



A Community Assessment for the Fox Cities of Wisconsin



LIFE at Work

LIFE of Learning

LIFE of Self-Sufficiency

LIFE at Home

LIFE in Natural Environment

A Safe LIFE

A Healthy LIFE

LIFE of Leisure

LIFE in the Community

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2006 LIFE Study Process

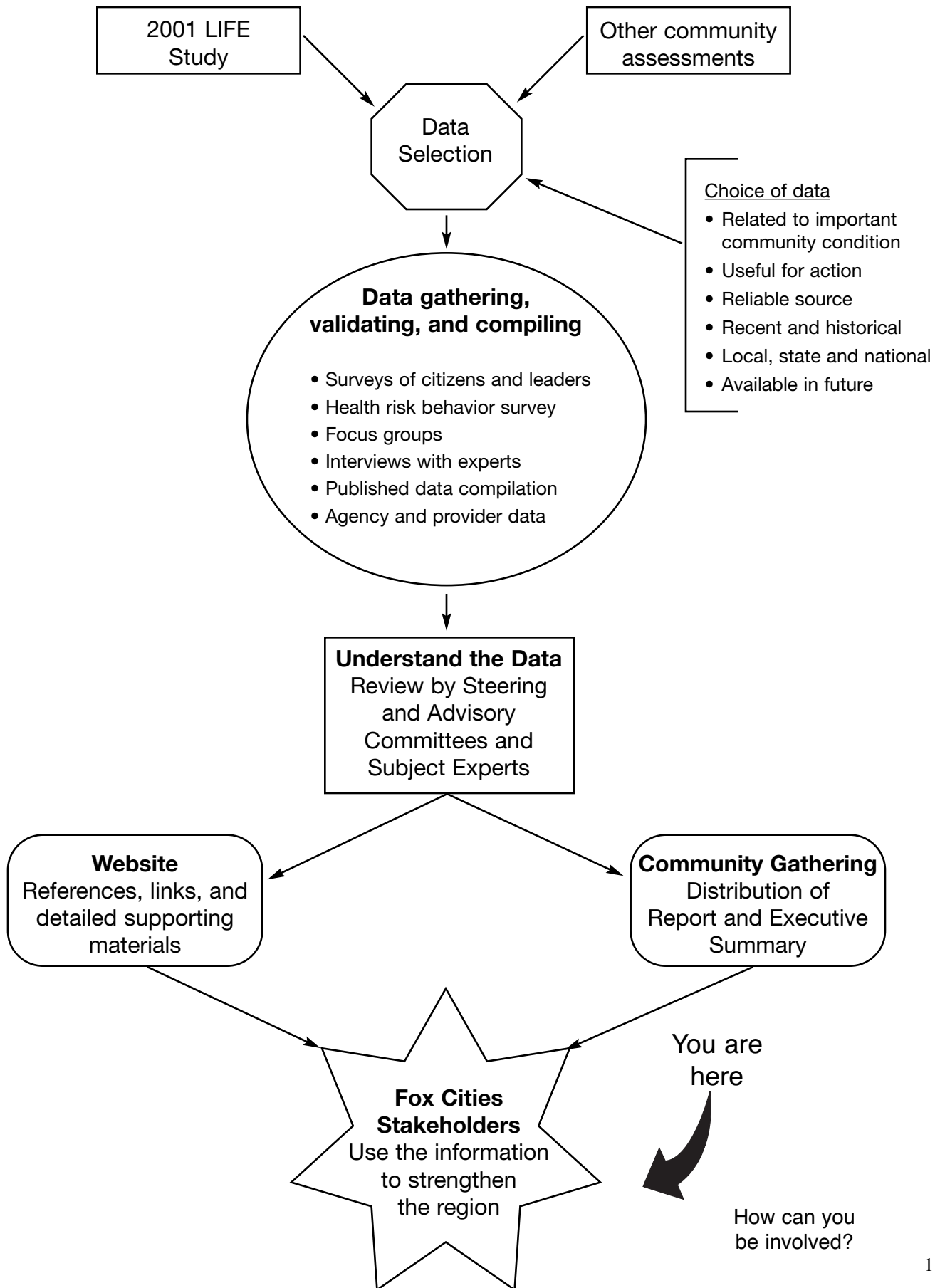


Table of Contents

LIFE Category	Page	LIFE Category	Page
Demographic information		LIFE of Learning IV-1	
2006 L.I.F.E. Study Process	1	Adult Learning	IV-3
Purpose and Opportunity	3	Higher Education	IV-4
Report Highlights	4	K-12 Education Profile	IV-5
Since the 2001 LIFE Study	5	Education for All Students	IV-6
Overall Satisfaction	6	Perceptions of Education	IV-7
How Do Citizens View the Area?	7	Student Success	IV-8
Fox Cities Area Strengths	8	LIFE at Leisure V-1	
A Snapshot of Key Findings by Category	9	Arts and Culture	V-3
If the Fox Cities were a Village of 100	10	Libraries and Enrichment	V-4
LIFE Study Opportunities for Improvement	11	Outdoor Recreation	V-5
Fox Cities Area Map	12	Recreation Programs	V-6
Population in Fox Cities Area Municipalities	13	Other Leisure Opportunities	V-7
Changing Demographics	14	LIFE in our Natural Environment VI-1	
Age and Income	15	Air Quality	VI-3
LIFE in Our Community I-1		Environmental Preservation	VI-4
Community Perceptions	I-3	Land Use	VI-5
Diversity	I-4	Resource Use and Conservation	VI-6
Governance and Infrastructure	I-5	Water Quality	VI-7
Leadership	I-6	A Safe LIFE VII-1	
Philanthropy	I-7	Juvenile Safety	VII-3
A Healthy LIFE II-1		Motor Vehicle Safety	VII-4
Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System	II-2	Personal Safety, Adults	VII-5
Access to Dental Care	II-3	Personal Safety, Children	VII-6
Access to Medical Care	II-4	Public Safety	VII-7
Health Status	II-5	Public Safety System	VII-8
Healthy Start for Infants and Children	II-6	LIFE of Self-Sufficiency VIII-1	
Mental Health	II-7	Access to Affordable Housing	VIII-3
Prevention Efforts	II-8	Homelessness	VIII-4
Quality of Medical Care	II-9	Economic Stress	VIII-5
Risk Behavior, Adults	II-10	Nutrition	VIII-6
Risk Behavior, Youth	II-11	Support Services	VIII-7
LIFE at Home III-1		LIFE at Work IX-1	
Care for Children	III-3	Cost of Living	IX-3
Disability and Support	III-4	Earnings and Wages	IX-4
Elderly Persons and Support	III-5	Economic Development	IX-5
Family Supportiveness	III-6	Economy	IX-6
Positive Youth Development	III-7	Employment	IX-7
		Transportation	IX-8
		Workforce Excellence	IX-9

Further information and complete source reports available at our website <http://www.foxcitieslifestudy.org>





Purpose and Opportunity

The sponsors of LIFE in the Fox Cities (Leading Indicators For Excellence) seek to understand the socio-economic conditions of the Fox Cities region and the overall direction in which it is headed. This report presents a snapshot of these conditions within nine areas of focus. We intend for many groups to use the findings: from the general public, to businesses recruiting new employees, to nonprofits planning services, to local governments deciding on resource allocation, to coalitions and emerging groups that gather to address an area of need in the community.

It is well known that the Fox Cities area is a vibrant community characterized by a highly valued quality of life. In large part, this is due to the fact that residents and their leaders identify problems and work together to solve them. They don't wait for the government to act or haggle hopelessly over positions. They act, collectively and individually, to preserve this quality of life. The past LIFE Study, by providing comprehensive information, contributed to several major initiatives addressing concerns, highlighted by the formation of the Fox Cities Rotary Multicultural Center, Harmony Café, the Tri-County Community Dental Clinic, the Venture Center at Fox Valley Technical College and the Aging and Disability Resource Center initiative.

This report provides information but not solutions. Its purpose is to spark regional leaders and citizens to action: action based on accurate understanding of the way things stand and the way they are heading. The 2006 LIFE Study will enable people who care about the area to understand and keep the Fox Cities region on the leading edge of excellence into the future.



Highlights of This Report

- ▶ Timely trend data that extends the work completed in 2001
- ▶ Information from a wide variety of original and published sources
- ▶ Fox Cities specific based on metro area and county-level data
- ▶ Detailed tables and source links available online
- ▶ User-friendly format
- ▶ Comprehensive synopsis of published data, survey results, and perceptions
- ▶ Interactive website with live links to original sources (<http://www.foxcitieslifestudy.org>)

Components of the Study

The following sources, woven together within each section, comprise the data:

- ▶ **Citizen Survey** of 350 randomly sampled residents of the region (with a confidence interval of + or – 5%)
- ▶ **Leader Survey** of 285 regional leaders representing government, faith, business, media, nonprofits and foundations, healthcare, education, and the community at large
- ▶ **The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System in the Fox Cities Survey (BRFSS)** of area residents (privately sponsored by Affinity Health System, Thedacare, and the health departments of Appleton, Menasha, and Neenah) and conducted by St. Norbert College Survey Center
- ▶ **13 Focus Groups** to gauge perceptions of key stakeholders on particular topic areas, including the categories of the LIFE study and also multicultural issues, young professional issues, working parent issues, and young adult issues. Six small group discussions with youth were held
- ▶ **Provider statistics** submitted by selected nonprofit and public organizations
- ▶ **Published data** from reliable secondary sources such as the State of Wisconsin, counties, Centers for Disease Control, Annie E. Casey Foundation and other objective sources
- ▶ **Interviews** with topic experts (planning departments, environmental analysts, educators, business statisticians, and others)

Background

This effort is in some ways unique and in other ways an “evolution” and extension of earlier needs assessments and efforts to describe the quality of life (e.g., The Partnership Project, Quality of Life, and LIFE in the Fox Cities 2001). The 2006 LIFE Study includes broader economic and environmental indicators than past efforts in order to expand the usefulness of the information reflecting interwoven socio-economic sectors of “Life” in the region.

Choice of data

- ▶ Related to important community condition
- ▶ Useful for action
- ▶ Reliable source
- ▶ Recent and historical, including 2001 LIFE Study
- ▶ Local, state, and national
- ▶ Available in future



Since the 2001 LIFE Study....

Much work has taken place and much progress made on the opportunities for improvement identified in the 2001 LIFE Study. Along with other community initiatives, and prompted in part by the 2001 LIFE Study findings, residents of the Fox Cities representing many different organizations, sectors, and walks of life have worked together to address these broadly recognized issues. We highlight just a few of them here.

2001 Opportunities for Improvement

DIVERSITY

The Fox Cities Rotary Multicultural Center was established in 2004 as a gathering place where every person and group is valued and included. Through the Center, educators, businesses, families and community members can find information and experiences to connect with people of many cultural backgrounds.

HEALTH ACCESS

Tri-County Community Dental Clinic, a non-profit walk-in clinic established in 2003, covers Calumet, Outagamie, and Winnebago Counties. Volunteer dentists, hygienists, and assistants provided cleanings, emergency care, and basic fillings to almost 3,000 persons in 2005. The Fox Cities Community Health Center opened a \$1.2 million facilities expansion in 2005, transitioning from a free clinic model to a community health center. Offering access to medical, dental, and mental health services for persons with low incomes, the move will allow the Center to double its capacity and strengthen its services.

HEALTH PROMOTION

The number of trails and greenways has grown rapidly in recent years in the Fox Cities. Fox Cities area school districts implemented healthy school nutrition policies to address childhood obesity and lifestyle habits. Seven area public health departments, Affinity Health System, ThedaCare, and the YMCA of the Fox Cities began "Walk to Win" in 2002 to encourage sedentary citizens to make walking a lifetime habit. The "Bridges to Healthy Cooking School," begun by Affinity Health System, ThedaCare, and Fox Valley Technical College, helps people learn about healthy cooking and healthy lifestyles.

REGIONAL VISION

In 2006 leaders from multiple sectors (both public and private) announced the New North, an effort to promote economic development in an 18 county area of Northeast Wisconsin. They will work jointly toward the following goals: fostering regional collaboration; focusing on targeted growth opportunities; supporting

an entrepreneurial climate; encouraging educational attainment; encouraging and embracing diverse talents; and promoting the regional brand.

AGING

Nonprofit agencies and human services departments in Outagamie, Calumet, and Waupaca Counties are collaborating to develop an Aging & Disability Resource Center with access in each county. They will share some staff and programs, technology, and the 2-1-1 telephone service to offer the public a single point of entry for information and assistance on issues affecting older adults, people with disabilities, and their families.

LOW COST HOUSING

The Housing Partnership has challenged itself to develop affordable housing in the Fox Cities in a variety of ways. Completed in 2004, the Peter Street Apartment project opened a 10 unit apartment building that will provide subsidized housing for low income families and transitional housing with supportive case management services. The Appleton Wire Works factory building is currently being converted to 25 units of low-to-moderate housing. Within the Harbor House Domestic Abuse Program facility, the Housing Partnership has developed six units of transitional housing.

TRANSPORTATION

With a goal of helping older adults to remain active and involved in the community, Valley Transit partnered with a team of volunteers from ThedaCare in 2004 to begin the "Making the Ride Happen" program using private funding. The program helps older adults and people with disabilities get information and referrals for transportation services and become more comfortable using public transportation.

How can you become involved in 2006?

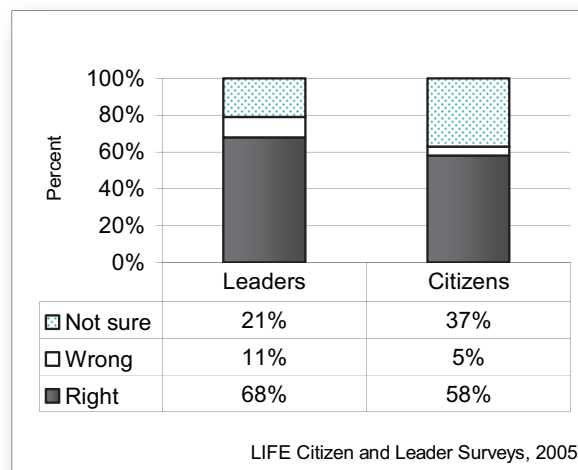
Overall Satisfaction with Aspects of the Fox Cities Area

On separate surveys, we asked citizens and leaders, "How would you rate the following aspects of the Fox Cities?"



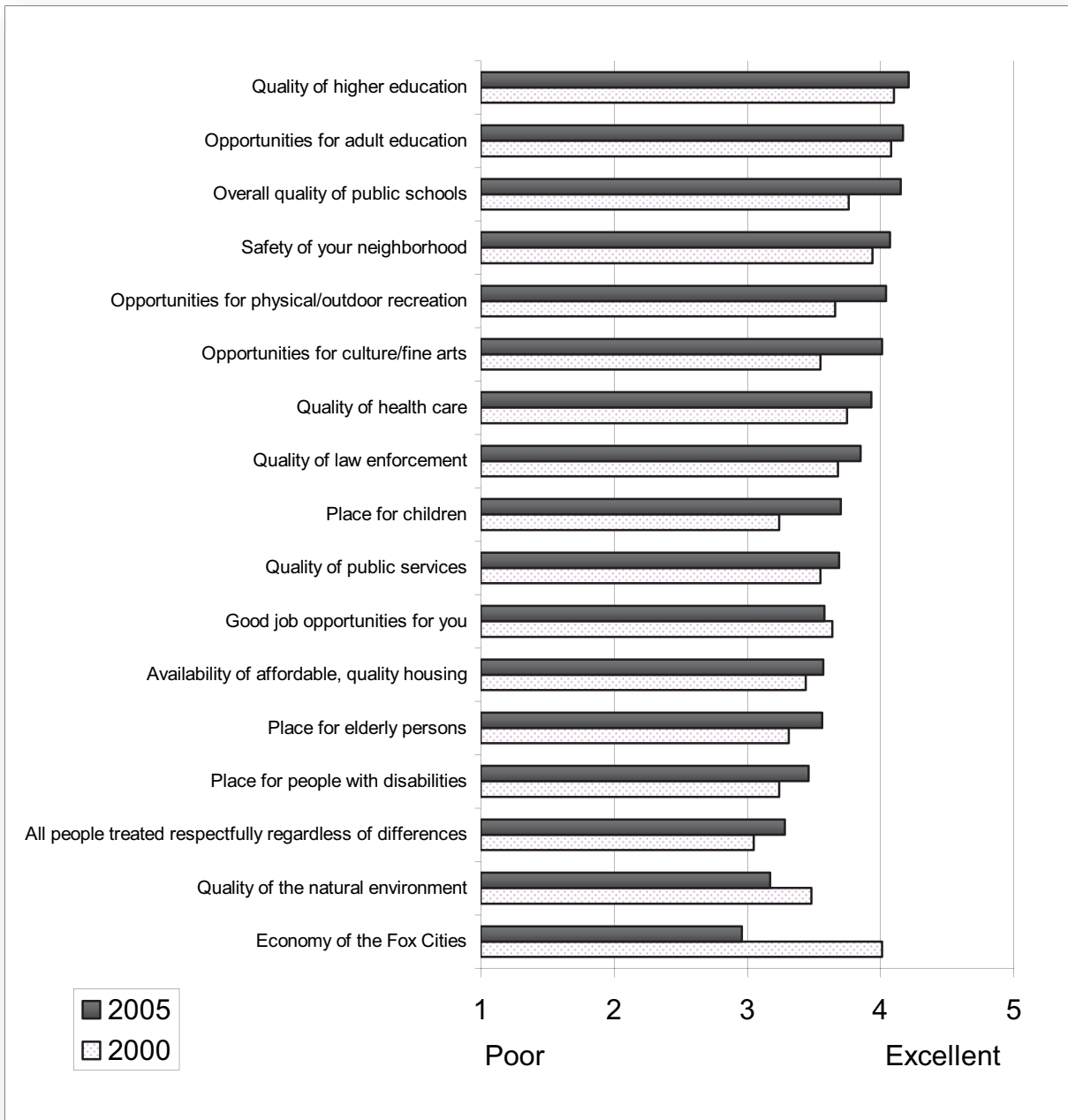
Direction of Fox Cities Area

"Considering where you would like to see the Fox Cities in five years, do you feel the Fox Cities region is currently headed in the wrong direction or the right direction?"



How Do Citizens View the Area?

Comparing 2001 and 2006 Citizen Surveys



Fox Cities Area Strengths

The strengths listed here received the most attention overall in focus groups and surveys. The 2006 LIFE Study included three surveys, 13 focus groups, interviews with experts, and a look at statistical data published by the state and others. We considered all data sources together to look for convergence on important issues.

Strengths	Broadly Recognized Aspects of the Fox Cities
Leisure opportunities	Outdoor recreation including water sports and trails; opportunities to view the arts, shop, use the libraries and to enjoy high quality restaurants
Safety	The area has consistently demonstrated a high level of public safety
Education	Higher education institutions received some of the highest ratings on surveys; K-12 education reported to be very high quality
Natural Environment	Clean air, plentiful water, good access to nature preserves
Collaboration	Organizations in the area have a track record of working together; now the expanded emphasis on the New North exemplifies this attribute
Community leadership	Leaders across different sectors are seen as proactive and willing to confront challenges
Health care	Widely recognized excellence for an array of services and quality of care
Community services and organizations	Local government and nonprofits viewed as effective and collaborative
Place for children and families	Well recognized as a friendly, safe area with emphasis on children and family lifestyle
Relative affordability	For many residents, the cost of living in the Fox Cities compares favorably to other parts of the United States

A Snapshot of Key Findings by Category

	Areas of Progress	Areas of Concern
LIFE in Our Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of public services • Growing recognition of and initiatives for diversity • Proactive community leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for leadership inclusive of minorities, young people, women • Quality of life perceived lower for people of color and singles • Uncontested local elections
A Healthy LIFE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of health and dental care • Services expanded for underinsured and uninsured • Heart disease death rate declines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased costs and decreased access to health care • Major impact of untreated mental illness and substance abuse • Lifestyle issues of obesity, lack of exercise, and substance abuse • Need for health professionals
LIFE at Home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative initiatives will expand information for those with disabilities and the elderly • Good environment to raise a family • Opportunities for children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns about quality and affordability of child care • Need for constructive opportunities for older youth • Transportation and support services for people with disabilities
LIFE of Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality K-12 education • Quality higher education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of preschool for children • Relatively lower rate of post-high school education • Affordability of higher education • Achievement gap for low income students
LIFE at Leisure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts and cultural opportunities • Outdoor recreation opportunities • Libraries • Restaurants and shopping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for better public pedestrian access to the waterfront • Concerns about growing parent pressure on youth to specialize and excel in sport at younger age
LIFE in our Natural Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good air quality overall • Quality nature preserves and parks • Progress on Fox River cleanup • Joint regional efforts expanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sprawling land development with harmful impacts • Water quality in certain areas • Reliance on automobiles
A Safe LIFE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very safe region; low crime rates • Quality emergency services • Teamwork across county and municipal lines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic violence and sexual assault reports increase • Re-integration of ex-offenders • Public perceives the area unprepared for major disaster
LIFE of Self-Sufficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower overall poverty rate than elsewhere • Strong nonprofit human services • Strong base of quality volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased number of people cannot afford basic needs • Cost of living increases
LIFE at Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic development initiatives • Strong manufacturing economic base • Retail sales and tourism • Workforce quality • Favorable cost of living for many 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job shift from manufacturing to services with lower earnings • Per capita income falling behind • Preparation of workforce for needed jobs

In 2006, if the Fox Cities were a village of 100 people...

2000/2001	Characteristic	2006
	Perceptions of the area	
21	“Excellent “ place to live	40
n/a	Heading in right direction	58
	Age, Gender	
28	0 to 19	29
36	20 to 44	38
24	45 to 64	21
11	65 or over	12
50	Female	50
	Ethnicity/Diversity	
92	Caucasian√	93
1	African American√	1
2	Hispanic origin√	2
3	Asian descent√	2
1	Native American√	1
1	Two races√	1
	Work (adult population only)	
71	In the labor force	71
3	Unemployed	4
	Income	
5	Poverty	6
23	Household income < \$ 25,000*	23
10	Household income >\$100,000*	11
	Education (age 25 and over)	
80	Graduated high school	90
15-20	College and beyond	23
	Health (adult only)	
95	Have insurance	93
77	Cholesterol checked, lifetime	88
34	Binged on alcohol	27
81	Visited dentist, past year	87
64	Report own health good/excellent	59
	Recreation (adult only)	
68	Participated in arts/culture	62
75	Used recreation facilities	75
	Community (adult only)	
75	Gave time for community service	68
86	Gave money to church/nonprofit	78

* 2002, 2004 American Community Survey, US Census

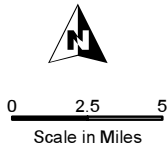
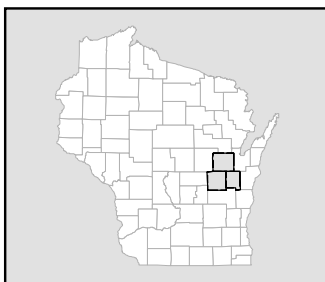
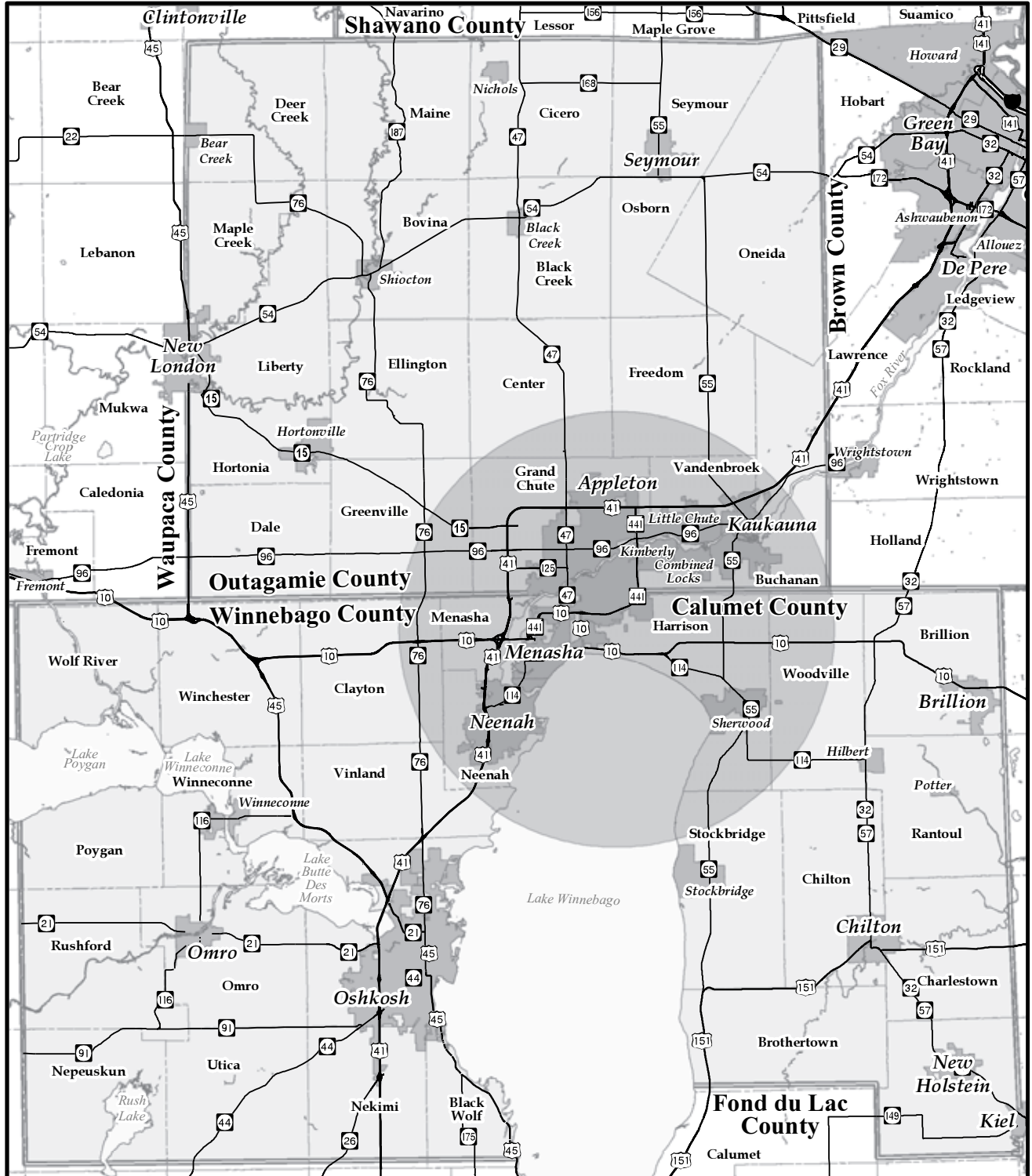


LIFE Study Opportunities for Improvement

While other important issues were identified, those listed below arose repeatedly and from multiple sources. The 2006 LIFE Study included three surveys, 13 focus groups, interviews with experts, and statistical data published by the state and others. We considered all data sources to look for convergence on important issues.

Opportunity Area	Broadly Recognized Aspects of the Fox Cities
Greater inclusion of diverse people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for further inclusion of diverse residents (beyond racial and ethnic diversity), especially in leadership roles
Economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need for economic development and higher paying jobs was a strong consensus of residents, leaders and experts • Economic development can help alleviate certain other concerns
Transportation alternatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Options for persons with lower incomes, persons with disabilities, the elderly, youth, shift workers, and those without automobiles • Desire for transportation options other than automobiles
Treatment for mental illness and addiction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declining access to treatment (especially for persons with low incomes or public health insurance) • Untreated mental illness/substance abuse creates many negative impacts
Health care access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtaining care is a challenge for many in the area due to growing out of pocket costs (for the insured) and a decrease in jobs with health benefits • Access to more preventive health care seen as important
Adult training and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased support for employment skills, literacy, parenting, financial, and many other skills needed to function well in life • Noted by many as a way to address many other areas of need
Regional vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need to create public efficiencies and related cost savings • Collaboration needed to confront challenges; New North a hopeful start
Long term focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need for area leaders to have a long term focus and to make sometimes difficult decisions to confront challenges • Health promotion, education, child care, aging, support for disabilities or mental illness, and disaster preparedness cited as needing long term focus
Affordable basic needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For those with lower to middle incomes, the challenge of making ends meet has become much more difficult • Housing, child care, health care, transportation costs cited
Support for elderly, people with disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of adults and children with disabilities grows • Declining safety net and government cutbacks have capped or reduced important services for persons with disabilities
Youth development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities needed for “average” youth in the arts and physical activities (especially for ages 16-21); pressure on high achieving youth to excel
Affordable quality child care/ preschool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The costs of child care have become a challenge for people with low to middle incomes; quality of existing services sometimes a concern • Pre-school and early education opportunities needed
Environmental preservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban sprawl and fragmentation of ecosystems • Impacts on drinking water quality, transportation, safety, recreation, and health
Affordable housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The supply of housing for people with very low incomes has not kept pace with the need projected by the Appleton Housing Authority • Requests for financial support grow for housing and utilities

Fox Cities Area, Wisconsin



Key

- Interstate Highway
- US Highway
- State Highway
- Fox Cities Area
- Municipalities



Map Prepared March 2006
By the East Central Wisconsin
Regional Planning Commission.

Base Data provided by:
WDNR Geo data, Bay Lake Regional Planning
Commission and East Central's Regional Counties.

Population in Fox Cities Area Municipalities

	2000 Census	2005 Estimate	Change 2000-2005	Projection 2010
Fox Cities Area Total	207,660	223,573	7.70%	236,020
City of Appleton	70,087	73,004	4.20%	75,396
City of Kaukauna	12,983	14,196	9.30%	15,081
City of Menasha	16,331	16,988	4.00%	17,443
City of Neenah	24,507	25,439	3.80%	25,845
Village of Combined Locks	2,422	2,708	11.80%	2,862
Village of Hortonville	2,357	2,550	8.20%	2,699
Village of Kimberly	6,146	6,436	4.70%	6,576
Village of Little Chute	10,476	10,952	4.50%	11,467
Village of Sherwood	1,550	2,188	41.20%	2,677
Town of Buchanan	5,827	6,970	19.60%	8,060
Town of Clayton	2,974	3,375	13.50%	3,643
Town of Grand Chute	18,392	20,228	10.00%	22,136
Town of Greenville	6,844	7,896	15.40%	8,987
Town of Harrison	5,756	8,375	45.50%	10,053
Town of Kaukauna	1,142	1,226	7.40%	1,306
Town of Menasha	15,858	16,950	6.90%	17,693
Town of Neenah	2,657	2,770	4.30%	2,802
Town of Vandenbroek	1,351	1,322	-2.10%	1,294
Fox Cities- Oshkosh MSA	358,365	381,512	6.50%	398,908
County of Calumet	40,631	45,812	12.80%	49,146
County of Outagamie	160,971	171,854	6.80%	181,224
County of Winnebago	156,763	163,846	4.50%	168,538
State of Wisconsin	5,363,675	5,563,896	3.70%	5,751,470

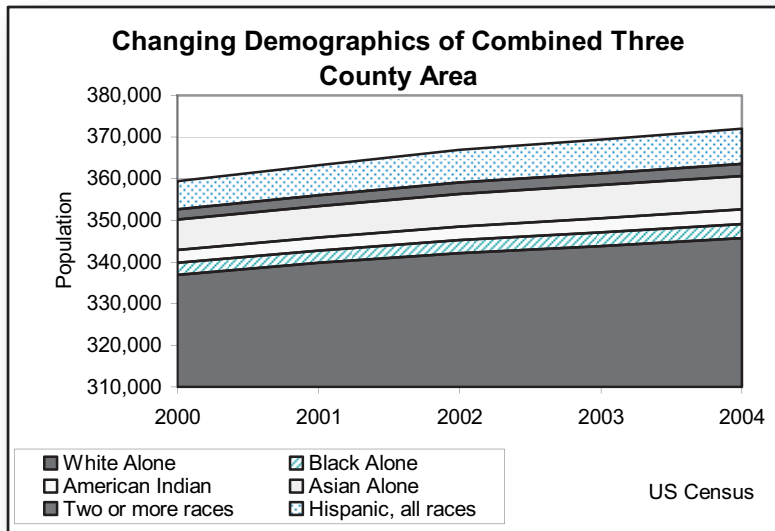
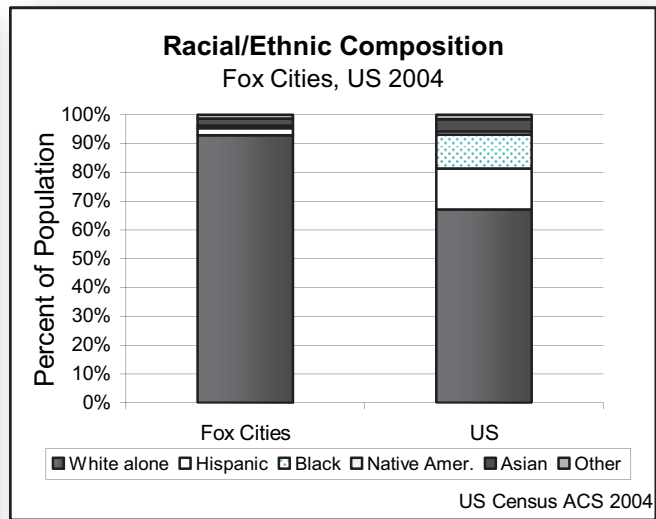
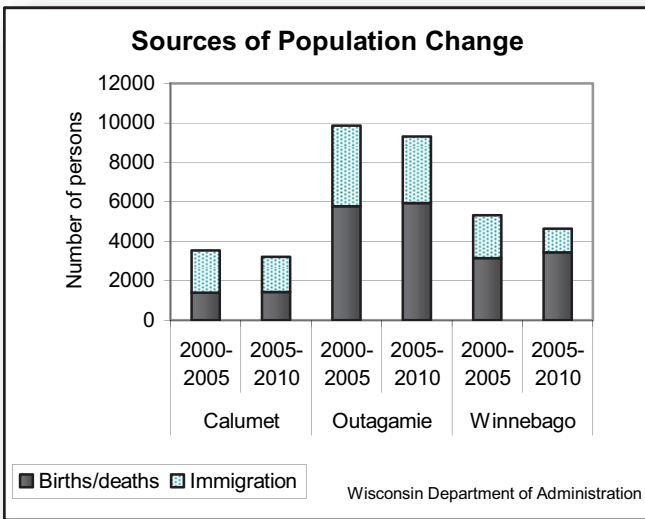
Source: Wisconsin State Department of Administration, Demographic Services Center, Wisconsin Population Projections, City, Town, Village (Projection by Total Estimates).

- Calumet County is projected to be the second fastest growing county in Wisconsin between 2000 and 2030 (projected to increase by 45% from 40,631 to 58,966)
- Outagamie County is projected to be the fourth fastest growing county (34% from 161,091 to 215,720)

Changing Demographics in the Fox Cities Area

Total Households					
	2000	2010	% change	2020	% change
Calumet	14,910	17,764	19.1%	20,679	16.4%
Outagamie	60,530	69,918	15.5%	79,318	13.4%
Winnebago	61,157	66,446	8.6%	71,468	7.6%
Wisconsin	2,084,556	2,303,238	10.5%	2,506,932	8.8%

Demographic Services Center, WI Dept of Administration



Projected Age Distribution in the Fox Cities Area

Year	Calumet			Outagamie			Winnebago			Wisconsin		
	2005	2015	2025	2005	2015	2025	2005	2015	2025	2005	2015	2025
Age												
0-14	23%	21%	21%	22%	21%	21%	20%	19%	20%	20%	19%	19%
15-34	25%	27%	25%	28%	28%	26%	28%	27%	25%	27%	27%	25%
35-64	42%	41%	39%	40%	40%	39%	41%	40%	37%	40%	39%	37%
65+	10%	11%	15%	10%	11%	15%	12%	14%	17%	13%	15%	19%

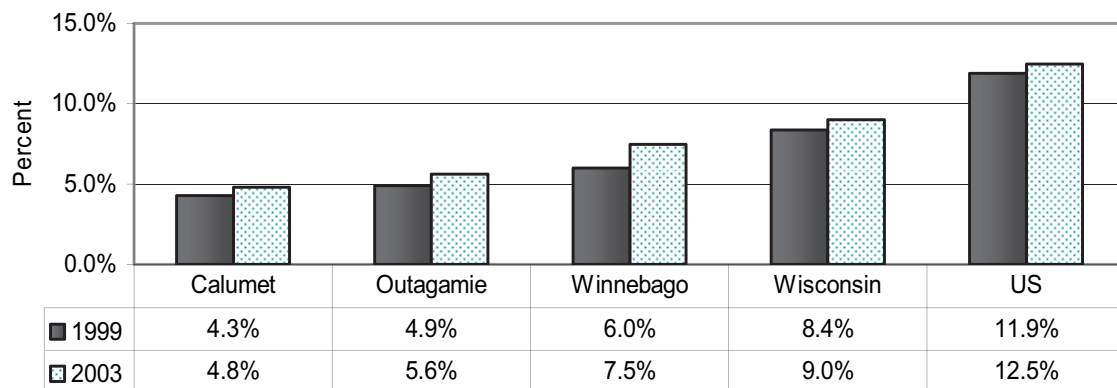
Wisconsin Dept of Administration

Changing Income in the Fox Cities Area

	Per Capita Total Personal Income			Household Income		
	1999	2003	% change	1999	2003	% change
Calumet	\$27,610	\$31,880	15%	\$52,630	\$60,307	15%
Outagamie	\$27,243	\$30,952	14%	\$49,444	\$52,654	6%
Winnebago	\$26,775	\$30,359	13%	\$45,180	\$46,947	4%
Wisconsin	\$27,135	\$30,685	13%	\$43,301	\$46,538	7%
US	\$27,939	\$31,472	13%	\$40,696	\$43,318	6%

US Census Small Area Estimates

Percent of Individuals in Poverty 1999, 2003



US Census Small Area Estimates



LIFE in our Community

“Excellence” for the Fox Cities is defined as:

Community leadership proactively makes decisions that are in the best interests of citizens in the long run. Citizens of all ages, religions, races, ethnicities, sexual orientations, genders, and income levels...

- Experience a sense of community and belonging
- Do not experience discrimination
- Have full access to services
- Are informed on community issues
- Have the opportunity to participate fully in community life through civic involvement/voting, volunteer work, and faith communities
- Experience a community infrastructure and amenities promoting a good quality of life

LIFE in Our Community

Community Perceptions	Perceptions of quality of life Stability of neighborhoods and respect for others Opportunities and involvement in spiritual life
Diversity	Respect for diverse people Demographic trends Perceptions of quality of life for subgroups of diverse residents
Governance and Infrastructure	Uncontested local elections Voter participation rates Citizen perceptions of quality of public services
Leadership	Direction of Fox Cities area Perceptions of transportation system Perceptions of leadership effectiveness
Philanthropic Vitality	Volunteering in past year, quality of volunteers Citizen percent of discretionary income donated to charity Number of nonprofits Citizen support for charitable organizations in past year

For more information on the community:

Demographic statistics <http://www.census.gov/acs/www/index.html>
LIFE focus group and survey findings <http://www.foxcitieslifestudy.org>
Fox Cities Rotary Multicultural Center <http://www.foxcitiesmulticultural.org/>
Election results and voter turnout <http://elections.state.wi.us/section.asp?linkid=155&locid=47>
County government information <http://www.co.winnebago.wi.us>, www.co.outagamie.wi.us and
www.co.calumet.wi.us

Selected additional information for each section of the 2006 LIFE Report can be found in Appendices at our website: <http://www.foxcitieslifestudy.org>

Community Perceptions

Data Highlights

- **Figure 1** In 2005, 40% of citizens believed that the Fox Cities area “excels” as a place to live (in 2000, 21% did so).
- **Figure 2** While citizens indicated their families are respected to a high degree, citizens rated the area close to average as a place where “people of different racial/ethnic backgrounds get along well” and where “all people are treated respectfully regardless of differences.”
- **Figure 3** 57% of Fox Cities area households (both owners/renters) have resided in their current home since 1999.
- **Figure 4** Most aspects of the Fox Cities area were rated “good” by both citizens and leaders, with education and safety nearing excellent. The ability of some citizens to meet basic needs and be self-sufficient scored somewhat lower (between average and good).
- 80% of residents had attended a religious service in the past year. 88% of leaders think the Fox Cities area provides good or excellent opportunities for spiritual growth.

Figure 1

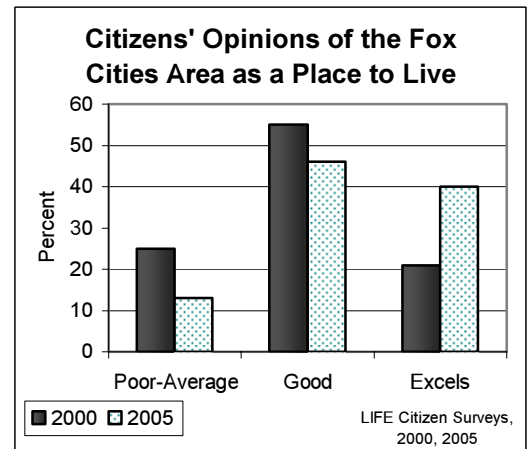


Figure 2

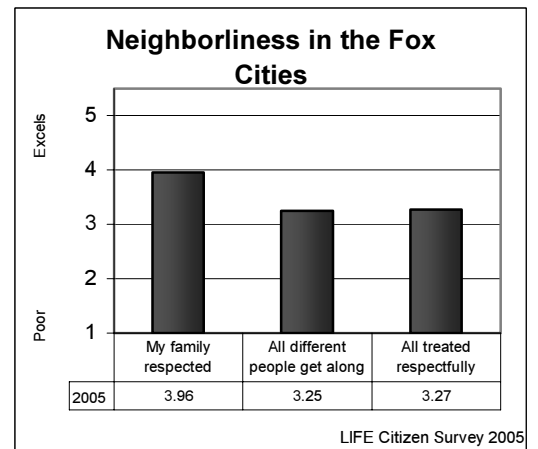
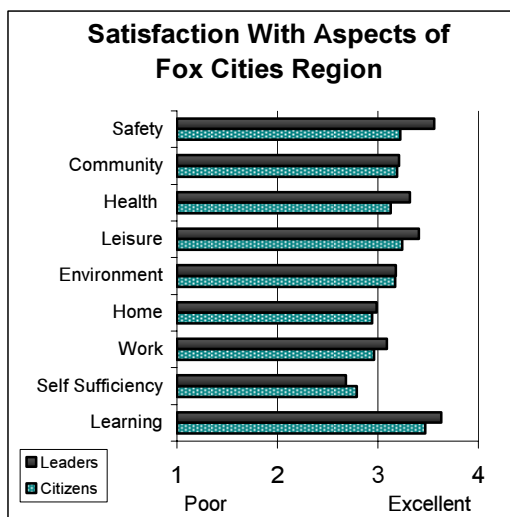


Figure 4

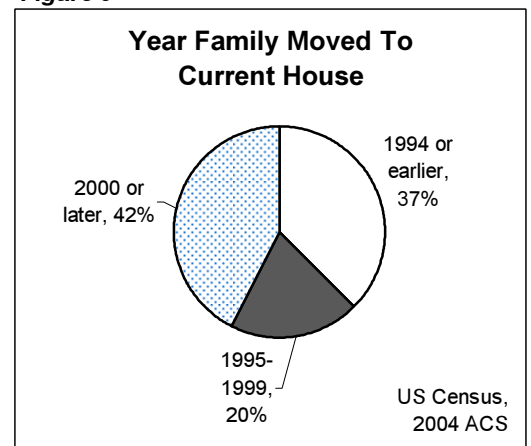


Progress and Concerns

Focus group and survey findings agree that the region has many strengths, especially opportunities for families, quality education, leisure opportunities, natural surroundings, and growing diversity. Leaders tended to view the area even more positively than citizens.

On the other hand, these data show that residents see the challenges of a changing economy, shrinking government services, growing human needs (due to poverty, aging, mental illness) and environmental concerns.

Figure 3



80% of citizens reported having attended a religious or worship service in the past year.

Diversity

Figure 1

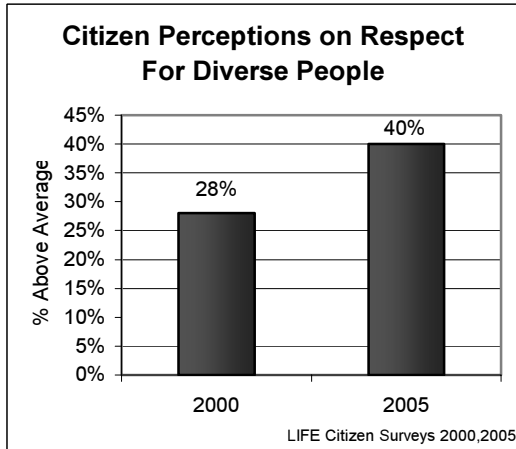


Figure 2

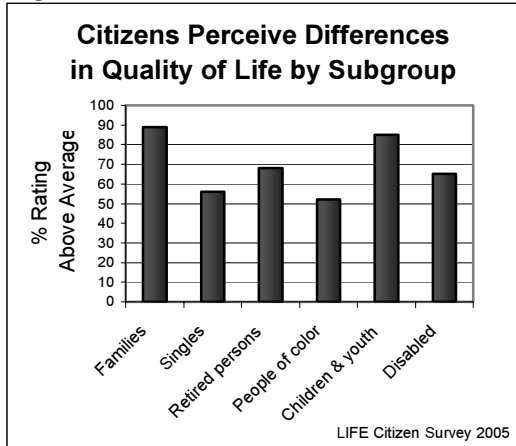
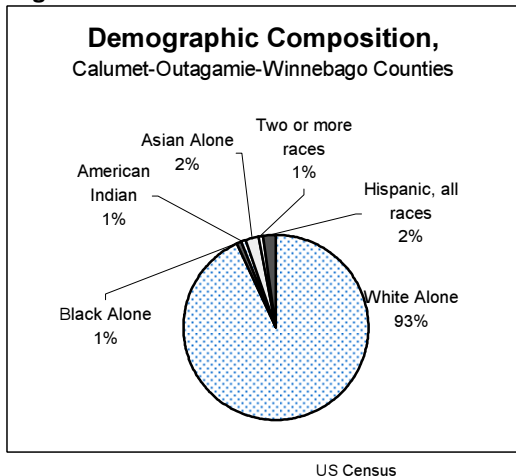


Figure 3



Data Highlights

- **Figure 1** In 2005, a higher percentage of citizens (40% vs. 28% in 2000) believed that in the Fox Cities, “all people are treated respectfully, regardless of their race, culture, religion, gender, sexual orientation, income level, disability, or age.”
- **Figure 2** About half of Fox Cities residents thought the area was a good/excellent place to live for people of color and about 2/3 said it was good/excellent for people with disabilities. 90% believe the region excels for families.
- **Figure 3** The minority population in the region is increasing. In 2004, 93% of the area was white, non-Hispanic compared to 94% in 2000. The number of persons of Hispanic origin grew by 26% and African Americans by 21% during that time.
- 36% of leaders agreed that the Fox Cities is a place where people of color take on leadership roles in the community.

Figure 3

	2000	2004	Net	% Change
White Alone	336,938	345,781	8,843	2.6%
Hispanic, all races	6,751	8,489	1,738	25.7%
Asian	7,266	8,035	769	10.6%
American Indian	3,147	3,455	308	9.8%
African American	2,824	3,416	592	21.0%
Two or more races	2,556	2,836	280	11.0%
Pacific Islander	100	98	-2	-2.0%
Total	359,582	372,110	12,528	3.5%

US Census/ECWRPC

Progress and Concerns

The newly opened Fox Cities Rotary Multicultural Center (2004) hosted a lively focus group with local people of color. Participants noted many positives about the area and progress within the region (e.g., schools, safety, programs to learn English). The New North, Northeast Wisconsin’s economic development initiative, chose diversity as one of its top priorities.

In several of our focus groups, participants perceived that the area is ready to “walk the talk” by encouraging leadership by non-dominant segments of the community (e.g., women, minorities, young people).

For many people of color, concerns include transportation, access to legal services, access to rehabilitation for substance abuse, and housing (including fair housing practices, affordable rental housing, and home ownership).

55% of leaders rated the Fox Cities above average as a place where people with different racial/ethnic backgrounds get along well.

Governance and Infrastructure

Data Highlights

- **Figure 1** In the April 2006 elections, 80% of county board supervisory elections were uncontested in the three counties combined. In Winnebago and Calumet Counties, several county board districts had no candidates running at all.
- **Figure 2** Voter participation rates in the Fox Cities area surpassed national rates and reached almost 3/4 of the voting age population in 2004.
- **Figure 3** The 2005 Citizen Survey revealed an improved perception of the quality of public services and drinking water compared to the 2000 results.
- When asked, "If you could change one thing about the Fox Cities area, what would it be?" 14% of respondents pointed to traffic concerns (construction and traffic safety). The second most-common answer (10%) dealt with the need for municipalities to collaborate and jointly make plans to address common issues.
- 30% of leaders indicated that "building a broader regional partnership" should be one of the Fox Cities' highest priorities.

Progress and Concerns

More than half of citizens scored their local government services as good or excellent. In most of the focus groups, experts commented on the high level of collaboration across county and municipal lines, especially related to safety, health, and human services.

The need to "regionalize" government services was one of the more prominent themes of the 2006 LIFE Study. Survey and focus group results converge on this idea. Whether talking about economic development, recreation programs, roads, taxes, safety, planning for land use, and more, the advantages of a "Fox Cities" perspective (in contrast to multiple municipalities) was clear to people we heard from. This regional approach, in their opinions, would reduce duplication and improve efficiency. Recent efforts like the New North, emergency response teams, and the three-county waste disposal agreement were cited as examples.

Figure 1

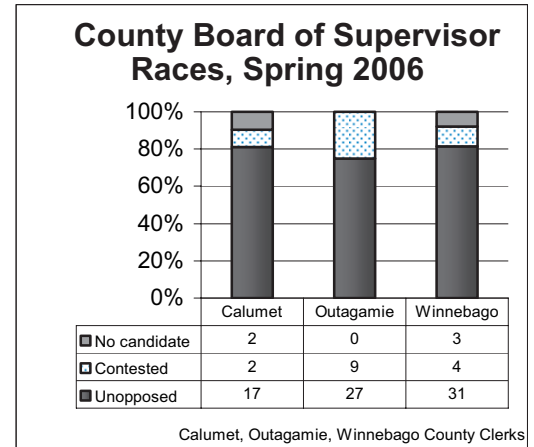


Figure 2

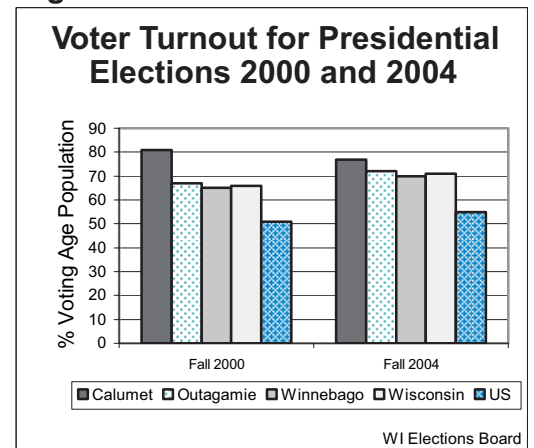
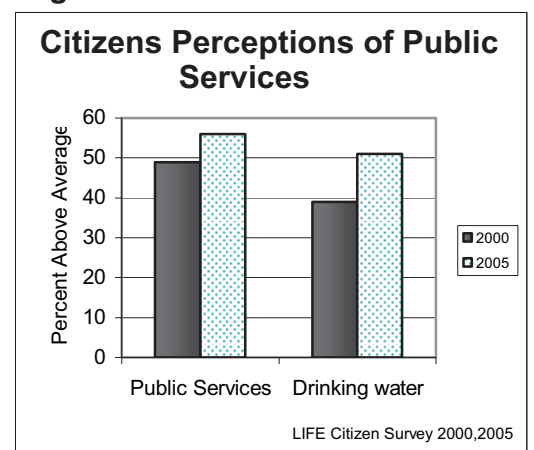


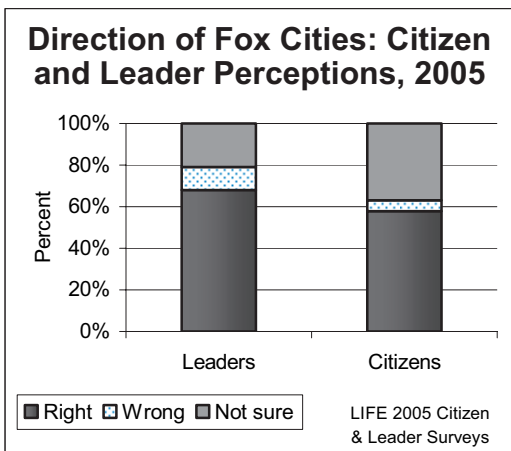
Figure 3



42% of citizens (vs. 32% in 2000) felt that the Fox Cities' transportation system was keeping up with growth, scoring it above average.

Leadership

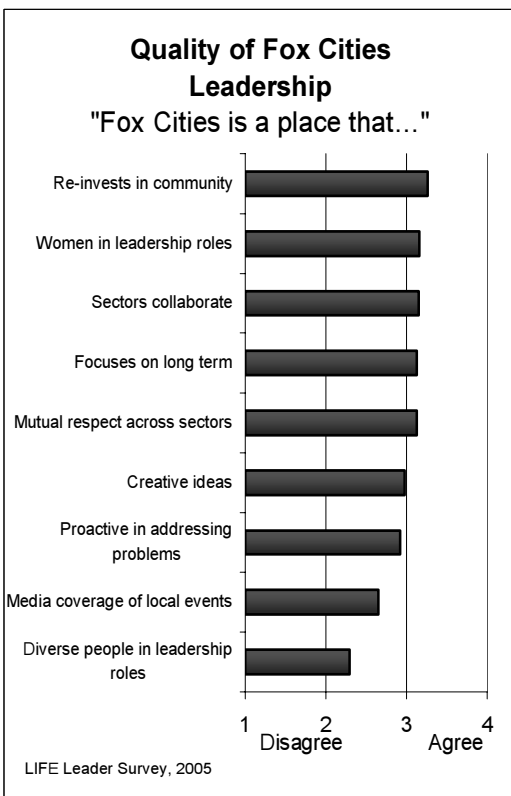
Figure 1



Data Highlights

- **Figure 1** 68% of leaders and 58% of citizens thought the area is heading in the right direction. Significantly, 37% of citizens responded “not sure.”
- **Figure 2** We asked leaders a series of questions about the effectiveness of regional leadership (both public and private). Leaders gave highest marks to the region’s re-investment in the community, women in leadership roles, and collaboration. Lowest ratings were given to the area’s inclusion of diverse persons in leadership roles, media coverage of local events, and the region’s effectiveness at proactively addressing problems.
- In two focus groups (young professionals and multicultural), the need for more inclusive leadership came up and generated animated discussion. Obtaining increased input from young people, diverse people, and other new voices was prioritized.

Figure 2



Progress and Concerns

In almost every focus group, participants highlighted community leadership as a unique strength of the area. People noted the willingness of these leaders to act on problems faced by the community.

Many agreed that existing local leadership must “walk the talk” by involving different types of persons in leadership roles. This was especially important to young professionals and people of color in our discussions with them.

In several of the focus groups, participants suggested that local leaders take a long term perspective on decisions facing them. They felt that, too often, local leaders have resorted to quick fixes or temporary solutions which, in some cases, had led to greater long term challenges. Focus group participants across the board acknowledged that the funding of government services has reached a point where no further expansion (and possibly reductions) will occur.

50% of leaders rated Fox Cities leadership fair or poor at implementing wise land development policies in the area.

Philanthropy

Data Highlights

- **Figure 1** Since 2000, there was a slight decline in the amount of financial and volunteer support for charitable and religious organizations reported by survey respondents.
- **Figure 2** In 2006, there were 728 public and private 501 (c) (3) charitable organizations in Fox Cities communities. (No historical comparison data were available from this source).
- **Figure 3** In 2003, Fox Cities residents donated to charity at a level similar to national and regional averages. Calumet County residents donated 8.3% of income; Winnebago County, 5.2%; and Outagamie County 6.4%, matching the national average.
- Several focus groups noted the high quality of volunteers supporting nonprofits in the Fox Cities area. The growing willingness of employers to provide paid volunteer release time has added to the strength of area nonprofits.
- In 2005 the Volunteer Center of East Central Wisconsin connected over 58,000 people to volunteer opportunities, up from 27,600 in 2000. The agency handles a growing number of requests from employers to develop volunteer programs.
- In 2005, United Way Fox Cities raised nearly \$6.4 million, exceeding its goal by 4%. The Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region received \$49 million and in its 04-05 fiscal year provided 541 grants to nonprofit organizations.

Figure 1

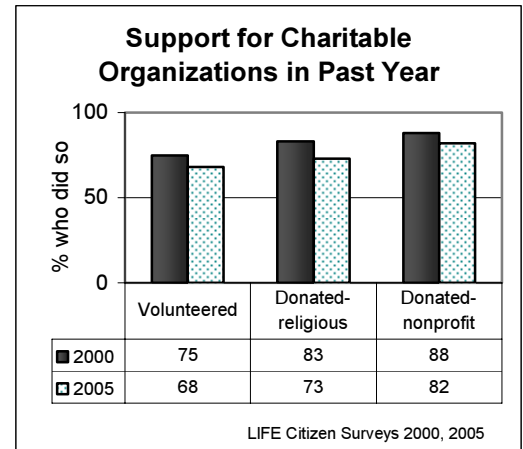


Figure 2

501 (c)(3) Organizations in Fox Cities Area

Appleton	405
Hortonville	13
Kaukauna	30
Kimberly	16
Little Chute	16
Menasha	73
Neeah	175
TOTAL	728

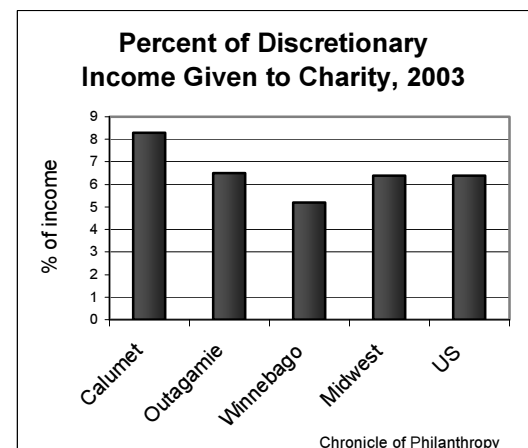
<http://www.guidestar.org>

Progress and Concerns

Many nonprofit organizations serve the Fox Cities area communities well; these organizations tend to be well supported by volunteer and charitable giving. Volunteers are used increasingly in schools and the area has recently observed greater business support for volunteer release time.

Nonprofit human service organizations increasingly take on the role of “safety net” as government services at all levels experience constrained funding. Nonprofit professionals attempt to serve growing numbers of impoverished families. At the same time, competition for funding has increased; many nonprofits with whom we spoke believed that obtaining sustaining funding for existing services was more difficult as many grants and awards are restricted to new programs.

Figure 3



In more than half of the LIFE Study Focus groups, “strong nonprofit organizations” was cited as a key strength of the Fox Cities area.



A Healthy LIFE

“Excellence” for the Fox Cities is defined as:

Citizens practice healthy lifestyles:

- Eat a balanced diet
- Exercise routinely
- Engage in activities in support of good mental health
- Do not abuse substances that are harmful
- Have routine health screenings such as blood pressure checks

In the event of an illness, citizens are treated early by well-prepared health providers of all levels in state-of-the art medical facilities.

A Healthy LIFE

Access to dental care	Dental visit in past year Number of teeth removed due to decay Tri-County Dental Clinic usage Dentists per capita, accepting Medicaid/uninsured clients
Access to medical care	Needed but didn't get care due to cost Health insurance coverage, citizen perceptions of benefits Medicaid recipients in three counties Medical visit in past year
Health status	Self reported health status, days of illness Leading causes of death, county health rankings Disability prevalence
Healthy start for infants & children	Infant mortality and low birth weight Percent of mothers that obtained prenatal care Births to unmarried mothers
Mental health	Days of depression in past 30 Crisis hotline usage for emotional concerns Use of emergency room by persons with mental illness Suicide rate
Prevention efforts	Exercise, cholesterol screening rates Breast and PAP exams among women Leader perceptions of Fox Cities prevention efforts Child immunization rates, lead poisoning
Quality of medical care	Citizen perceptions of quality of health care Health care workforce
Risk behavior, Adults	Tobacco, alcohol use Presence of lifestyle diseases and obesity
Risk behavior, Youth	Youths not working and not in school Percent of teens engaging in risk behaviors Births to teens Drug arrest rates in three counties

For more information on health:

Dentist workforce, WI Dept. Health and Family Services, www.dhfs.wi.gov/provider/dentists.htm
Birth statistics, <http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/births/index.htm>, <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/births.htm>
2005 County Health Rankings, <http://www.pophealth.wisc.edu/uwphi/research/rankings2005.htm>
Cancer Statistics, http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/npcr/uscs/pdf/2001_USCS.pdf
National Center for Health Statistics <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/>
Medicaid detailed statistics, <http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/medicaid8/caseload/county.htm>
Quality of providers, <http://www.wchq.org/Reporting/>
Causes of death in Wisconsin query system, http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/wish/measures/mortality/long_form_broad.html
Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System <http://www.cdc.gov/brfss/>
Youth Risk Behavior information <http://dpi.wi.gov/sspw/pdf/yrbstrendgraph.pdf>, www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash/yrbbs/

Selected additional information for each section of the 2006 LIFE Report can be found in Appendices at our website: <http://www.foxcitieslifestudy.org>



Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)

Background. The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) is the world's largest continuously conducted telephone health survey used to track health risks in the United States. Information from the survey is used to improve the health of the American people, to identify emerging health problems, to establish health objectives and to track progress toward meeting these objectives. Data can be used at the national, state, and local levels.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) developed the BRFSS with a set of standard core questions that enable health professionals to make comparisons among states and local areas and also to reach national conclusions. Fox Cities' health professionals used these core questions to provide useful data to understand patterns of disease, identify populations at highest risk, determine the prevalence of health risks, to guide and evaluate disease prevention efforts, and allow for ongoing tracking and identification of emerging health trends.

Connection to the LIFE Study. The two studies are distinct but were done during the same period of time. In conjunction with the 2006 LIFE Study, a group of health care providers (listed below) commissioned St. Norbert College Survey Center to conduct the BRFSS in the Fox Cities area. This collaboration allows the 2006 LIFE Study to include timely information about local disease patterns, health habits, insurance coverage, and more.

Key Findings from the 2006 Fox Cities BRFSS

Chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes and hypertension are the leading causes of death in the Fox Cities. In many instances, the causes of these chronic diseases are personal health-damaging behaviors practiced on a daily basis during the course of a lifetime.

The 2006 Fox Cities BRFSS data indicate that the following health behaviors occur at a higher rate than State and National norms.

- ***Tobacco use and exposure***
- ***Abuse of alcohol***
- ***Obesity and lack of physical exercise***
- ***Inadequate diet and nutrition***

“In many instances, these chronic diseases are caused by personal health-damaging behaviors practiced on a daily basis during the course of a lifetime.”

Similar lifestyle related priorities have been reported in the “Healthiest Wisconsin 2010: A Partnership Plan to Improve the Health of the Public” (also known as the State of Wisconsin Health Plan).

By highlighting the key health issues locally, these findings create an opportunity for intervention that could substantially decrease illness, mortality rates and cost while improving the health of residents of the Fox Cities area.

The entire Fox Cities BRFSS report can be found on the 2006 Fox Cities LIFE Study website at:

<http://www.foxcitieslifestudy.org>

The 2006 Fox Cities BRFSS was sponsored by Affinity Health System, TheDACare, and the health departments of Appleton, Menasha, and Neenah. It was conducted by St. Norbert College Survey Center.

Access to Dental Care

Data Highlights

- Figure 1** The number of Fox Cities residents reporting having visited a dentist to have their teeth cleaned in the past year rose to 87% in 2005 from 81% in 2000.
- Figure 2** Since 2000, a higher percentage of Fox Cities residents lost at least one tooth due to untreated decay (33% in 2000 compared to 45% in 2005).
- Figure 3** Tri-County Community Dental Clinic, a non-profit walk-in clinic established in 2003, covers Calumet, Outagamie, and Winnebago Counties. Volunteer dentists, hygienists, and assistants perform cleanings, emergency care, and basic fillings. The clinic treated almost 3,000 persons during 5,728 visits in 2005 alone, for an estimated \$1.2 million of dental care services. They report that the majority of patients have Medicaid dental insurance, and about one-third are children.
- The number of dentists in northeast Wisconsin (17 county area) grew by 100 between 2001 and 2003; from 5 dentists per 10,000 residents to 6 per 10,000.
- In June 2005, the following numbers of dentists were listed by the state as accepting Medicaid and Badgercare patients: Calumet County, 1 of 11 dentists; Outagamie County, 35 of 131 dentists; Winnebago County, 12 of 93 dentists. In the three counties, 22 dentists had language translation available.
- In a focus group of young adults held at Fox Valley Technical College, the majority of participants agreed that lack of dental insurance and the high cost of procedures were some of the most important concerns that they faced. Most participants did not have dental insurance.

Progress and Concerns

The number of dentists per capita in Northeast Wisconsin grew slightly between 2001-2003. The impact of untreated dental needs on overall health receives growing recognition leading to expanded efforts to meet dental needs.

The new Tri-County Community Dental Clinic has addressed a critical need in the Fox Cities. The clinic, which collaborates with area higher education programs and the Fox Cities Community Health Center, is touted as a major success in the area by many.

Yet experts say that accessing non-emergency dental services continues to be a struggle. Younger adults with lower-paying jobs we spoke with were not seeking preventive dental care due to prohibitive cost.

Figure 1

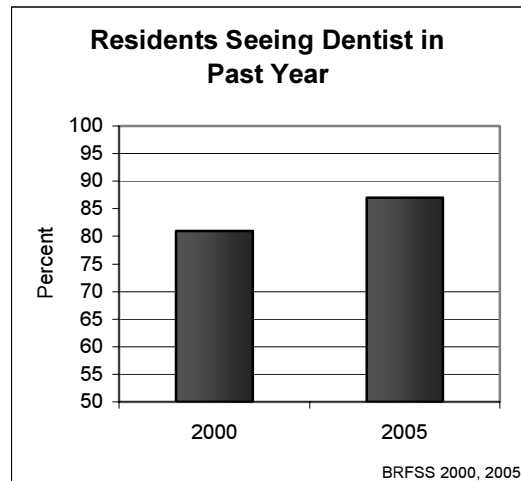


Figure 2

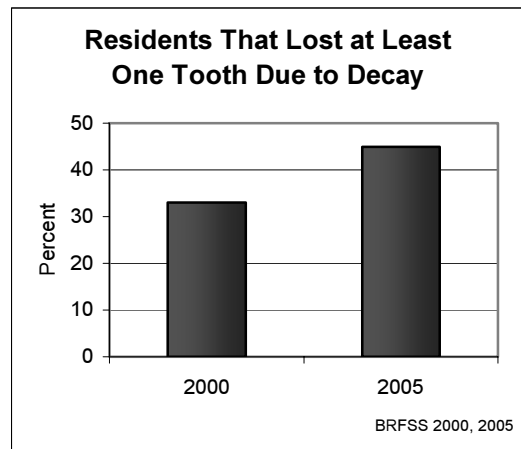


Figure 3

Tri County Community Dental Clinic, 2005	
Patients Treated	2,987
Patient Visits	5,728
% Medicaid	60
% Low income	40
% Children	28
% Calumet County	4
% Outagamie County	51
% Winnebago County	44

16% of citizens reported they sometimes or often had trouble getting dental care.

Access to Medical Care

Figure 1

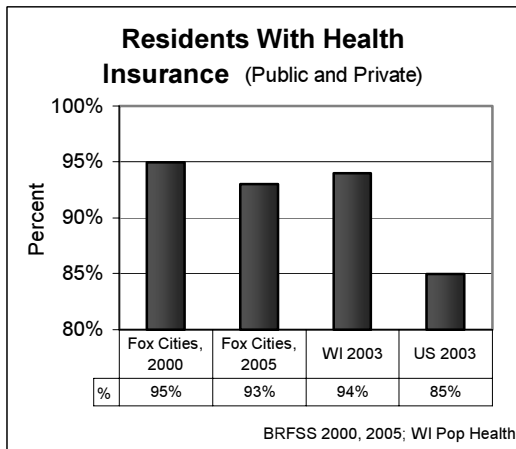


Figure 2

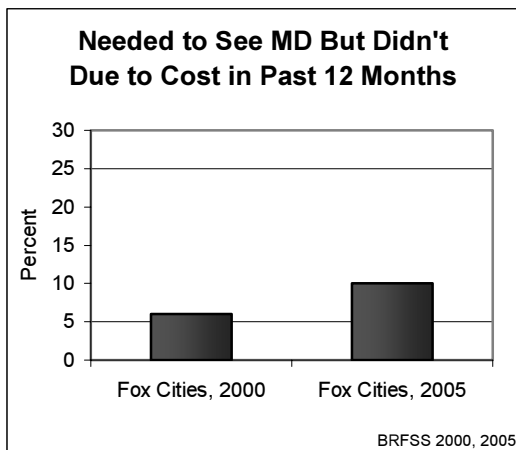
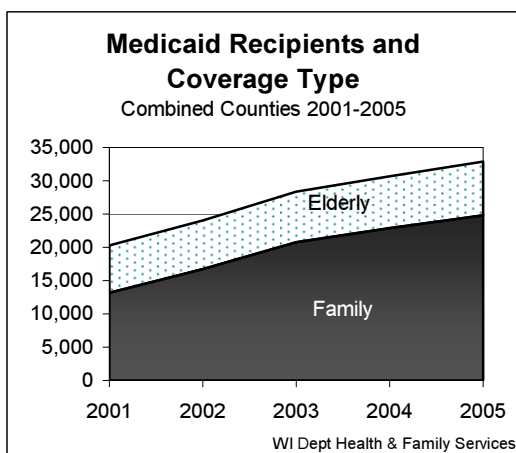


Figure 3



Data Highlights

- Figure 1** Insurance coverage in the Fox Cities area (93%) in 2004 surpasses national and state rates. The Fox Cities Community Health Center (described below) reports that the majority of persons it serves are employed with high deductibles or no health insurance. 18% of residents rated the Fox Cities below average at providing jobs with health care benefits (LIFE Citizen Survey, 2005).
- Figure 2** The number of residents who reported that they needed to see a physician but did not because they couldn't afford the cost increased from 6% in 2000 to 10% in 2005.
- Figure 3** The number of persons receiving Medicaid grew by 61% between 2001-2005 for the three counties combined. The Family Coverage portion (which includes Badgercare) has grown 88%.
- For those insured by Medicaid, obtaining outpatient behavioral health services has become difficult due to very poor reimbursement rates. For certain procedures, providers serving Medicaid patients earn less than \$.50 on the dollar and tend to lose money when working with clients insured by Medicaid. On top of these reimbursement disincentives, the shortage of psychiatrists (locally as well as nationally) makes obtaining psychiatric services for non-emergency situations even more difficult.

Progress and Concerns

A greater proportion of residents in the Fox Cities area are insured and have seen a doctor recently, compared to state and US rates. The Fox Cities Community Health Center was awarded a three-year federal grant (\$650,000 annually) and, in 2005, opened a \$1.2 million facilities expansion, transitioning from a free-clinic to a community health center. Offering access to medical, dental, and mental health services for persons with low incomes, the move will allow the Center to double its capacity and strengthen its services.

Within several focus groups, participants listed climbing health care costs as a challenge even for those with health care benefits, who are increasingly challenged by growing out-of-pocket costs. Public costs of the Medicaid system for low income persons continue to grow in Wisconsin, challenging state budgets locally and across the nation.

74% of residents had a routine checkup within the past year in 2005, up from 68% in 2000 (no state or US data obtainable).

Health Status

Data Highlights

For information on lifestyle diseases see Risk Behaviors, Adults (A Healthy LIFE).

- **Figure 1** 59% of residents in the Fox Cities area reported their overall health was either very good or excellent, higher than the US rate of 55% but down from 64% in 2000.
- **Figure 2** For most major diseases, Fox Cities area mortality rates fall at or below state and national rates. For the past five years, trends show declining mortality for heart disease and stroke but fairly constant rates for cancer and respiratory disease.
- **Figure 3** In 2000, the leading cause of death in the Fox Cities area was heart disease and in 2004 it was cancer. These two diseases are by far the leading causes of death but rates have declined over the past four years. Other diseases listed in the top ten have experienced slight increases in mortality rates during that time.
- About 8% of the adult population in the Fox Cities has a disability (12% US); 37% of Fox Cities residents over age 65 have a disability (40% US) (US Census ACS, 2004).
- All three counties rank favorably in statewide comparisons of health outcomes: Outagamie County is the sixth healthiest of Wisconsin's 72 counties; Winnebago is 14th, Calumet is 22nd (2005 County Health Rankings, UW Population Health Institute).

Figure 1

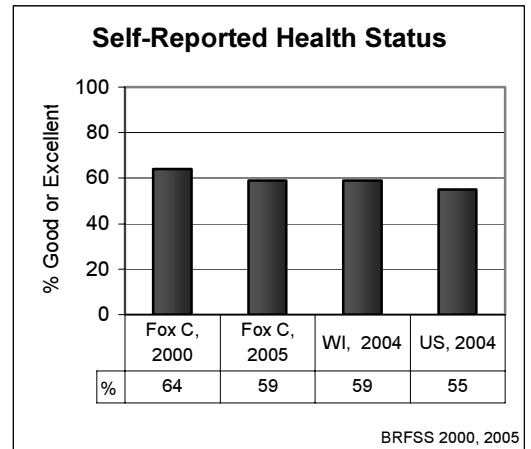
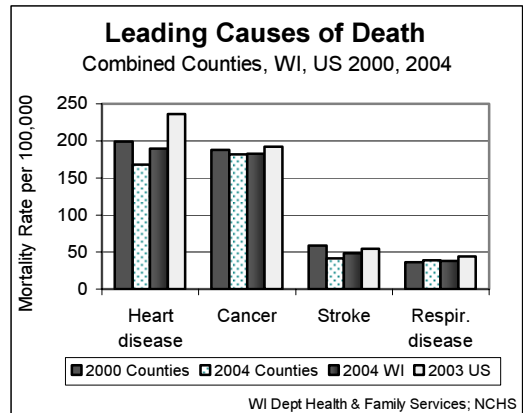


Figure 2



Progress and Concerns

While deaths due to most major chronic diseases are heading in the right direction, other diseases have inched higher. For example, deaths due to Alzheimer's disease and Diabetes have risen in since 2000.

Health experts in our focus group expressed concern about the interaction between mental illness and poor health outcomes or inefficient use of urgent health care services.

These same experts urged greater preparation to meet the growing needs of elderly persons living in the area. In particular, the pipeline of health professionals can be strengthened, especially for Geriatricians and Nurse Practitioners. Prevention services must be emphasized, including implementing a case-management model and engaging the elderly in healthy activities designed to improve mental and physical health.

Figure 3

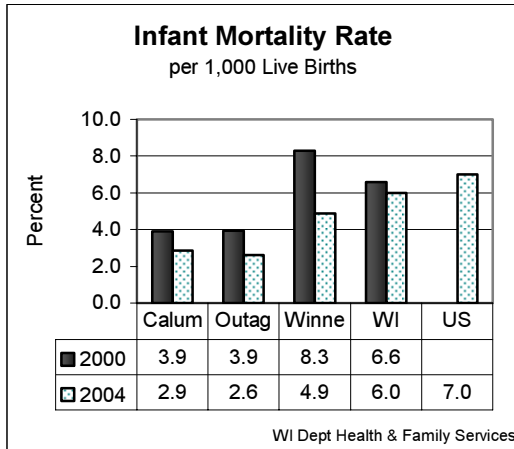
2000 Rate	Cause of death	2004 Rate
188	Cancer	182
199	Heart disease	168
58	Stroke	41
37	Respiratory disease	39
34	Accidents	38
23	Alzheimer's disease	28
23	Diabetes	27
18	Influenza	17
11	Kidney disease	16
11	Suicide	11

WI Dept Health & Family Services; NCHS

In 2005, 63% of residents had no days of illness in the past 30 days, an improvement compared to 58% in 2000.

Healthy Start for Infants and Children

Figure 1



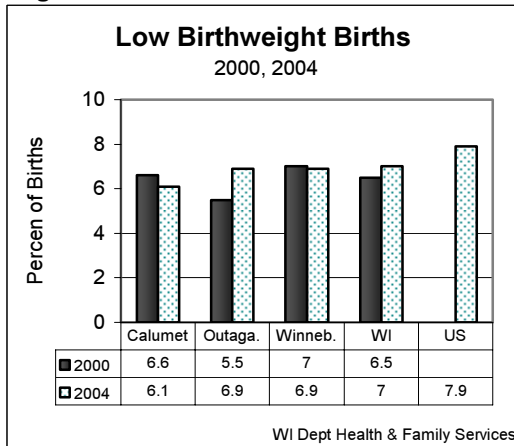
Data Highlights

Information on births to teens can be found in Risk Behavior, Youth (A Healthy LIFE).

- **Figure 1** The infant mortality rates in the 3 counties (2.6 to 4.9 infant deaths per 1000 births) falls below rates in Wisconsin (6.0) and the US (7.0) and has improved between 2000 and 2004 when it ranged from 3.9 to 8.3 (WI DHFS).
- **Figure 2** In 2004, the percentage of babies born with low birth weights ranged from 6.1% in Calumet County to 6.9% in Winnebago and Outagamie Counties, compared to the Wisconsin rate of 7.0% and the US rate of 7.9% (2003). According to the WI Department of Health and Family Services (2004), higher percentages of low-birth weight infants were born to mothers that:

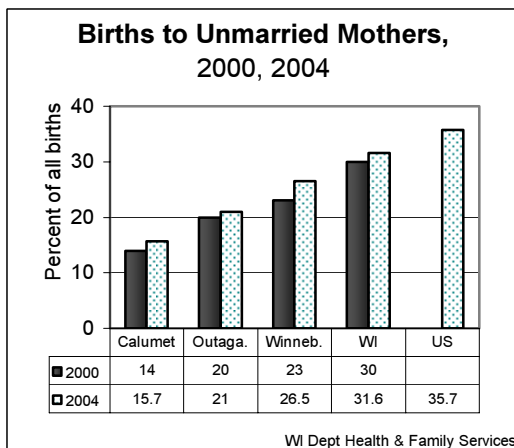
- Were unmarried
- Had less than a high school education
- Got no prenatal care
- Were age 15 or under (see Risk Behavior, Youth)
- Smoked during pregnancy

Figure 2



- **Figure 3** Births to unmarried mothers is growing. While area counties experience lower rates than statewide and nationally, one in four births in Winnebago County was to a single mother (2004).
- In 2004 the percent of births where the mother received no prenatal care was less than 1/10 of one percent in all three counties of the Fox Cities and between 85-89% of mothers obtained prenatal care in their first trimester of pregnancy.
- The percent of births to mothers with no high school degree was lower in the Fox Cities area than in Wisconsin (ranging between 9-11% of births compared to 16%, WI).

Figure 3



Progress and Concerns

Teen births are down and almost all mothers in the Fox Cities area have received prenatal care. As a result the area experiences a much lower infant mortality rate than Wisconsin and the United States overall. When it comes to low birth weight, the area matches the state of Wisconsin and falls only slightly below the US average. Outagamie County's rate has increased.

While the number of births to single mothers falls short of Wisconsin and the US percentages, these birth rates inch higher. The poverty rate for single mothers with children age 5 and under in the Fox Cities metro area was 41% in 2004 (US Census ACS 2004).

Fox Cities area infant mortality rates are significantly below the US average.

Mental Health

Data Highlights

- **Figure 1** About 3 in 5 residents had not felt stressed or depressed at all in the past month in 2005. This was a slight decline from 2000 with 63%.
- **Figure 2** Outagamie County provides a 24 hour crisis telephone hotline with coverage for Calumet County. Total calls to the hotline in 2005 declined after what had been a four-year increase. 53% of callers' problems related to emotional distress, mental illness, depression, or suicide.
- **Figure 3** The number of patients seen in the Theda Clark Hospital Emergency Room with a *primary* diagnosis of mental illness or substance abuse rose to 108 visits a month in the last half of 2005, or six percent of emergency room visits.
- 51% of adults surveyed said they were "very satisfied" with their lives (BRFSS, 2005).
- 53% of Leaders rated the Fox Cities area good or excellent at helping people maintain good mental health (LIFE Leader Survey 2005).
- Suicide was the 10th ranked cause of death in 2004 with 42 events that year in the 3 county area (this rate matches the rate in 2000).

Progress and Concerns

Rates of self-reported depression have remained level, and about 3 in 5 local residents had not experienced a day of depressed mood in the past month. About half of residents reported being "Very satisfied" with their lives. Suicide, although the 10th leading cause of death in the area, remained at the same rate since the previous LIFE study in 2000.

The impact of untreated mental illness became one of the strongest focus group themes to emerge. According to experts we interviewed, the shortage of psychiatrists is critical. Access to mental health and substance abuse treatment is a challenge, with a purported wait of 3 months for a first psychiatric appointment for those having public or no insurance.

Besides the discomfort of the person living with untreated mental illness, the ripple effect of untreated mental illness creates greater burdens for the health, justice, safety and human service systems in the area. This is a national problem.

Figure 1

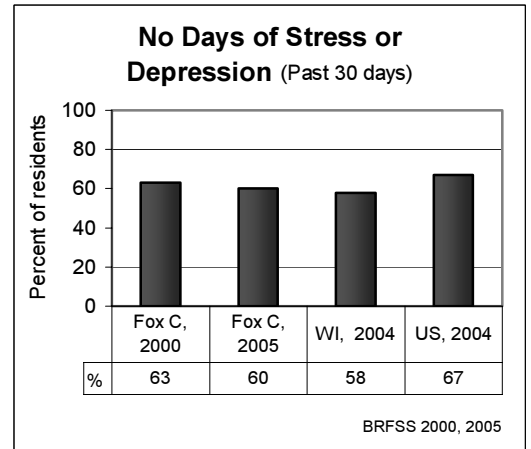


Figure 2

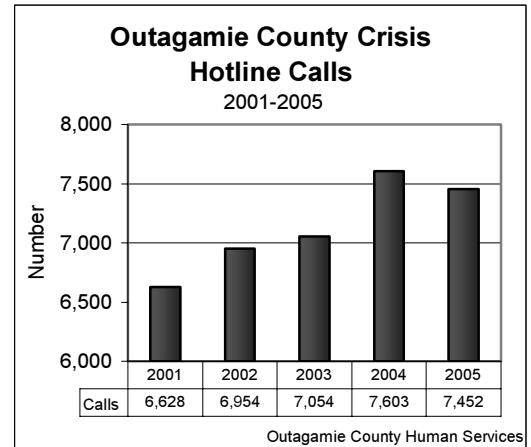
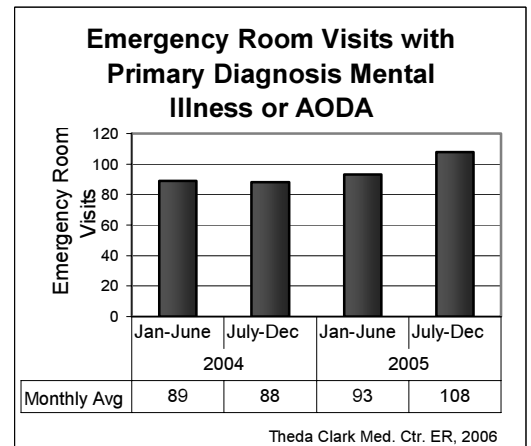


Figure 3



In 2005, 15% of Citizens reported being unable to obtain mental health services they needed at some time.

Prevention Efforts

Figure 1

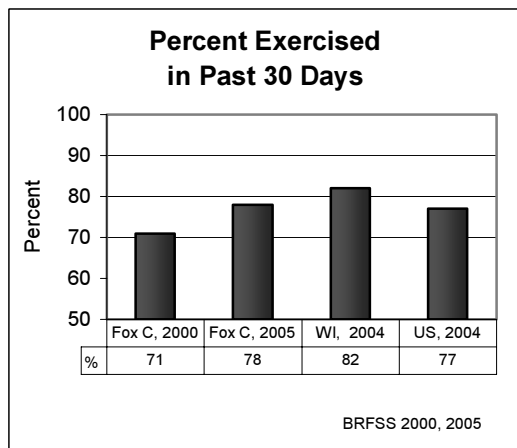


Figure 2

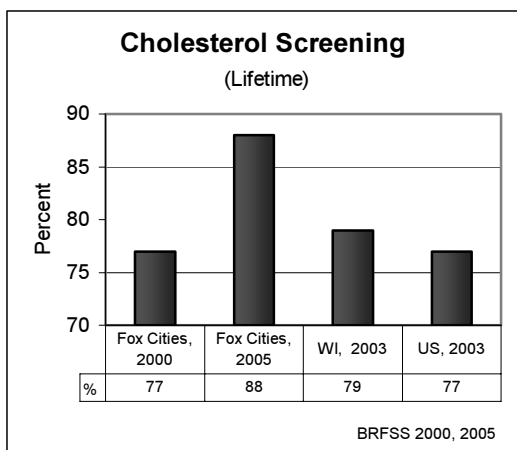


Figure 3



Data Highlights

- Figure 1** The percent of Fox Cities residents who reported being physically active in the past 30 days rose from 71% in 2000 to 78% in 2005 according to the BRFSS survey. This nearly matches the US rate but falls short of Wisconsin residents on average (82%). (Note that the 2005 Wisconsin Population Health Institute County Health Rankings reported that between 44% and 55% of area residents were physically *inactive*.)
- Figure 2** The number of Fox Cities residents screened for high cholesterol jumped between 2000 and 2005, from 77% to 88% of those surveyed, far exceeding state and national screening rates.
- Figure 3** Leaders were asked a series of questions about prevention-related efforts in the Fox Cities. On average, leaders rated the area just above “fair” on efforts to promote good mental health, collaboration to address health needs, preparation for the health needs of the elderly, and promoting healthy lifestyles.
- Women’s health:** 90% of women had had a breast exam at least one time in their lives; of those, 80% had within the past year. (In 2000, 93% have ever had and 72% in past year). The rate of ever having had a PAP test remained constant at 95% between 2000-2005. In contrast, over that same time, the percent of women tested within the past year dropped from 71% in 2000 to 63% in 2005 (BRFSS 2000, 2005).
- Children’s health:** The childhood immunization rate reached 99+% in all three counties in 2003. In 2004 Calumet County ranked first among 72 counties in Wisconsin with zero children testing positive for lead poisoning compared to 1% in Outagamie and 3.4% in Winnebago (ranking 64th).

Progress and Concerns

The local area can brag about very high rates of exams and screenings for chronic diseases. Death rates due to cancer and heart disease have declined in the Fox Cities area (see “Health Status”). Just how much exercise local residents get is unclear. Several local initiatives to reduce obesity and improve positive health habits have begun in the past year, including within local school districts.

Despite the decline in death rates seen recently, the prevalence of lifestyle-related chronic diseases has increased over the five year survey period and now exceeds Wisconsin and US rates. Leaders in the area strongly stressed the need for greater emphasis on prevention.

In 2005, 87% of those surveyed had had a routine checkup within the past two years (up from 84% in 2000).

Quality of Medical Care

Data Highlights

- **Figure 1** Citizens and Leaders surveyed for the LIFE Study in 2005 were highly positive about the Fox Cities meeting the health needs of residents: 76% and 85% respectively gave the area “good” or “excellent” scores. (No comparison data are available.)
- **Figure 2** Wisconsin’s health care workforce per capita matches or exceeds US levels for most health professions with the exception of nurse practitioners. Wisconsin ranks 16th among states in per capita health services employment and matches the national average in hospital beds per 100,000. Bellin College of Nursing in Green Bay reports graduating 20 Masters degree nurses in 2004 and another 28 in 2005.
- In 2005, sixty-six percent of citizens rated the overall quality of health services in the Fox Cities good or excellent, a number that was unchanged since 2000.
- Among the health care experts we assembled for our focus group, the consensus was that, for the size of the community, the resources and quality of health care services in the Fox Cities area was outstanding. The health systems, technology and services that are offered locally resemble the care you might find at an academic center. Cooperation between health departments, health systems, and public health occurs regularly.
- The Wisconsin Collaborative on Healthcare Quality launched a website in 2005 (www.wchq.org) that allows the public to see quality and cost performance by Fox Valley hospitals, medical groups, and health plans for a given procedure or diagnosis.

Figure 1

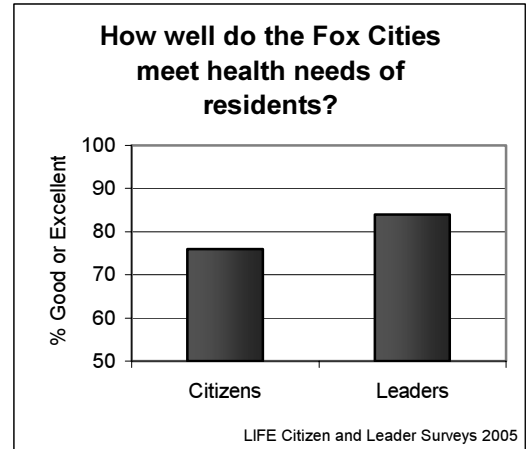


Figure 2

Wisconsin Health Care Workforce per 100,000		
	WI	US
Physicians	189	198
Primary Care MDs	71	69
New MD grads	6.8	6.4
Psychiatrists	10	
Physician Asst	20	14
Nurses	891	780
Nurse Practitioners	19	34

US Health & Human Services Bureau of Health Professions, 2000

Progress and Concerns

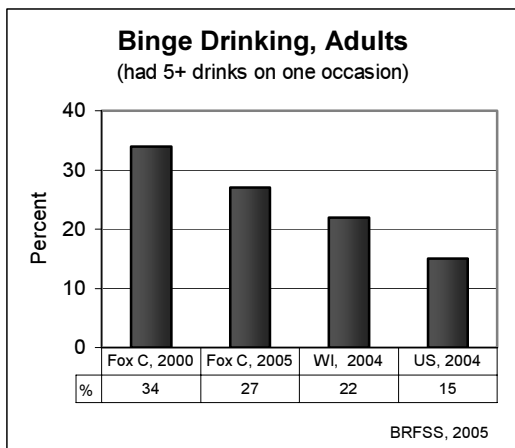
Participants in the citizen focus group and survey stated that the breadth of high quality treatment and provider options was outstanding locally (for those with health insurance coverage). The commitment by community leaders to address gaps and unmet health care needs is outstanding, according to health care experts that we interviewed. There is increasing access to information on performance and costs of local hospitals, insurance plans, and physician groups.

A shortage of psychiatrists was discussed by numerous experts we interviewed. This shortage causes a challenge for those with brain diseases to obtain the necessary prescriptions and follow up that they need to maintain health. This includes treatment for persons with Alzheimer’s disease, a growing concern.

66% of residents rated the quality of health care “Good” or “Excellent” in the Fox Cities area.

Risk Behavior, Adults

Figure 1



Data Highlights

- **Figure 1** The percent of adults who, in the past 30 days, had consumed five or more drinks on one occasion dropped from 34% in 2000 to 27% in 2005 in the Fox Cities area yet still exceeds national and state averages.
- **Figure 2** Respondents to the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (in both 2000 and 2005) indicated whether they had ever been diagnosed with diabetes, hypertension, and high cholesterol. All three diseases showed an increase over the five year period between surveys. Local rates now exceed state and national rates of these lifestyle-related diseases.
- **Figure 3** The percent of Fox Cities residents who do not smoke (62%) increased by 5% since 2000 yet is lower than WI and US averages of 78% and 79% respectively.
- Fox Cities area residents' rates of being overweight or obese are similar to WI and US averages: in 2005, 23% of those surveyed were obese and 38% were overweight (using the Body Mass Index calculation). Of those age 50+, about 70% were obese or overweight in 2005.
- In 2003, according to the National Survey of Drug Use and Health (US Government), about 339 per 100,000 Wisconsin residents had used an illicit drug in the past 30 days, ranking in the bottom third of states. This amounted to about 1,200 residents of the local three county area.
- According to experts we interviewed, people insured by publicly funded programs have limited access to treatment for substance abuse due to very poor reimbursement rates. 37% of residents felt that the Fox Cities is good or excellent at addressing alcohol and substance abuse.

Figure 2

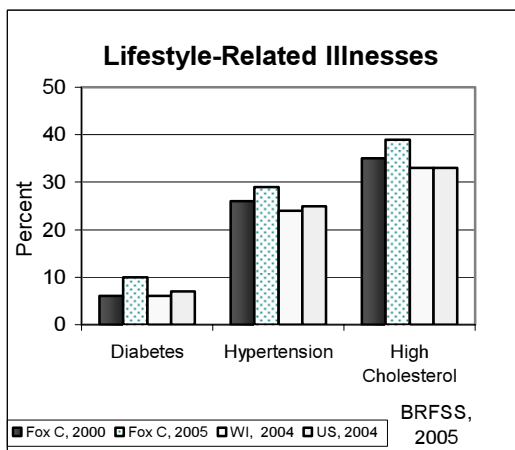
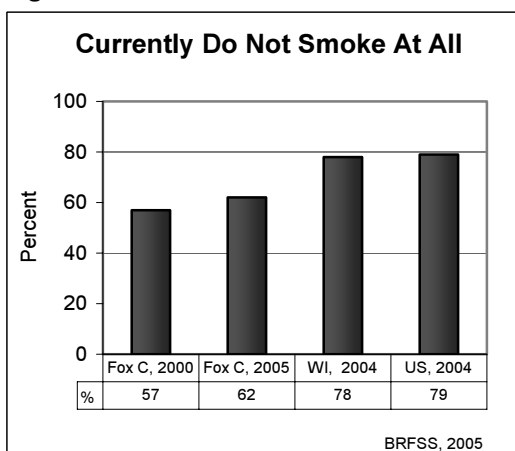


Figure 3



Progress and Concerns

The amount of binge drinking and smoking has declined locally, although they still occur at higher than state and national rates. The City of Appleton passed a smoking ban for public places that was upheld in a recent referendum. Young adults in both focus groups highlighted the smoking ban as a positive aspect of living in this area. There are more biking and walking trails available throughout the area.

On the flip side, lifestyle related diseases continue to grow locally and exceed national averages as they trigger the leading causes of death in the area. According to the key findings of the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, the Fox Cities area has an opportunity to address these lifestyle concerns and significantly impact its disease rates.

85% of citizens reported that there was a no smoking policy at their workplace, up slightly from 83% in 2000.

Risk Behavior, Youth

Data Highlights

More information on youth appears in "A SAFE LIFE" and "LIFE at HOME."

- Figure 1** The percent of youth not working or in school (6.6%) is lower than the US average (7.6%) but has grown locally while national rates have declined (US Census).
- Figure 2** This chart shows the percent of 10th grade youth that engaged in the risk behavior in the past month. Fox Cities 10th graders paralleled Wisconsin 10th graders. Alcohol use was the most common risk behavior, with 43% of youth having had alcohol in the past month and 29% bingeing on alcohol (5 drinks in a row). Comparable data from previous years of this survey were not available.
- Figure 3** In the Fox Cities area counties the birth rates for teens (15-19 years) are lower than the national and state averages and have declined since 2000 (2005 Wisconsin County Health Rankings). According to the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 22% of 10th graders in the Fox Cities area had ever had sexual intercourse compared to 32% in Wisconsin overall.
- About one in four Fox Cities 10th graders experienced depression in the past year, and 14% had attempted suicide in the past year. One in three ate breakfast every day and one in five exercised every day for 20 minutes or more (Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2004, 2005, 2006). The prevalence rate for obesity among youth ages 12-19 in the three county area averaged 18-19% over the past 10 years (Weiss, Strasburger, "Education for Healthy Kids").
- Drug arrest rates in the Fox Cities area are below the state of Wisconsin overall and have either remained steady or declined recently. In Calumet County, one youth per 1,000 was arrested for drug charges in 2003 compared to 3 in both Outagamie and Winnebago Counties, 4 in Wisconsin.

Progress and Concerns

We spoke with several small groups of middle and high school youth and with young adults at Fox Valley Technical College. These young people had generally favorable views of the area, including safety, shopping, transportation, and extracurricular opportunities offered through middle and high schools.

Young adults strongly felt that young people between 16 and 21 had few alternatives for constructive free-time options unless the youth was in sports or other recreation/arts programs. They suggested that many youth frequent the mall or coffee shops and just drive around. According to them, several well-liked social gathering places for youth had recently closed with profitability concerns. Once a young person reaches 21 years old, they stated, his opportunities would expand.

Figure 1

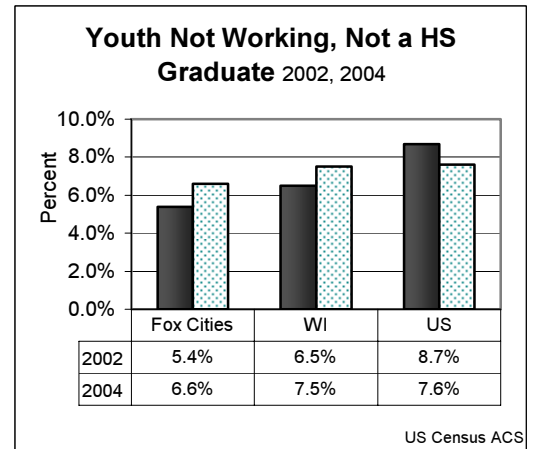


Figure 2

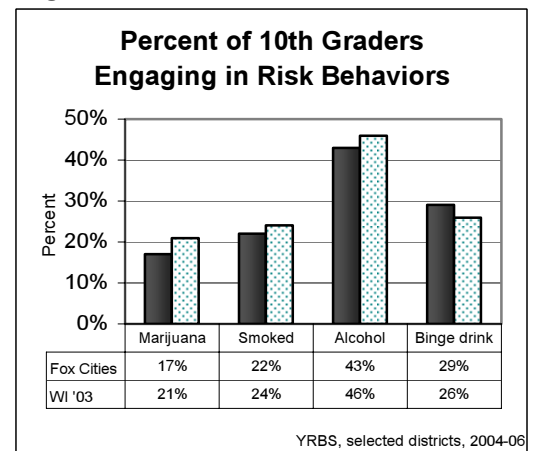
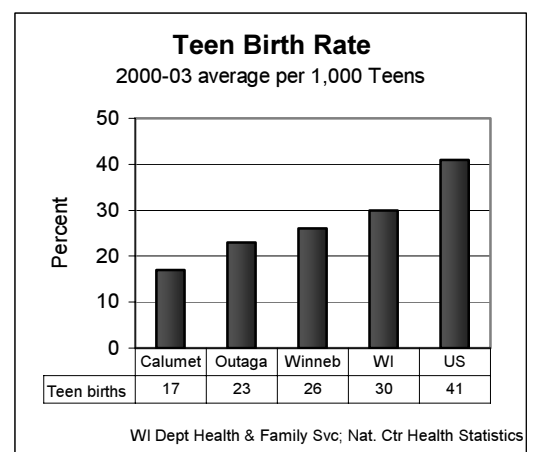


Figure 3



Teen birth rates, declining across the US, varied between 17 and 26 births per 1,000 in the Fox Cities area versus 41 nationally.



LIFE at Home

“Excellence” for the Fox Cities is defined as:

Community leaders and residents understand and address the needs of people that are vulnerable due to their age or handicapping conditions (children, youth, people who are older or have disabilities). These members of the community, as appropriate, have the opportunity to:

- Be safe from abuse and neglect
- Be involved in the community through leisure activities, employment, and education
- Receive needed supportive care
- Utilize affordable and quality child care
- Have access to affordable transportation

LIFE at Home

Care for Children	Percent of families with all adults working Children receiving subsidized child care per 1,000 Children receiving state-licensed child care per 1,000 Child care capacity, costs, quality, and staff wages in the area Perceptions of the availability of quality affordable child care
Disability and Support	Percent of adult and child population with disabilities Use of selected nonprofit organization support services Use of paratransit transportation services Calls to information and assistance telephone services Perceptions of Fox Cities quality of life
Elderly Persons and Support	Trends in aging population Community Options Program use and wait list Number of elderly persons living alone and number in poverty Perceptions of Fox Cities as a place to retire Preparedness for needs of elderly, caring for family member
Family Supportiveness	Percent of families with two parents Child poverty rate Percent of births to mother with less than high school education Children in the Kinship Care program per 1,000 Perceptions of Fox Cities as a place for children and families
Positive Youth Development	Youth not working and not in school Summary of recent youth survey findings Youth focus group results

For more information on children, families, elderly people, and people with disabilities:

Child Care Resource & Referral, Inc., <http://www.getconnectedforkids.org>
Wisconsin Child Care Research Partnership, <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/flp/wccrp/>
Annie E. Casey Foundation WISKIDS COUNT, <http://www.wccf.org/publications/index.html#kids>
Community Options Program, WI Dept of Health and Family Services, http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/LTC_COP/cop.htm
United States Census, American Community Survey (ACS), <http://www.census.gov/acs/www/index.html>
Public Transportation in Fox Cities area, <http://www.appleton.org/departments/transit/>

Selected additional information for each section of the 2006 LIFE Report can be found in Appendices at our website: <http://www.foxcitieslifestudy.org>

Care for Children

Data Highlights

- In 2005, the three county area had approximately 50,000 children age 9 years and under (WI Dept of Admin, 2004).
- **Figure 1** In the Fox Cities, 71% of families with children under age 6 had all adults in the workforce in 2004, a decline from 77% in 2002 but still higher than the state or US averages. Wisconsin was ranked 10th highest in the US.
- **Figure 2** In 2003, the number of children (ages 0 to 7) receiving subsidized child care ranged from 66 to 126 per 1,000 children in the three Fox Cities counties, nearly 50% more children than in 2000.
- **Figure 3** The number of children per 1,000 receiving state licensed child care grew by about 18% in the three counties combined.
- In 2006, average weekly costs in the three counties were \$171 for infant care (in a group facility) and \$139 for a 3-4 year old. Costs had risen approximately 30% since 2001 (CCR&R Appleton and CCR&R Oshkosh, 2006).
- In the Fox Cities about 1 in 4 group child care teachers had a 2 or 4-year degree; hourly wages for these teachers averaged \$9.85 an hour. 67% received health insurance benefits through their employers and 33% received dental insurance (CCR & R Appleton, 2006).

Progress and Concerns

The rate of young children in licensed child care has grown over the past four years. Child Care Resource & Referral, Inc. in Appleton successfully pilot tested “Room To Grow,” a national evidence-based program to improve the quality of child care centers. Other research has demonstrated a direct link between improved education of child care staff and long term beneficial child outcomes.

The number of families receiving the child care subsidy has jumped, in part due to policy changes to Wisconsin’s welfare system (W-2). Participants in working parent, education, and service provider focus groups agreed that the high cost and limited availability of high quality child care services were a local challenge. Several focus group participants noted that part time child care is especially difficult to locate.

Figure 1

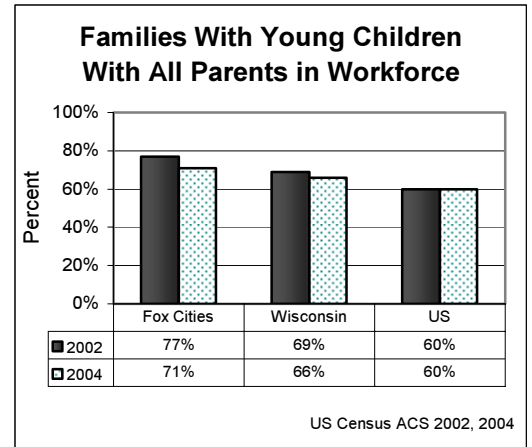


Figure 2

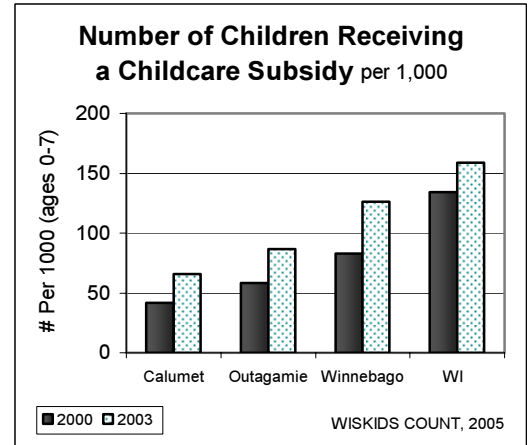
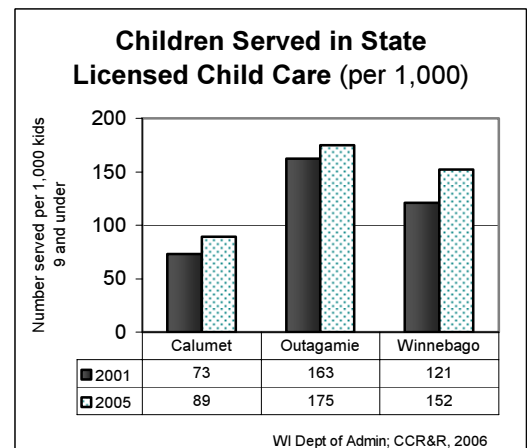


Figure 3



29% of residents with children said that the Fox Cities area was below average in the availability of affordable, quality child care.

Disability and Support

Figure 1

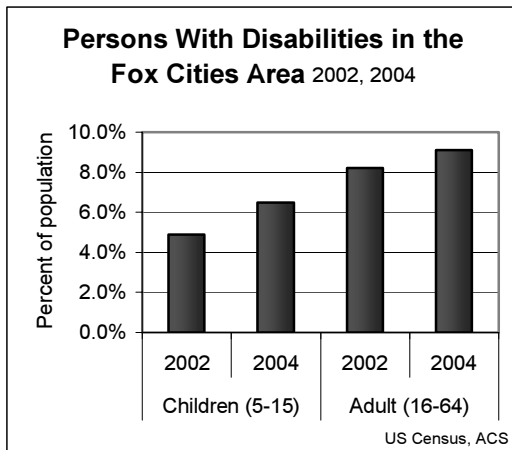


Figure 2

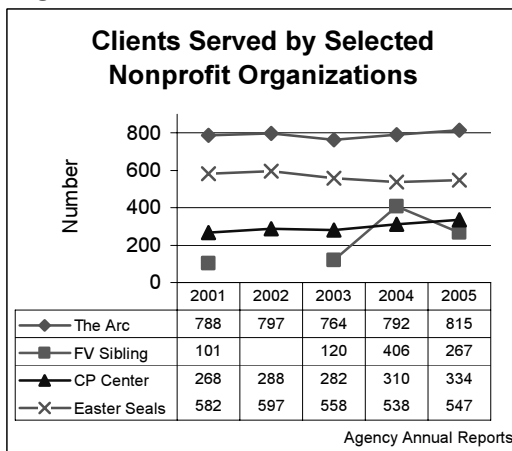
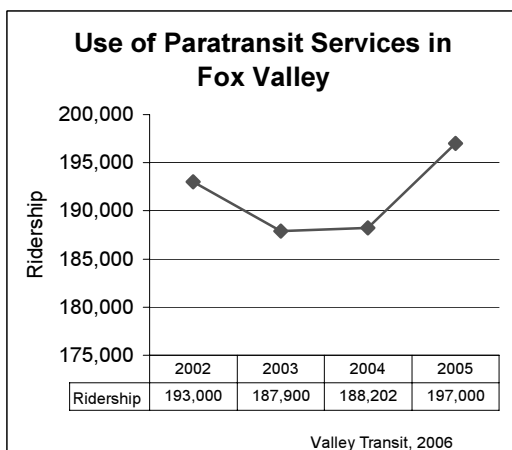


Figure 3



Data Highlights

Next page: information on related issues of the elderly.

- Figure 1** In the Fox Cities area in 2004, 6.1% of children and 9.1% of adults had some type of disability, up from 4.9% and 8.2% in 2002, respectively (in the US, rates were 6.3% for children and 11.6% for adults) (US Census ACS).
- Figure 2** The number of clients served by selected area organizations that support people with disabilities and their families has remained fairly steady over the past five years.
- Figure 3** Use of paratransit services in the Fox Cities (public transportation specialized for persons with disabilities) increased 5% between 2004-2005. Nonprofit human service providers report that many of their disabled clients need greater assistance than is currently available and the costs of special transportation are increasingly prohibitive.
- Despite cutbacks or flat funding for human services, Outagamie County experienced growing demand for its Family Support Program (serving disabled children) and case management for adults with developmental disabilities. The latter had a waiting list of 31 at year end, 2005.
- In all three counties, calls to information and assistance telephone services by people with disabilities or their families have steadily increased. Every year since 2002 the top issues of callers included transportation, housing, and legal assistance needs (County Human Service Departments).

Progress and Concerns

Many participants in our focus groups commented on the strength of area nonprofit and county human service providers. "Celebrating Abilities," a grassroots group of service providers, began in 2003 to hold an annual, week-long event to raise public awareness of the contributions by persons with disabilities. Valley Transit brought 16 new busses into service in 2004 with modernized accessibility features. Leisure program managers described expanded recreational and cultural opportunities for handicapped individuals.

However, provision of support services in the area has not kept pace with growth in the number of persons with disabilities living in the area. As needs continue to increase, budgets of service providers remain flat or decrease. Local experts express an urgent need for supportive and accessible housing for persons with disabilities (including the elderly), for help obtaining expensive medical equipment typically not covered by insurance, for expansion of respite care and for affordable transportation specialized for persons with disabilities.

65% of citizens and 72% of leaders believed that the Fox Cities area is a good or excellent place for persons who have a disability.

Elderly Persons and Support

Data Highlights

Previous page: related information on persons with disabilities.

- Figure 1** All three Fox Cities area counties have lower proportions of elderly residents than the State of Wisconsin. Between 2005 and 2025, the population over age 65 will rise from about 10-11% of the population to 15-18%. By 2025, the 3 counties will have a combined total of over 73,000 residents age 65+, including 8,300 over 85.
- Figure 2** The Community Options Program, a state-funded in-home care program for persons with disabilities, has received national attention as an innovative program that supports older or disabled persons. Current local demand for the program outstrips funding: people on waiting lists must wait several years to receive services.
- Figure 3** In 2005, 68% of citizens surveyed believed that the Fox Cities rates above average as a place to retire compared to 62% in 2000. 72% of leaders agreed.
- In 2004, 9.2% of Fox Cities households were single people aged 65+ (similar to the US rate of 9.1%). 6.7% of seniors lived in poverty (9.4% US). Locally, 37% of persons age 65+ had a disability (US Census, ACS).
- In 2004, Alzheimer's disease was the 7th leading cause of death in the three county area, contributing to 109 deaths compared to 82 in 2000 (WI DHFS). Mental health providers report growing demands for services to support families where an older member has dementia.
- 53% of leaders believed the area is doing a good or excellent job of preparing for the health needs of the increasing elderly population. Experts in the health focus group stressed the anticipated shortfall of health professionals (especially Geriatricians) to care for the elderly (see also A Healthy LIFE: Quality of Care).

Progress and Concerns

Nonprofit agencies and human services departments in Outagamie, Calumet, and Waupaca Counties are collaborating to develop an Aging & Disability Resource Center with access in each county. They will share some staff and programs, technology, and the 2-1-1 telephone service to offer the public a single point of entry for information and assistance on issues affecting older adults, people with disabilities, and their families.

Data we collected are confirmed by experts with whom we spoke: there is a crucial need for housing that is accessible and equipped for persons with disabilities. Increasingly, these are seniors who remain relatively independent yet need accommodations. Affordable transportation is also a need.

Figure 1

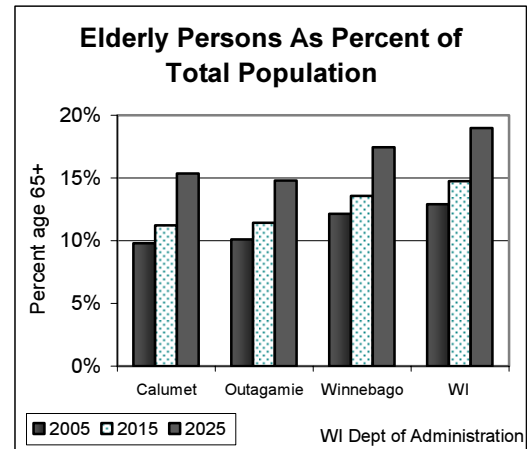


Figure 2

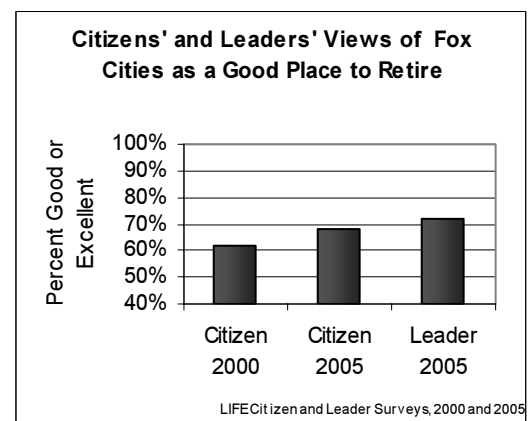
Figure 2

Community Options Programs (COP)*, 2004

	Recipients	Waiting List
Outagamie	479	316
Winnebago	794	268
Calumet	102	n/a

*includes COP and COP Waiver; Calumet County does not keep waiting list

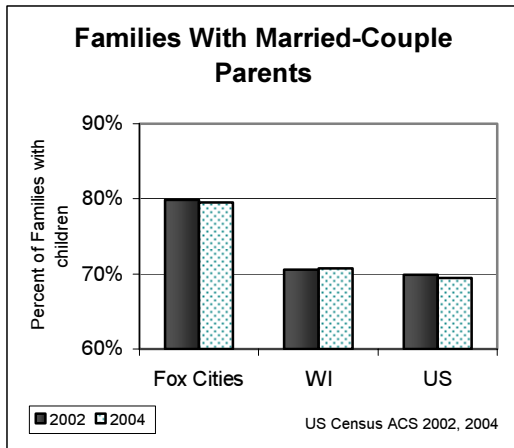
Figure 3



78% of leaders said the area is good or excellent at ensuring that older persons have opportunities to be involved in the community.

Family Supportiveness

Figure 1



Data Highlights

- Figure 1** The Fox Cities area has a much higher rate of children living in two parent households than in Wisconsin or the US. At the same time, births to unmarried mothers is growing across the United States and locally. In 2004, the percent of births to single mothers ranged from 15% in Calumet County to 26% in Winnebago County (US, 36%). (See a Healthy LIFE: Healthy Start for Infants).
- Figure 2** The poverty rate for children in the Fox Cities area was almost half that in Wisconsin and far less compared to the US rate. The local rate declined between 2002 and 2004. In 2004, 4.6% of children under 5 in the Fox Cities were below the poverty line compared to 21% in the US.
- Figure 3** Locally about 1 in 10 births is to a mother with no high school degree (a marker of future economic challenge). This rate has declined statewide and in Winnebago County.
- In Wisconsin (2003), 9 out of 1,000 children were cared for by a relative (often a grandparent) through the Kinship Care program (a statewide program providing financial support). In Calumet County, this number was 1.1, Outagamie County, 1.8, and Winnebago County 5.9. In these local counties, the rate of participation had doubled since 2000 (WISKIDS COUNT 2005).

Figure 2

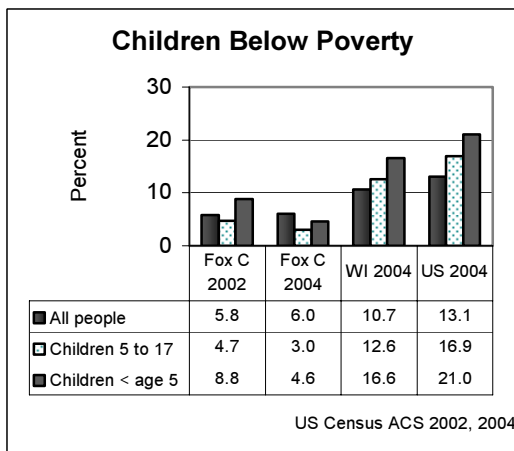
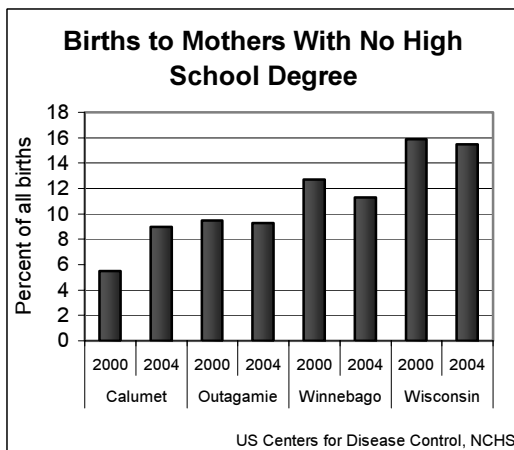


Figure 3



Progress and Concerns

The Fox Cities area gets strong positive reviews as a place that supports children and families. Safe neighborhoods, human services, arts and recreation opportunities, the economy, and other features create a positive climate for children and their parents. In comparison to state and national averages, Fox Cities families are more likely to include two parents, creating economic and household stability.

The poverty rate is far below state and national levels, and the number of children in poverty locally decreased as recently as 2004. However, experts within three of our focus groups stated that since then, they have seen increases in the number of high-need children from families that face many challenges. Their opinions are corroborated by more recent local data on the growing use of income-based public subsidy programs (for example, use of child care subsidies, food stamps, free and reduced lunch program, and energy assistance). These data can be found throughout this report.

89% of citizens rated the Fox Cities good or excellent as a place to raise a family.

Positive Youth Development

Data Highlights

- **Figure 1** The percent of youth not working or in school (6.6%) is lower than the US average (7.6%) but has grown locally while national rates have declined (US Census).
- **Figure 2** We held six small group discussions with middle and high school youth at public and private schools, Harmony Café, Boys and Girls Club, and Youth Go. We also spoke with young adults at Fox Valley Technical College. Common themes are shown here.
- **Figure 3** The presence of Developmental Assets (40 life conditions and personal habits necessary for positive youth development, widely promoted by the Search Institute) have been assessed in the past by school districts in Wisconsin and nationally. In the years since the 2001 LIFE Study, use of this tool has decreased locally (largely due to costs). Three local school districts assessed youth in grades 7, 8, and 9. The Developmental Assets these youth reported most frequently are summarized here.

Figure 3
Most Frequent/Infrequent Developmental Assets Found Among 7-9th Graders in Three Fox Cities Districts

Present	Lacking
Family support	Family communication
Boundaries for behavior	Caring school climate
*Positive peer influence	Useful roles in community
Youth programs	*Creative activities
Religious community	Reading for pleasure
Achievement motivation	Planning and decision making
Bonding to school	
Honesty, integrity	
Responsibility, restraint	* top ranked /lowest ranked asset

Progress and Concerns

Local youth seem pleased with their schools, many of the options available to them (including the mall, summer recreation, and community events). Middle school youth, in particular, report being connected to their schools and pleased with opportunities there and within the community.

Several clear opportunities for improvement surfaced in our conversations; many of them relate especially to youth ages 16-21 and to the need for low-pressure, fun, inclusive activities. Participation in creative arts and music was especially low. See Figure 2: Recommendations.

Figure 1

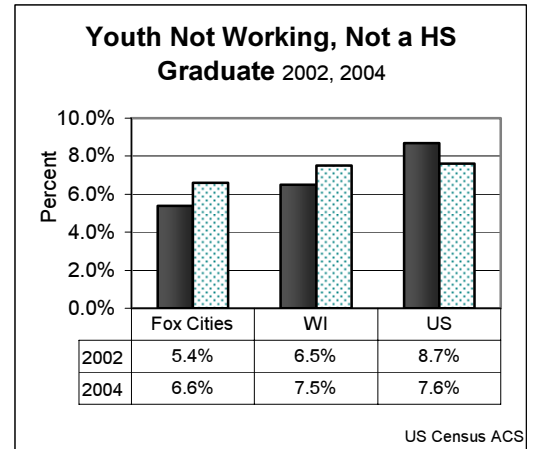


Figure 2

Youth Focus Group Common Themes
Positives
Mall, coffeeshops, festivals, parks, movies
Good schools with opportunities to get involved
Easy to get around, bus service
They feel safe in the Fox Cities
"P.A.R.T.Y. at the PAC"
Negatives
Easy access to drugs, alcohol
Competition, pressure to excel
Segregation in schools, not just racial
Focus on bars and alcohol
Pressure to "be a couple"
Not enough affordable access to arts
Recommendations
More gathering places for youth (like Boys/Girls Club, Brigade, Youth Go), especially for those age 16 to 21
Expanded affordable transportation options
Winter/off-season opportunities
More opportunities outside of school, especially for the "average" youth
Positive adult relationships

58% of citizens rated the Fox Cities area good or excellent at providing opportunities for youth to participate in positive activities.



LIFE of Learning

“Excellence” for the Fox Cities is defined as:

Citizens of all ages continue to learn at all stages of life:

- Youth and children view school positively and develop their skills and unique talents to prepare them for viable careers and a lifetime of learning
- Adults (young and returning) seeking new skills or qualifications can obtain affordable higher education leading to improved career development
- Adults have the opportunity to enroll in personal enrichment programs and other lifelong learning activities that are plentiful, affordable, and satisfying

LIFE of Learning

Adult Learning	Percent of population with high school degrees Citizen and leader perceptions of opportunities in community Utilization of Fox Valley Literacy Coalition services Utilization of Valley Packaging Industries services
Higher Education	Citizen and leader perceptions of higher education opportunities Enrollment at local institutions Average annual costs to attend University of Wisconsin school
K-12 Education Profile	Enrollment in public, private, charter, and home schools Habitual truancy Student teacher ratio Expenditures per pupil
Education for All Students	Eligibility for free or reduced lunch program Head Start enrollment and waiting list Availability of preschool Academic performance of economically disadvantaged students
Perceptions of Education	Citizen perceptions of education system Leader perceptions of education system
Student Success	Student graduation rate Third graders reading at proficient or advanced levels Math, science, and reading test scores, 4th and 10th ACT scores Post graduation plans

For more information on learning and education:

Fox Valley Literacy Coalition, Inc., www.focol.org/literacy/
Valley Packaging Industries, www.vpind.com
Fox Valley Technical College, www.fvtc.org
Lawrence University, www.lawrence.edu
University of Wisconsin—Oshkosh, www.uwosh.edu
University of Wisconsin—Fox Valley, <http://www.uwfoxvalley.uwc.edu>
Demographic and enrollment statistics, public and private K-12 education, <http://dpi.wi.gov/lbstat/pubdata2.html>
Student academic performance, <http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/sig/dm-acadachmt.html>
National information on educational assessment, <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/nde/criteria.asp>
Wisconsin Taxpayer's Alliance, <http://www.wistax.org/facts/2005.xls>

Selected additional information for each section of the 2006 LIFE Report can be found in Appendices at our website: <http://www.foxcitieslifestudy.org>

Adult Learning

Data Highlights

LIFE of Self-Sufficiency, "Support Services" contains information about other learning and skill development programs for adults.

- Figure 1** About 9 out of 10 Fox Cities residents had completed high school in both 2002 and 2004, higher than Wisconsin and the US. In 2004, 23% of Fox Cities residents had completed college (24% Wisconsin, 27% US).
- Figure 2** The Fox Valley Literacy Coalition, Inc. provided education services to 511 persons in 2005, the majority of whom speak English as a second language (ESL). Between January and March, 2006, the Coalition enrolled 54 new students. The agency reports a waiting list of 70 persons, 50 of whom are seeking ESL services; the remainder are seeking Adult Basic Education. Program managers report an increasing demand for literacy services among native English speakers.
- Figure 3** Valley Packaging Industries, Inc. collaborates with the Fox Valley Literacy Coalition to offer the Employment and Literacy program for anyone for whom language is a barrier to employment or inclusion in the community. The program experienced a reduction in staff when funds were not available for a job placement position in 2005, resulting in reduced caseload. The agency also provides support for people who have little experience working in this country to learn basic workplace literacy. Of the 46 clients they assisted in 2005, 100% maintained their jobs.
- Citizens view adult education favorably: 73% of citizens rated the Fox Cities above average in providing opportunities for adults to get an education (the question did not define whether adult education referred to higher education or other types of training).

Progress and Concerns

The high school completion rate locally compares favorably to Wisconsin and United States averages. Leaders and citizens viewed the opportunities for adult education highly.

One of the dominant themes across focus groups was the need for education and support for adults, including those that have been "downsized" and need new skills or others who seek to obtain or advance employment. The programs described above focus on literacy and employment skills. In another section we describe two similar programs (LIFE of Self-Sufficiency). While one of these programs is being expanded with state funding (CAP Services), the other three show that there is more demand than they can currently meet. One program has a waiting list and another experienced a cutback due to insufficient funding.

Figure 1

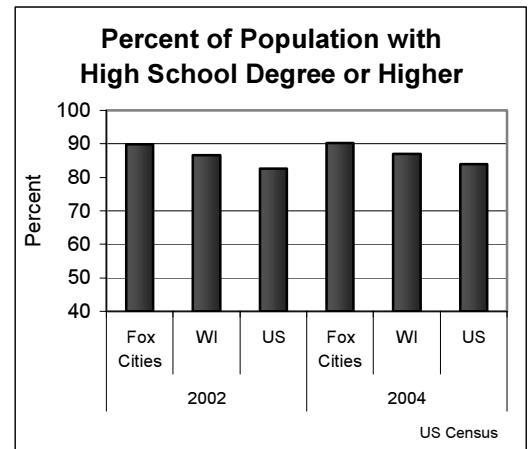


Figure 2

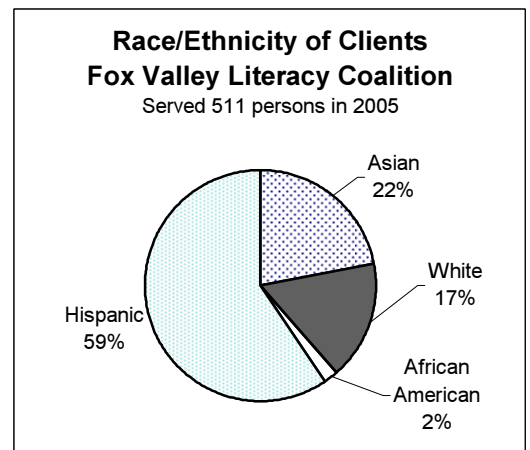


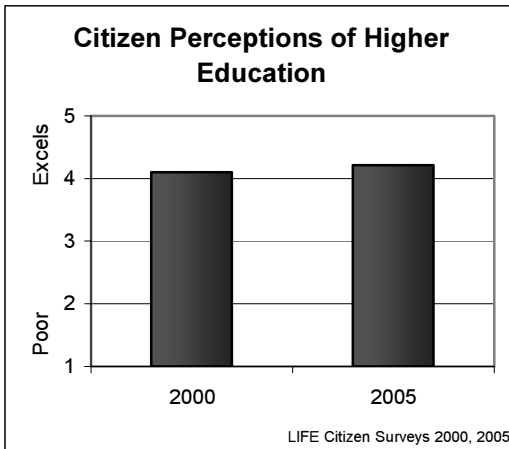
Figure 3

	2004	2005
Training clients	98	67
Obtained employment	63%	44%
Employment support clients	72	46
Preserved job	100%	100%

92% of leaders rated the opportunities for continuing education for adults good or excellent.

Higher Education

Figure 1



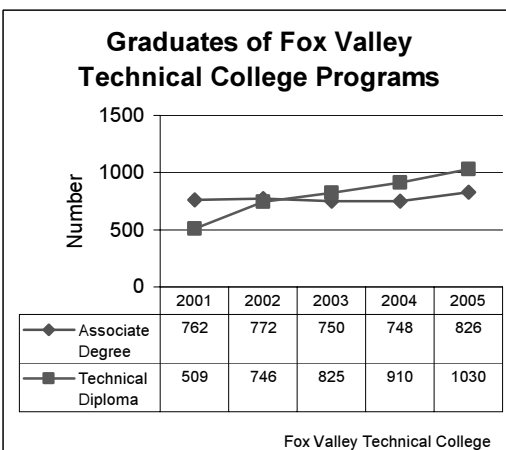
Data Highlights

- **Figure 1** The overall quality of technical schools and colleges in the Fox Cities was rated highly in 2005: on a five point scale, the average rating was 4.2 (compared to 4.1 in 2001).
- **Figure 2** The four local institutions offering post-secondary education in the Fox Cities enroll close to 22,000 students. There are 18 colleges and universities within an hour's drive of the area (Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce & Industry).
- **Figure 3** Technical diplomas awarded by Fox Valley Technical College (FVTC) rose by 102% between 2001 and 2005 while associate degrees grew by 8%. Full time equivalent students increased by nearly 1,000 during that time, reaching almost 5,900 students. FVTC reports that 14 of its program areas have reached full capacity, and several other programs report more demand for enrollment than can be met currently (five are health care programs).
- Between 1994-2004, the average cost of attending a college within the University of Wisconsin (UW) system increased 55% to \$12,724 while the average amount of need-based financial aid grew 24% (to \$6,026). In the UW system, the percent of freshmen from families in the two lowest income brackets dropped from 39% to 32% while the percent of freshmen from the top two income brackets grew from 38% to 44% (Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, 2/18/06).

Figure 2

College	Type	2005 Approximate Enrollment
Fox Valley Technical College	Vocational education	7,100
Lawrence University	4-year private; Conservatory of Music	1,600
University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh	4-year public	9,600 undergraduates 1,400 graduates
University of Wisconsin-Fox Valley	2-year public	1,719

Figure 3



Progress and Concerns

Residents have highly favorable opinions of higher education in the Fox Cities. Fox Valley Technical College ranks among the top post-secondary vocational education institutions in the United States (Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce & Industry). University of Wisconsin-Fox Valley now collaborates with Bachelor's degree-awarding University of Wisconsin campuses to allow students to complete a Bachelor's degree on its Fox Valley campus. These institutions increasingly team up with local business to develop programs that will meet the needs of local employers.

The increasing cost of higher education, especially for 4 year degrees, has become more of a barrier to people with lower incomes. While quality higher education options exist locally, many young professionals in our focus group said that they plan to obtain advanced degrees by taking courses online or re-locating to enroll in graduate programs.

97% of leaders rated higher education opportunities good or excellent in the Fox Cities area.

K-12 Education Profile

Data Highlights

- Figure 1** Enrollment in Fox Cities area public school districts grew by 5% between the 1999-00 and 2004-05 school years, with some districts declining and others increasing enrollments significantly.
- Figure 2** In 2004-05, for the Fox Cities overall, 87.7% of students were white compared to 90.8% in 1999-00. In 2004-05, 18.7% of students were from low income families (185% of poverty) compared to 11% in 2001. Finally, in 2004-05, 12.1% of high school students had a disability (learning, emotional, cognitive, or other disabilities requiring special education) compared to 12.5% in 2002-03.
- Figure 3** In 2004-05, expenditures per pupil had risen 10% since 2001-02 to \$7,984 in 2004-05. Statewide, school districts spent an average of \$8,734 (+13%).
- In 2004-05, 7,700 students enrolled in private schools in the Fox Cities area, a decline of about 1,000 students (-12%) in the past five years (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (WI DPI)).
- In 2004-05, 1,228 children attended charter schools in the area. 713 children received home schooling, up from 676 in 1999-00. About 400 students were enrolled in virtual school programs (WI DPI).
- Freedom, Kaukauna, Kimberly, Little Chute, and Menasha school districts offer 4-year old kindergarten for a combined total 855 children enrolled in 2004-05 (WI DPI).
- In 2003-04, 3.2% of Fox Cities area students were habitually truant compared to 9.4% of students statewide (2004-05 data not available). Habitual truancy is defined as having five or more unexcused absences from school per semester (WI DPI).
- In 2003-04, the student-teacher ratio in the Fox Cities was 15.0 to 1 compared to 14.7 to 1 in Wisconsin (WI DPI).
- 60% of residents believed the Fox Cities was above average at investing needed resources to ensure quality education in the future (LIFE Citizen Survey 2005).

Progress and Concerns

According to survey and focus group feedback, Fox Cities area residents feel strongly that the education system (both public and private) is excellent. Local districts spend less on education than the state average and this spending, while increasing, has grown at a slower rate than statewide. The number of students from families with low incomes attending public schools in the Fox Cities has increased significantly since the 2001 LIFE Study.

Figure 1

Enrollment in Public K-12 Fox Cities School Districts			
	1999-00	2004-05	% change
Appleton	14,651	15,060	3%
Freedom	1,505	1,541	2%
Hortonville	2,541	3,133	23%
Kaukauna	3,632	3,784	4%
Kimberly	2,975	3,908	31%
Little Chute	1,409	1,550	10%
Menasha	3,655	3,620	-1%
Neenah	6,585	6,296	-4%
Total	36,953	38,892	5%

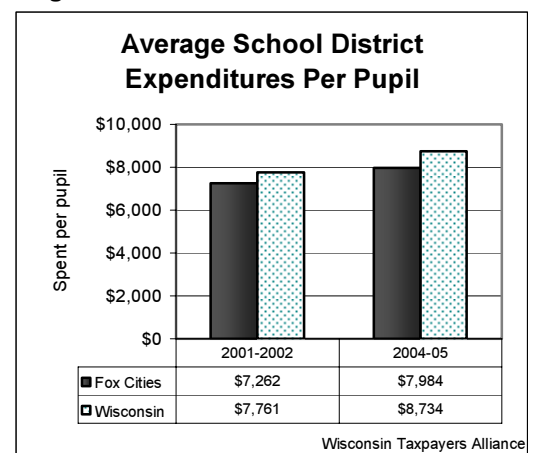
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Figure 2

Student Demographic Information, '04-05			
	% white	% low income	% disabled (HS)
Appleton	81.5	23.8	12.8
Freedom	93.1	11.2	13.1
Hortonville	95.5	8.9	11.8
Kaukauna	93.7	15.9	13.6
Kimberly	94.9	6.2	9.3
Little Chute	92.0	14.6	8.4
Menasha	81.6	32.1	12.8
Neenah	92.0	16.0	11.6
Fox Cities weighted average	87.7	18.7	12.1

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Figure 3



Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance

In 2005, 67% of citizens rated the quality of public schools above average, compared to 58% in 2000.

Education for All Students

Figure 1

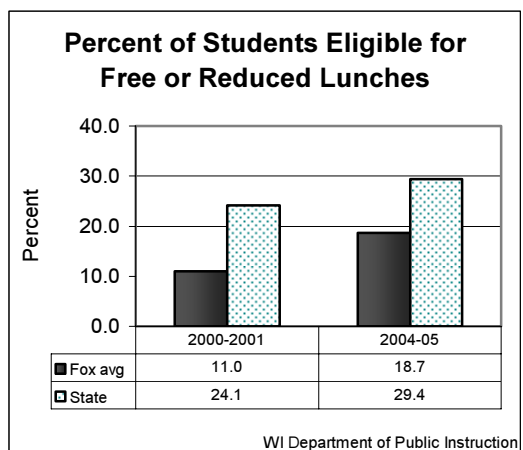


Figure 2

	Currently Enrolled	Eligible on waiting list
Appleton	195	31
Neenah	34	13
Menasha	34	12
Kaukauna	34	4
Stephensville	16	0
Total	313	60

Head Start, 2006

Figure 3

	2001		2005	
	Programs	# served	Programs	# served
Calumet	3	53	4	68
Outagamie	15	483	19	587
Winnebago	n/a	n/a	18	511

Child Care Resource & Referral

Figure 4

	Reading		Math	
	Low income	Avg-high income	Low income	Avg-high income
Appleton	68%	90%	58%	84%
Menasha	68%	84%	53%	83%
Neenah	75%	93%	48%	85%

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

In Appleton, 68% of low income 4th graders achieved proficiency in reading compared to 90% of their peers with higher incomes.

Data Highlights

- Figure 1** The proportion of public school students in the Fox Cities eligible for free or reduced lunch rose from 11% to 18.7% between 2000-01 and 2004-05 (Wisconsin's rate was 29.4% in 2004-05). To be eligible, a student's family must have income at or below 185% of the federal poverty line (for a family of four, the 2006 poverty line is \$19,350).
- Figure 2** The Head Start program currently enrolls 313 children in the Fox Cities area (2006) with sixty eligible children on the waiting list (to be eligible, a family income must be at or below 100% of poverty). Program managers estimate that there are another 100 children who recently applied whose family incomes fell just above poverty, making them ineligible for Head Start. Some parents of enrolled children participate in the Even Start program to develop their own skills. This program faces the threat of reduced federal funding.
- Figure 3** Almost 1,200 young children are enrolled in preschool programs in Calumet, Outagamie, and Winnebago Counties combined. In Calumet and Outagamie Counties, the number of children served rose by 22% between 2001 and 2005.
- Figure 4** In Appleton, Menasha, and Neenah in 2004-05, low income fourth graders scored much lower on both reading and math assessments than their peers who are from middle and upper income families. Other school districts in the Fox Valley area were not included due to the small sample size of low income students. This gap in achievement widens as one examines test scores at both 8th and 10th grade levels.

Progress and Concerns

Approximately 2,000 children are enrolled in early education programs in the three counties (combined preschool and 4 year kindergarten enrollment). A strong Head Start program provides early education along with supportive services for parents with extremely low incomes.

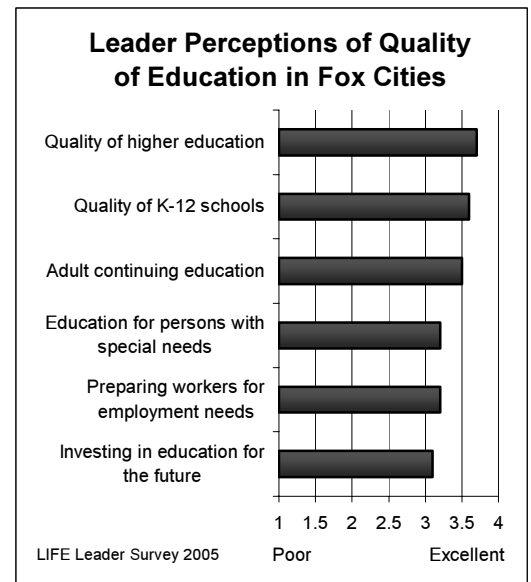
Yet, there are limited early education opportunities for families with low incomes, a growing segment of the local school population. These children show weaker academic performance than their peers in elementary school and then fall farther and farther behind academically as they grow up. In two of our focus groups, parents of young children noted the challenge they experienced in locating affordable, acceptable-quality pre-school programs. Two large public school districts do not offer kindergarten programs for four year olds.

Perceptions of Education

Data Highlights

- Figure 1** Leaders rated the quality of existing higher education, public and private K-12 schools, and adult continuing education in the Fox Cities area as excellent: their responses surpassed 3.5 on a 4 point scale (where 4 is excellent). Leaders scored the remaining items in the “good” range: educating people with special needs, preparing workers for the local economy, and investing in education for the future.
- Figure 2** In 2005, citizens viewed the area’s education system even more favorably than they did in 2000. Asked to respond to various topics related to the local education system, citizens scored most aspects of the education system 4 out of 5 possible. 70% of citizens rated the area good or excellent at meeting educational needs of their own families. 60% rated the area good or excellent at investing needed resources to ensure a quality education system in the future.

Figure 1

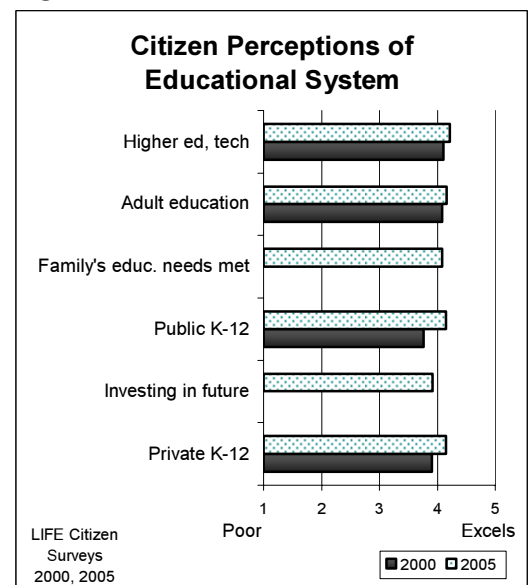


Progress and Concerns

When asked to describe the strengths of the Fox Cities area, participants in most focus groups listed the area’s education system. Youth, when asked about their experiences at schools, held mostly favorable opinions about the quality, safety, and opportunities for involvement at their schools.

Participants in a number of different focus groups expressed concerns about whether current educational approaches match up with future local workforce needs. For example, there is a clear projected demand for health care workers yet it is unclear whether a sufficient number of young people are “in the pipeline,” i.e. enrolled in science curriculum and courses to help them progress into science-related careers. The same holds true for higher-skilled manufacturing jobs. Participants in several focus groups urged a closer connection between employers, schools, and young people themselves as they consider career options.

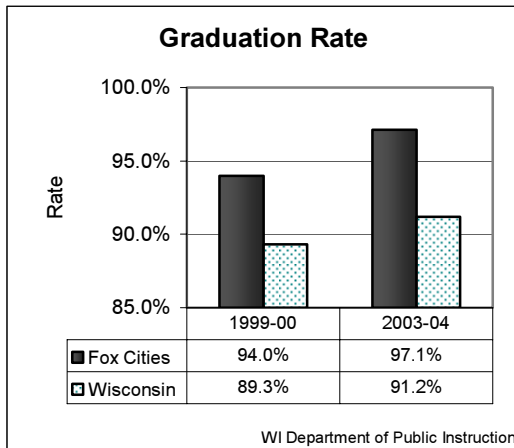
Figure 2



84% of residents and 94% of leaders rated the Fox Cities good or excellent on providing effective education overall.

Student Success

Figure 1



Data Highlights

Truancy is described in "K-12 Education Profile."

- Figure 1** The graduation rate for the Fox Cities surpassed 97% in 2003-04, up from 94% in 1999-00 and exceeding Wisconsin's overall graduation rate of 91.2%.
- Figure 2** The percent of third graders reading at proficient or advanced levels improved from 73.7% to 90.5% between the 1999-00 and 2004-05 school years. The percent of third graders that were proficient at reading increased by at least 10 percentage points in every school district in the Fox Cities area over that time.
- Figure 3** Achievement test scores in math and reading have risen at all three grade levels (except for 8th grade math, which dropped by 1%) and, in every case, exceed the average test scores of Wisconsin students (WI DPI).
- In 1999-00, 59% of Fox Cities high school students took the ACT college entrance exam (average score, 22.7). In 2003-04, 57% took the ACT (average score, 22.8), compared to 57% of Wisconsin students that took the ACT (average 22.2) (WI DPI). Nationally, the average ACT score was 20.9 in 2004 (ACT.org).
- In 2002-03, 56% of Fox Cities students planned to attend college or university after graduating, 22% intended to enroll in a vocational training program, 14% had unspecified plans, and 8% fell into other more specific categories (WI DPI).

Figure 2

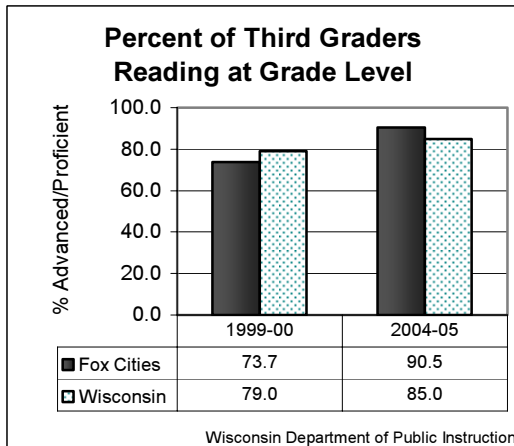


Figure 3

Percent of Students at Proficient or Advanced Levels			
Reading		2002	2004
4th	Fox Cities	87%	88%
	Wisconsin	81%	82%
8th	Fox Cities	87%	88%
	Wisconsin	83%	85%
10th	Fox Cities	74%	77%
	Wisconsin	71%	74%
Math			
4th	Fox Cities	79%	81%
	Wisconsin	71%	72%
8th	Fox Cities	81%	80%
	Wisconsin	73%	73%
10th	Fox Cities	72%	77%
	Wisconsin	69%	72%

Progress and Concerns

High school students graduate at a higher rate in the Fox Cities than in Wisconsin overall, and over half of graduates plan to attend college. Results of comprehensive assessments done by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction show increasing test scores in Fox Cities area schools. Most elementary school children read at a proficient level.

The percent of students achieving proficient test scores declines as youth get older, and in general, math scores are lower than reading scores. On a previous page, "Education for All Students," we show that fewer children from families with low incomes achieve academic proficiency than from families with middle to high incomes. In our work/employment focus group, participants emphasized the importance of math and science skills for the area workforce.

77% of 10th graders in the Fox Cities were advanced or proficient in math in 2004-05.



LIFE at Leisure

“Excellence” for the Fox Cities is defined as:

Citizens of all ages and ability levels:

- Engage in creative activity
- Attend affordable arts and cultural events offered in the community and support the arts
- Enjoy regular, satisfying indoor and outdoor recreational activity for overall physical, mental, and social well-being
- Have access to clean, safe rivers and lakes, trails, parks, and other outdoor resources for recreation

LIFE of Leisure

Arts and Culture	Citizen perceptions of arts opportunities Attendance at arts events in past six months Financial support from Wisconsin Arts Board Annual attendance at performing arts events and museums
Libraries and Enrichment	Library utilization and per capita transactions Library expenditures per capita UW-Fox Valley programs and attendance Appleton Art Center program attendance
Outdoor Recreation	Miles of trails Park acreage per 1,000 population Parks with access for disabled Use of natural recreation space
Recreation Programs	Local recreation program use patterns Youth opportunities and perceptions
Other Leisure Opportunities	Citizen and leader perceptions of leisure opportunities Tourism assessment findings

For more information on leisure:

Wisconsin Arts Board <http://arts.state.wi.us>
Fox Cities Online recreation listings <http://www.focol.org>
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Library information <http://dpi.wi.gov/pld/dm-lib-stat.html>
Trails and Greenways www.focol.org/greenways; <http://www.neenahtrails.com/>
Northeast Wisconsin Trail map <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/parks/reports/trails/new.html>
Fox Cities Convention and Visitors Bureau <http://www.foxcities.org/>
Fox River Locks Restoration Project <http://www.wisinfo.com/foxlocks/>

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Arts and Cultural Opportunities

Data Highlights

- **Figure 1** In 2005, 69% of citizens rated arts/cultural opportunities above average, compared to 52% in 2000.
- **Figure 2** In 2005, 62% of citizens had attended a cultural event in the past 6 months compared to 68% in 2000.
- **Figure 3** Per capita grants to arts organizations in the Fox Cities area by the WI Arts Board were well below the state average.
- The Fox Cities Performing Arts Center estimated serving approximately 200,000 guests in fiscal year 2004-05.
- Fox Valley Symphony estimated that 12,000 people attended concerts in 2004-05, similar to prior years.
- The Appleton Art Center reported that in 2005 they served 20,140 persons, up from 8,500 in 2000. The Art Center offers exhibits, tours, and classes for children and adults.
- Lawrence Academy of Music provided individual or small group instruction to approximately 2,000 adults and youth in 2005. Lawrence University offered 215 concerts, 11 theatre productions, and many other public arts programs in 2005.

Progress and Concerns

Residents in the region enjoy a variety of cultural opportunities, including the addition of the Fox Cities Performing Arts Center since the last LIFE study (repeatedly cited by people in many different focus groups as a source of pride). A number of musical opportunities exist locally, as well as numerous smaller art galleries and exhibits. The multi-cultural aspect of the region is on display. Residents appreciate that many of these opportunities are very affordable and often free.

Persons working within the "Leisure" sector believed that arts organizations should seek more opportunities to collaborate. Multicultural events are sometimes perceived as solely for the particular ethnic group and must be developed and shared across cultures. And although they felt affordable arts opportunities exist, persons of lower income seem less aware of them.

Figure 1

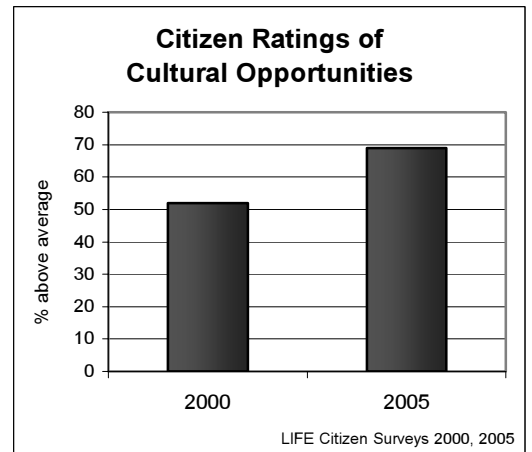


Figure 2

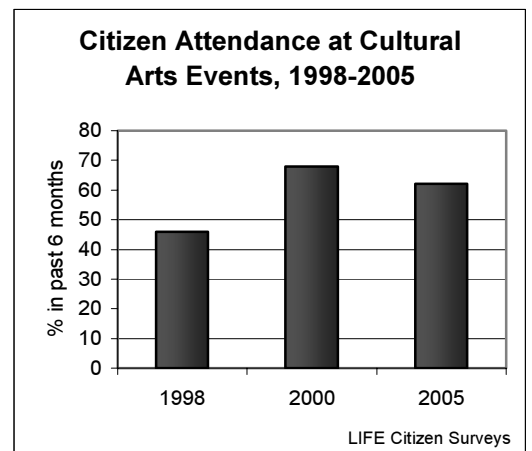
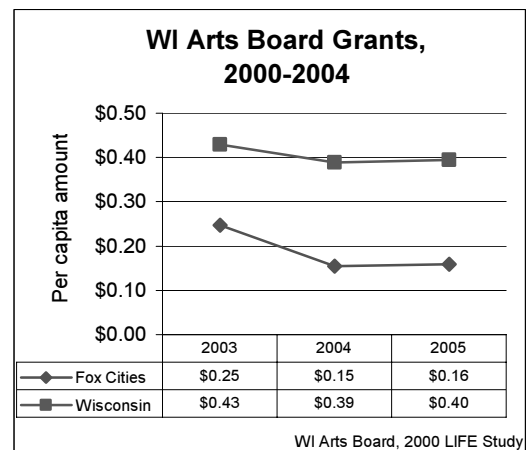


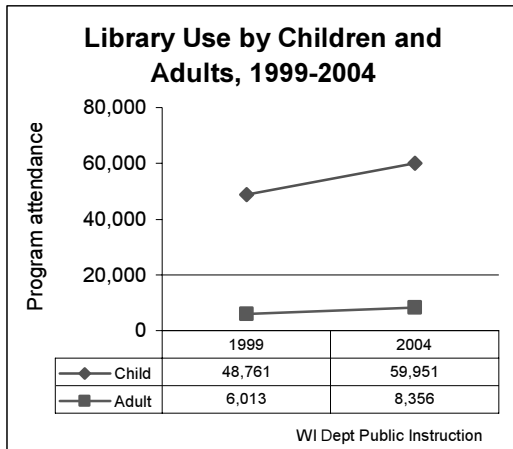
Figure 3



75% of leaders believed that the Fox Cities does a good or excellent job of attracting and rewarding talented persons in art and music.

Libraries and Enrichment

Figure 1



Data Highlights

Summarized data from the library systems in the Fox Cities area, including Kimberly, Kaukauna, Appleton, Neenah, and Menasha.

- **Figure 1** In 2004, program attendance by Fox Valley children had reached almost 60,000 visits, an increase of 23% over 48,671 in 1999. Adult attendance rose 39%.
- **Figure 2** Adult circulation transactions grew from 1.10 million in 1999 to 1.53 million in 2004; child transactions from 1.00 to 1.13 million.
- **Figure 3** Library transactions per person in the Fox Cities is nearly double the US rate. Transactions per capita rose from 11.1 to 12.2 between 1999 and 2004.
- 93% of leaders and 72% of citizens rated the quality of library services Good/Excellent.
- Library operating budgets rose 20% per capita between 1999 and 2004, from \$30 per capita to \$36 per capita in 2004 (for the five systems cited above).
- In 2005 UW Fox Valley's Barlow Planetarium had 37,953 visits, 6% less than in 1999.
- In 2005 UW Fox Valley served 1,003 adults in its general adult programs compared to 1,313 adults served in 2001.
- In 2005 Appleton Arts Center education programs served 20,750 adults, children, and youth, a 93% increase over 2000 (10,750).

Figure 2

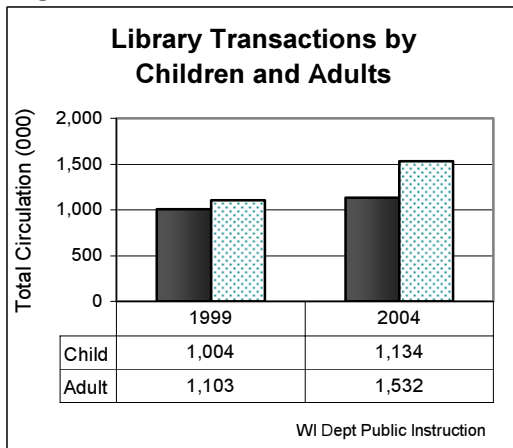
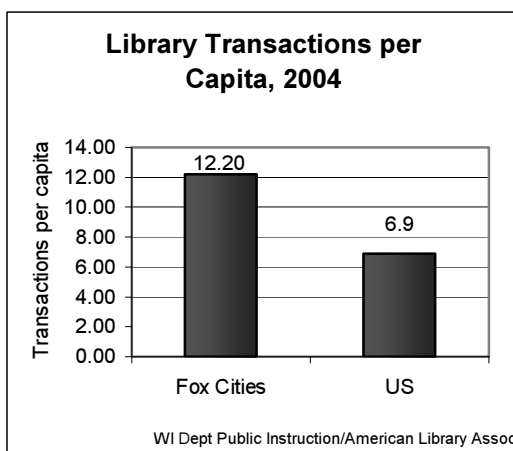


Figure 3



Progress and Concerns

Residents, leaders, and focus group participants recognize local libraries as tremendous assets in the area. Library programs for children have risen dramatically in the past few years and use of libraries far exceeds national averages. Numerous museums, education institutions, and other organizations offer classes, programs and other educational opportunities. Young children are especially well served.

These agencies continue to seek ways to engage the increasingly diverse population and persons that are typically less involved in enrichment programs.

13% of citizens indicated that they had taken an internet college course or training program.

Outdoor Recreation

Data Highlights

- **Figure 1** In 2005, 72% of citizens rated physical recreation opportunities (sports, exercise programs, parks, outdoors) above average, a rise from 56% in 2000. The number of citizens reporting using recreation facilities remained at 75%, the same rate as in 2000.
- **Figure 2** Annual visits to High Cliff State Park were up to 819,900 in 2003, a 10% increase from 1999 (741,588)
- **Figure 3** Park acreage increased between 1996 and 2000, from approximately 11 to 14 acres per capita (ECRPC, 1996, 2000)
- The Northeast Wisconsin area (including the Fox Cities) has one of the highest concentrations of nature centers in the US, with 17 centers covering over 12,000 acres and 150 miles of trails.
- The Fox Cities Trestle-Friendship Trail opened in August 2005 as a result of a broad community effort that raised \$1.6 million. The Riverwalk Trail project in downtown Neenah (under development) will cover 1.5 barrier-free miles. The Fox Cities had approximately 55 miles of trails in 2005 compared to 47.8 in 2001 (Fox Cities Greenways) (Note, exact methods for counting miles may differ).
- According to the East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, in 2004 the Appleton urbanized area had 5,081 acres of recreational land use, 3% of total acreage. In 1996, there were 3,640 recreational acres, 4% of total urbanized land.
- Phase 1 of the \$28.8 million Fox River Locks Restoration Project will restore the 4 locks in the Appleton area, opening the Fox River to recreational boaters and riverfront economic development.
- Appleton has 29 parks, all with some features accessible for persons with disabilities; one park is fully accessible. Neenah has 21 parks with accessible features including trails, ball diamonds, fishing decks, shelters, and more.

Progress and Concerns

Outdoor recreation opportunities topped numerous focus group lists of strengths of the Fox Cities area: boating, parks and nature centers, and golfing opportunities, to name a few, are excellent. There are numerous winter leisure opportunities.

However, participants in four focus groups expressed interest in additional public lands with larger woodland acreage such as High Cliff State Park in Calumet County. While there are many local neighborhood parks, they tend to be smaller.

Figure 1

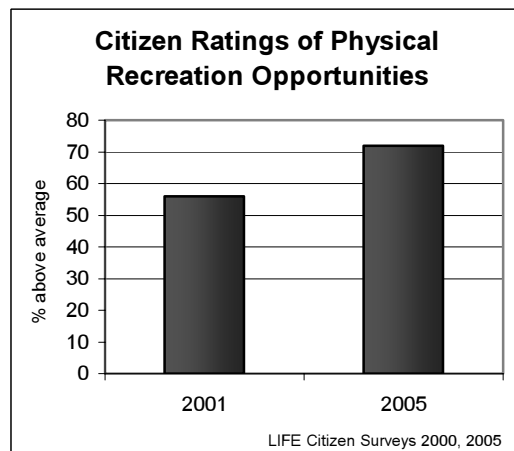


Figure 2

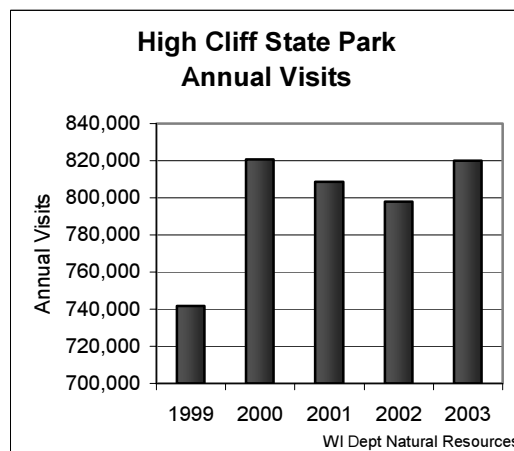
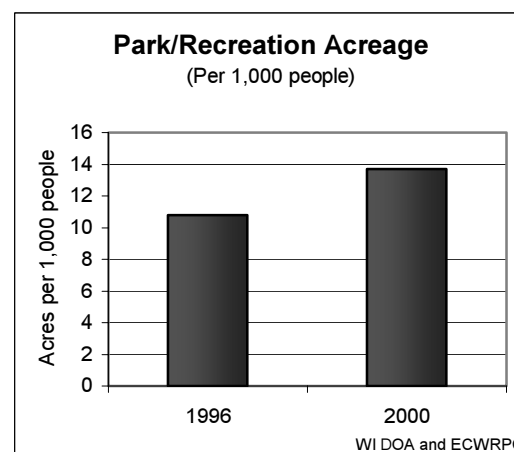


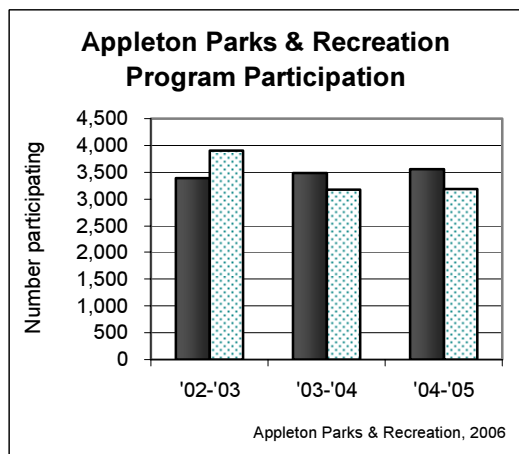
Figure 3



90% of citizens indicated that the Fox Cities provided good or excellent outdoor recreation opportunities.

Recreation Programs

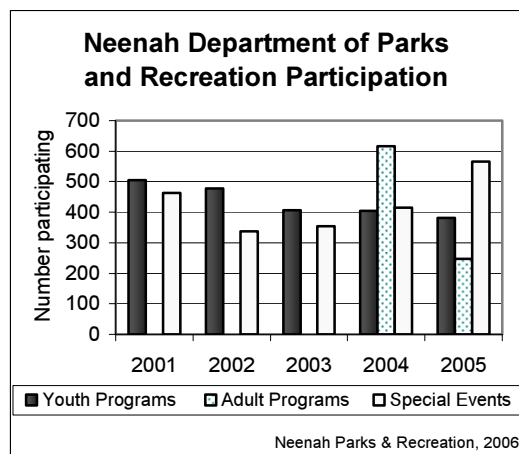
Figure 1



Data Highlights

- Figure 1** The Appleton Parks & Recreation participation by adults under age 55 increased (primarily from growth in softball leagues). Youth program participation declined between '02 and '03 then stayed level the following year. In only its second year of offering programs for older adults (over age 55), the agency experienced a 13% increase in participation in its fee-based programs, serving 10,845 persons in 2005.
- Figure 2** Neenah Parks and Recreation Department experienced declines in participation by children as numerous alternative programs now exist within the community. Appleton officials report similar trends for children.
- Appleton Parks and Recreation Department offered “Drop in” open gym times for youth in 2004-05, with 1,662 youth attending.
- In 2006 the YMCA of the Fox Cities had over 26,000 members, compared to 18,000 in 2002 (Post-Crescent 3/19/06).

Figure 2



Progress and Concerns

There are many affordable recreation programs available in the Fox Cities area and many residents participate. Involvement by older residents appears to be growing.

In several focus groups, participants had animated discussions about youth sports programming. Most agreed that parents have become very involved in youth sports programs and at times become highly competitive. Children increasingly specialize at very young ages and spend a great deal of time traveling and competing in tournaments or camps arranged by their parents. When a child reaches early adolescence, chances for involvement in sports drops for less athletic youth.

When asked their opinions of opportunities that exist for teens in sports programs, many youth felt that “only the athletes” were involved and they would like to see more opportunities for fun, non-competitive physical outlets for the average teen. These activities would not have to be led by parents.

Participants in the leisure focus group suggested a need for open play spaces in neighborhoods, where youth could organize their own informal activities. Increasing physical activity would reduce obesity rates of youth. Moreover they suggested increasing awareness and ease of access to recreation programs for persons with lower incomes or of minority racial/ethnic groups.

93% of leaders said the area is good or excellent at encouraging youth to explore interests and participate in positive activities.

Other Leisure Opportunities

Data Highlights

- **Figure 1** Both leaders and citizens gave very high marks to the availability of leisure opportunities locally.
- **Figure 2** On average, citizens rated the availability of leisure opportunities for their families as “good.” Fine arts, cultural and recreational opportunities were rated similarly. Citizens were asked how well the Fox Cities offers leisure opportunities that reflect a variety of cultures; their responses indicate they feel the area is above average.
- **Figure 3** Leaders rated fine arts and recreation choices highly while expressing a lower (but still favorable) opinion of leisure activities that reflect cultural diversity and opportunities for persons with disabilities.
- Similarly, leaders thought that the Fox Cities area was just above average (2.8 out of 4) at ensuring persons with disabilities can remain actively involved in community life.
- A 2004 Tourism Assessment found a variety of appealing cultural and retail attractions throughout the Fox Cities. At the same time the study recommended improved promotion strategies.

Progress and Concerns

Participants in several focus groups agreed that the number and quality of restaurant choices in the Fox Cities area far surpasses that of other similar sized communities. They also agreed that the Fox Cities has enjoyable seasonal events such as Arts Festivals, Country USA, Fox Jazz Fest, Farmers’ Markets, and other celebrations. Retail shopping was noted as a strength by several focus groups, including working parents, business, both young adult groups and youth.

Focus group participants believed the Fox Cities area can do a better job of engaging minorities in arts and recreational opportunities across the area. The libraries are perceived to be good at doing this. Diverse cultural events take place but the area could improve at cross-cultural participation in these events, i.e. they are not just for the benefit of the group leading it, but for all members of the community.

In our focus groups, many youth, working parents, and young adults (both professional and technical) expressed interest in existing local leisure options. The young adult groups found the idea of riverfront development very appealing and envisioned a pedestrian area with interesting shops and unique restaurants.

Figure 1

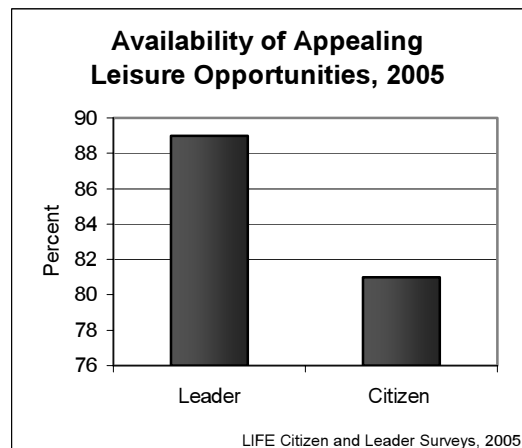


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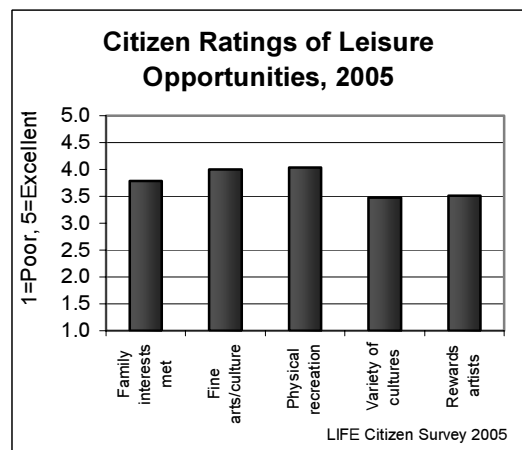
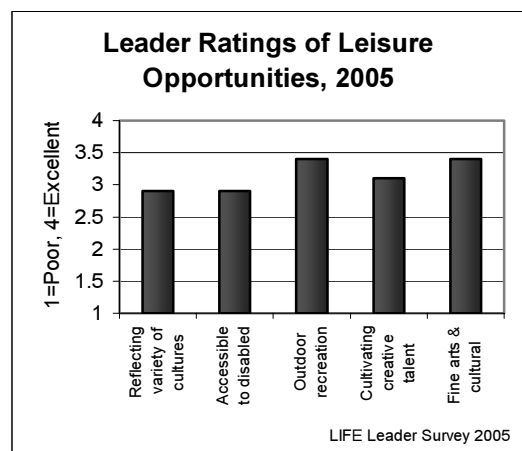


Figure 3



90% of citizens indicated that the Fox Cities provided good or excellent outdoor recreation opportunities.



LIFE in Our Natural Environment

“Excellence” for the Fox Cities is defined as:

Community leaders and citizens:

- Value conservation, stewardship, and protection of the natural environment
- Have the opportunity to enjoy the outdoors
- Experience clean air and water
- Preserve green space and implement well-managed land development

LIFE in our Natural Environment

Air Quality	Air quality index percent of good quality days Citizen perceptions of air quality Number of facilities releasing pollutants
Environmental Preservation	Citizen and leader perceptions of environment Leader perceptions of efforts to protect environment Environmental health determinants
Land Use	Land use in Fox Cities area Residential land use trend Vehicle-deer crashes
Resource Use and Conservation	Percent that drove alone to work Per capita energy consumption Vehicle miles traveled Gallons of water pumped per capita Leader perceptions of conservation efforts
Water Quality	Citizen perceptions of quality of drinking water Municipal water utility violations Citizen perceptions of quality of lake and river water Impairments of lakes and rivers and source of impairment

For more information on the environment:

Wisconsin Pollution Prevention Partnership (DNR, UW-Extension, Commerce Department), <http://wip2.uwex.edu/>
Current air quality conditions, <http://airnow.gov/index.cfm?action=airnow.currentconditions>
Searchable database on all aspects of environmental quality, <http://www.epa.gov/enviro/>
Superfund sites and cleanup progress, <http://www.epa.gov/superfund/index.htm>
East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, <http://www.eastcentralrpc.org>
Natural Resource Conservation site, US Department of Agriculture, Wisconsin info, <http://www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov>
Wisconsin Department of Administration, Energy, http://www.doa.state.wi.us/section_detail.asp?linkcatid=109
Ground water information, <http://www.uwsp.edu/cnr/gndwater/index.htm>
Lake Winnebago Status Report, <http://www.uwsp.edu/cnr/uwexlakes/ecology/WaterQualLakeWinnebago.pdf>
Information about watersheds, <http://www.epa.gov/surf/> <http://basineducation.uwex.edu/>

Selected additional information for each section of the 2006 LIFE Report can be found in Appendices at our website: <http://www.foxcitieslifestudy.org>

Air Quality

Data Highlights

- Figure 1** The Air Quality Index is calculated by the Environmental Protection Agency through monitors that collect air samples and record the concentrations of six “criteria” pollutants on a daily basis. In the Fox Cities area, overall air quality has improved since 2001, with the number of days where air quality fell in the “Good” category for 90% of days in 2004 (from 80% in 2001). No days were measured in the “Poor” range. When air quality reaches the “moderate” range, a small number of people are likely to experience respiratory distress.

The number of days where ozone is the major pollutant (due to vehicle exhaust, factory emissions, and sunlight) rose to 70% in 2004 (from 67% in 2001). On the remaining days, small particulates (from factories, exhaust, dust, soot, and the like) were the highest measured pollutant in the Fox Cities.

- Figure 2** Citizens perceive that air quality has improved between 2000 and 2005, with over 50% of residents rating local air quality as above average.
- Figure 3** According to the WI Department of Administration, 2005, Wisconsin’s carbon dioxide emissions have reached an all time high due to increased vehicle travel and an expanding economy (that relies heavily on fossil fuel). (See “Resource Use and Conservation” for information on vehicle miles and energy consumption).
- As of April, 2005, there were 188 facilities that released emissions into the air in the three county area (new baseline measure for future LIFE Studies) (EPA).

Progress and Concerns

On about 9 out of 10 days, the air in the Fox Cities area qualifies as good. Citizens report good or excellent air quality to an increased extent than they did in 2000.

Focus group participants pointed to the high rate of travel by car as cause for concern, and ozone has increased as the major pollutant present in the air. In several focus groups, residents and experts voiced interest in having convenient alternatives to automobile travel available.

Figure 1

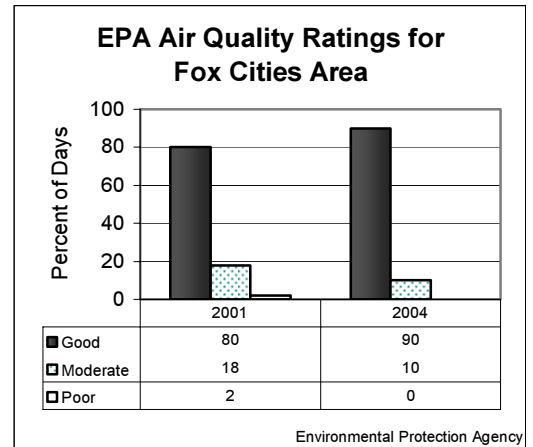


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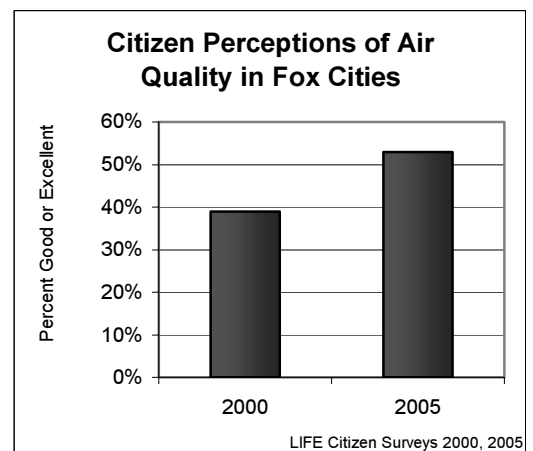
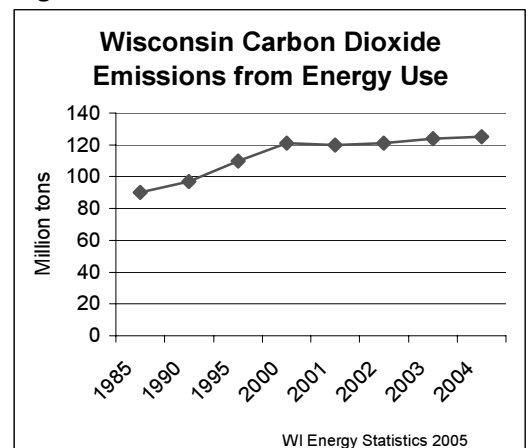


Figure 3



The Fox Cities area had 0 days of poor air quality in 2004 (in 2001 there were 2).

Environmental Preservation

Figure 1

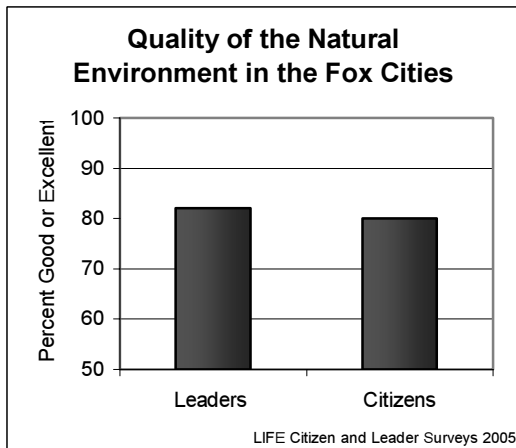


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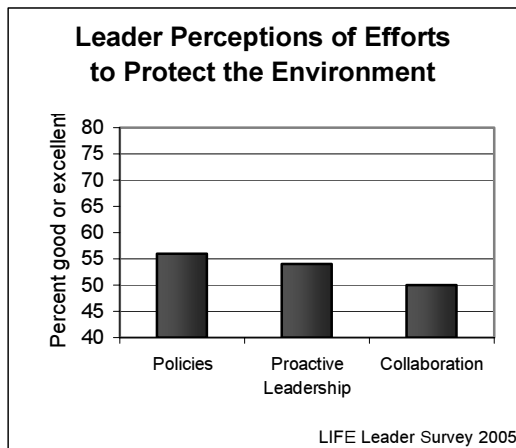


Figure 3

Environmental Health Determinants	Calumet Outagamie Winnebago		
	Calumet	Outagamie	Winnebago
Air quality cancer risk	below average	below average	below average
Air quality hazard index	average	below average	below average
Fine particulates, ozone	below average	below average	below average
Nitrate levels in water	below average	above average	average
Lead poisoned children	above average	average	below average
Overall county ranking (of 72)	36	37	58

Wisconsin County Health Rankings; UW Pop. Health Institute, 2005

Data Highlights

- **Figure 1** Leaders and citizens held similar views about the quality of the environment in the Fox Cities area: 82% of leaders and 80% of citizens rated it good or excellent.
- **Figure 2** Just over half of leaders we surveyed rated the Fox Cities area good or excellent for implementing policies, behaving proactively, and collaborating to protect the environment.
- **Figure 3** Where 1 is the best ranking, Calumet and Outagamie Counties ranked 36th and 37th (respectively) of Wisconsin's 72 counties on environmental conditions that impact residents' health. Winnebago County was ranked 58th (see last row of table). This ranking is developed by analyzing several environmental factors that impact residents' health, including air and water quality, exposure to lead and other environmental hazards, and deaths due to certain kinds of cancers (County Health Rankings, University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute, 2005).

Progress and Concerns

A very high number of residents perceive the overall quality of the natural environment as good or excellent. In our focus groups, experts familiar with environmental conditions and concerns report new state regulations that will be helpful to protecting the environment.

In an analysis of county environmental health factors, the Fox Cities area counties fared either average or below average on the extent that residents are exposed to health risks due to the environment.

Focus group participants pointed to a lack of regionalized land use planning. This poses a challenge to protecting the environment on a broader scale. They urged efforts to broaden the base of support for the environment by engaging business, education, health care, and the public to understand and address common concerns and to look at the community as an "ecosystem" in which the environment plays a vital role in quality of life.

48% of citizens believe the Fox Cities area is above average at protecting the natural environment (not asked in 2001).

Land Use

Data Highlights

- **Figure 1** The Fox Cities metropolitan area covers approximately 242 square miles. The largest amount of land is used for agriculture (39%) followed by woodlands and open lands (20%) and residential (17%).
- **Figure 2** In the three county area, use of land for residential purposes grew by 50% between 1990-2000, with Outagamie County alone having a 71% gain.
- **Figure 3** Vehicle-deer crashes are a sign of urban sprawl, as habitats are consumed by development. Between 2002 and 2003 the area experienced a 17% increase in reported car-deer crashes, with 1,055 total incidents in 2003.
- The Fox Cities experiences a trend toward larger agribusiness farms: in 2002 there were 3,126 farms in the Fox Cities area, an 8% decline from 1997. The acreage of these remaining farms has increased in all three counties, including 11% in Calumet County.
- 50% of area leaders believe that the Fox Cities area is below average on land development policies.
- The Fox Cities area has two Superfund Sites on the National Priorities List; both completed cleanup actions (removing soil and treating water) and have complied with all required follow-up testing. Another four locations in the area are monitored by the state of Wisconsin.
- There were 79.5 acres of public land per 1,000 residents in the three county area in 2003 (historical data not comparable) (East Central WI Regional Planning, 2003).

Figure 1

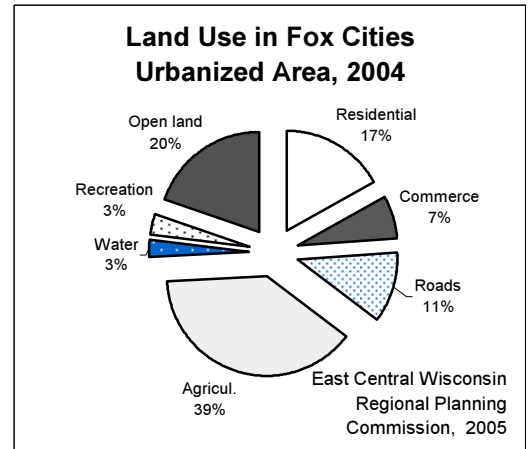
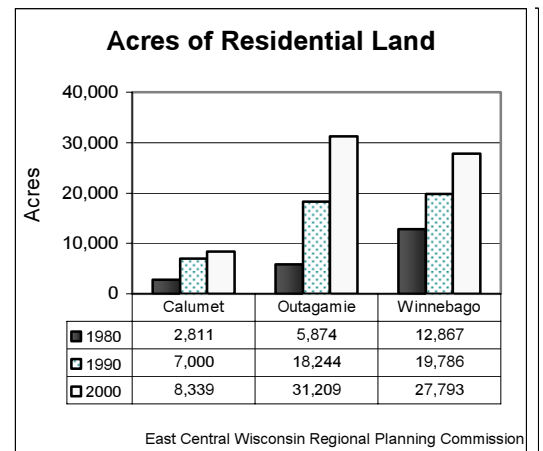


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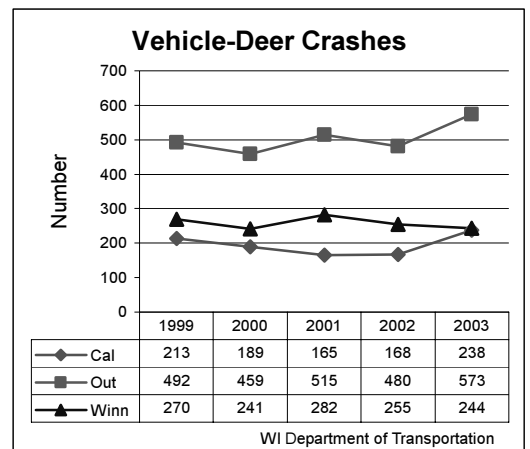


Progress and Concerns

State and local governments implement many programs to protect the environment and deal with emerging concerns. Comprehensive planning takes place periodically at the county and municipal level, and many have participated in the Wisconsin Smart Growth planning program. The public appears to have a growing interest in enjoying the outdoors: access to biking/hiking trails has expanded since the last LIFE study and the area enjoys outstanding nature preserves.

Both experts and citizens in our focus groups expressed concern about sprawling development leading to fragmentation of habitat and conflict between farming versus residential use. "Leap frog" clusters of housing developments requiring well water and septic systems break apart habitats and harm groundwater supplies, described on the next page. Several focus group discussions pointed to the desire for better public access to natural woodlands, such as High Cliff State Park.

Figure 3



When asked, "What one thing would you change about this area?" the #2 concern of citizens related to land development/growth.

Resource Use and Conservation

Figure 1

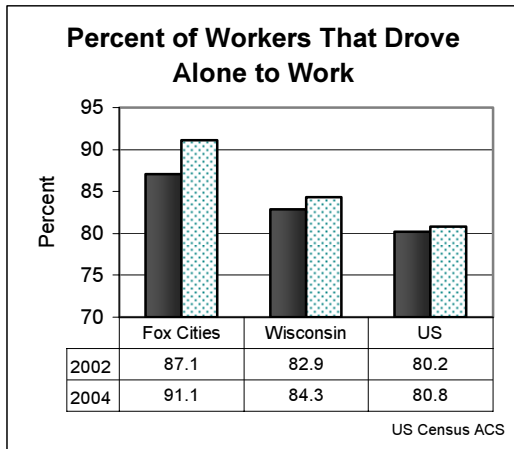


Figure 2

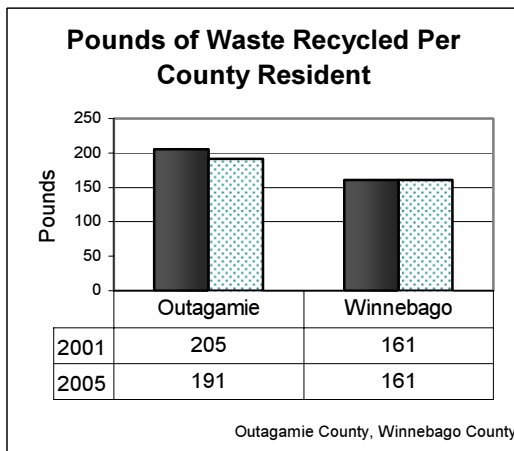
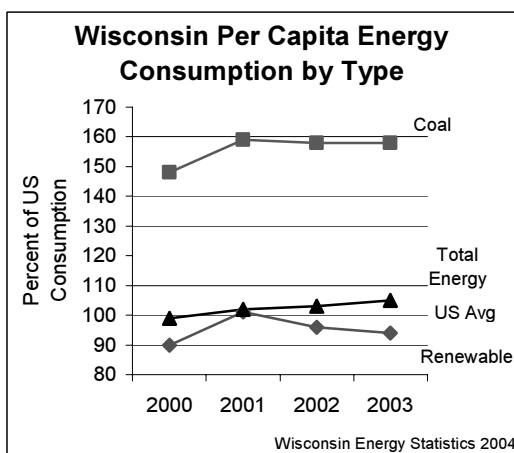


Figure 3



Data Highlights

- Figure 1** Workers in the Fox Cities area drive alone to work at a much higher rate (91%) than Wisconsin and the US, and the number that do so has increased in the past two years. Valley Transit ridership increased by 5% between 2002 and 2005. East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (ECWRPC) estimated that in 2005, 338,780 gallons of gas were used daily in the Fox Cities area (1.2 gallons per capita). Finally, another estimate showed that each resident averaged 2.95 automobile trips each day in 2005 (for work, shopping, etc.; not including truck trips).
- Figure 2** Both Outagamie and Winnebago Counties saw declines in the pounds recycled per resident between 2001 and 2005. While part of this decline may be due to changes in what is recycled—plastics weigh less than glass—some experts familiar with recycling believe that there are fewer participating in recycling (county-level data are not available for Calumet County, since each municipality contracts with a private vendor to handle recyclables).
- Figure 3** Per capita, a Wisconsin resident used 105% of the US average amount of total energy in 2003. Per capita, a Wisconsin resident used 94% of the US average amount of renewable energy and 158% of coal.
- About 91% of the power produced in the East Central Wisconsin Region (includes the Fox Cities) was from fossil fuel, with 9% generated by hydroelectric, wind, and biomass sources (ECWRPC). (See Air Quality section for information on emissions of CO₂ from fossil fuel use and vehicle travel.)
- In 2005, ECWRPC estimated that 7.6 million vehicle miles were traveled each day in the Fox Cities area (including Oshkosh).
- The total gallons of water used in the three county area dropped by 3% between 2000 and 2004 to about 35 gallons per capita pumped each day (ECWRPC).

Progress and Concerns

Federal and state legislation have attempted to encourage use of renewable energy. Locally, use of wind tower farms continues to expand. Cooperative regional agreements for waste disposal will reduce recycling costs locally.

In Wisconsin, coal use exceeds the national rate. Nine out of ten Fox Cities area residents drive alone to work on a regular basis in 2004, more than in 2002.

51% of leaders rated the Fox Cities below average at encouraging conservation.

Water Quality

Data Highlights

- Figure 1** 51% of area residents rated the quality of their drinking water above average, compared to 38% in 2000. The largest public water utilities in the Fox Cities area served approximately 160,000 residents in 2004 and had zero contaminant level violations. Nationally, about 5% of water utilities report violations in a given year. There are a number of other public sources of water for smaller municipalities which undergo regular monitoring for contaminants.
- Figure 2** In 2005, more citizens perceived the quality of water in lakes and rivers to be good or excellent (29%) than in 2001, when 19% did so.
- Figure 3** Four major watersheds flow in the Fox Cities area: Wolf River, Lake Winnebago, and the Upper and Lower Fox River. These watersheds provide drinking water and recreational use for Fox Cities residents. While all watersheds were found to have impairments, the Lower Fox River extending north to DePere and Green Bay is identified as one of 32 areas of concern in the US.
- 1995 data (most recent we could locate) showed the major groundwater aquifer serving Fox Cities wells declining two feet per year. As the level declines, so does the quality of the water. In 2004-05, health officials and groundwater monitoring sites report that the following contaminants exceed standards in a percentage of Fox Cities area wells: arsenic (5%-20%), bacteria (10%-42%, compared to state average of 19%), nitrates (5%-15%), and fluoride (percent of wells not known) (Outagamie County). About 800 private wells in Calumet County were tested between 2002 and 2005: 35% of these wells had excessive levels of coliform bacteria, 25% nitrates and 5% E.coli bacteria (Calumet County).

Progress and Concerns

Public water systems provide exceptional drinking water quality to Fox Cities residents. Lake Winnebago is an area attraction for boating and fishing, while area rivers offer recreational use and attractive waterfront locations. Numerous statewide water quality and watershed monitoring programs have been implemented in the Fox Cities area and around the state, including recent regulations to better handle storm water runoff.

Well testing has increased since high levels of certain contaminants have been found in local groundwater. Cleanup of the Lower Fox River progresses, recognized worldwide as a model of a cooperative, non-mandated public-private partnership. The \$400 million river cleanup is the largest in the nation and is expected to take 10 years (Appleton Post-Crescent, 2006).

Figure 1

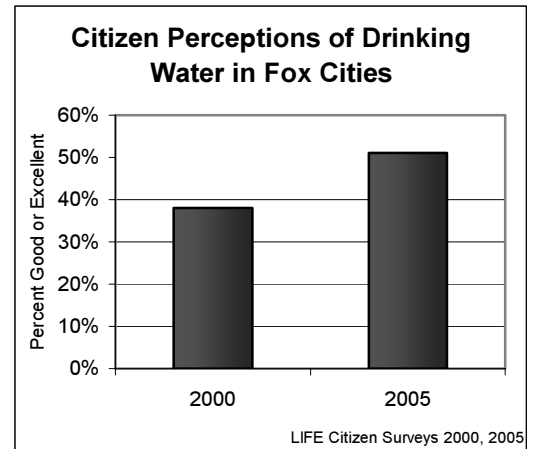


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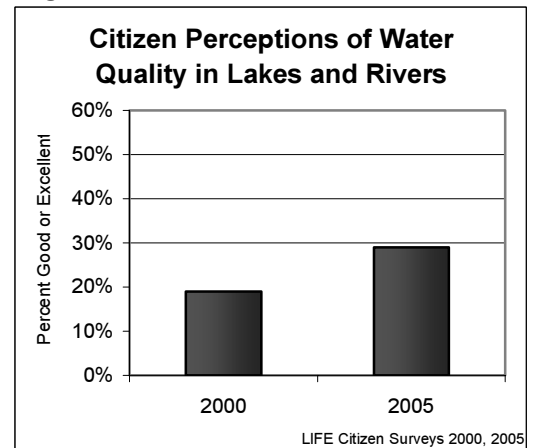


Figure 3

Surface Water Quality			
Watershed	Water bodies	Impairments	Primary Issue
Lake Winnebago	10	31	Sediment
			Degraded habitat
			Turbidity
Wolf River	16	22	Mercury
Upper Fox River	8	16	Degraded habitat
			Sediment
Lower Fox River	14	64	Dissolved oxygen
			Phosphorus
			Sediment
			Degraded Habitat
			Nutrients

Environmental Protection Agency, 2002 data

In 2005, more citizens perceived the quality of their drinking water to be good or excellent (51%) than in 2001 (38%).



A Safe LIFE

“Excellence” for the Fox Cities is defined as:

Citizens of all ages, abilities, and income levels:

- Are safe from harm or neglect in their own homes
- View their schools, neighborhoods, communities, and the Fox Cities area as safe
- Have confidence in law enforcement, emergency services, disaster response and fire protection
- Receive the support they need if they are a victim of crime
- Are aware of and engage in prevention and early intervention

A Safe LIFE

Juvenile Safety	Juvenile arrests Juvenile status offenses Juvenile drug arrests Runaway calls to hotline
Motor Vehicle Safety	Crashes, fatalities, and injuries Alcohol-related deaths and injuries Speed-related crashes, vehicle deer crashes Seat belt utilization Citizen perceptions of traffic
Personal Safety, Adults	Forcible rape offense rate Reported sexual assaults Reported elder abuse Reported domestic violence incidents
Personal Safety, Children	Substantiated rates of child abuse or neglect and reason Preventable hospitalization rate for children Foster home or residential placement rate Children treated in the Child Advocacy Center
Public Safety	Violent crime rates by county Total index crimes and crime rates, violent and property Citizen perceptions of safety own neighborhood
Public Safety System	Citizen perceptions of different aspects of safety Leader perceptions of safety policies, including preparedness Automated External Defibrillator (AED) placements

For more information on Safety:

KidsCount Data Annie E. Casey Foundation, www.aecf.org
Wisconsin Department of Transportation, <http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/safety/motorist/crashfacts/docs/crashfacts.pdf>
Wisconsin Crime and Arrests, Office of Justice Assistance, http://oja.state.wi.us/sac/docs_all.asp
Wisconsin Domestic Abuse Incident Reports, <http://www.doj.state.wi.us/cvs/>
Child abuse and neglect information, <http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/children/cps/pdf/2004CANReport.pdf>
US Department of Justice Crime Statistics, <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/cvusst.htm>
US Department of Justice Family Violence, http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/vawprog/selected_results.html

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Juvenile Safety

Data Highlights

- **Figure 1** Since 2001, juvenile arrest rates in Outagamie and Winnebago Counties have declined. While Calumet County's rose recently, it was still lower than in 2001 and the lowest of the counties charted.
- **Figure 2** Youth drug-related arrest rates declined for all three Fox Cities area counties between 2000 and 2003.
- **Figure 3** Juvenile Status Offenses (related to age, like curfew, liquor, truancy, runaway violations) declined between 2001 and 2004.
- **Figure 4** The number of Outagamie County Crisis Hotline calls related to youth runaway situations is up for 2004-05, but has fluctuated in the past 5 years.

Figure 4

Calls to Outagamie County Crisis Hotline Dealing with Runaway Situations	
Year	Calls
2002	58
2003	35
2004	73
2005	67

Progress and Concerns

Respondents to both surveys rated the region as a good place for children and youth with safe schools and neighborhoods. Focus group participants highlighted widespread availability of youth programs, especially sports-related. Nonprofit and governmental support services for youth in the region are highly respected.

Since 2004, juvenile arrests and status offenses have declined in the region. At the same time, our focus group experts staffing youth-related programs report growing numbers of youth from families with high needs.

Focus group participants noted that there is room for improvement to include minority, economically disadvantaged, non-athletic youth in some of the positive programs that are available in the area.

Figure 1

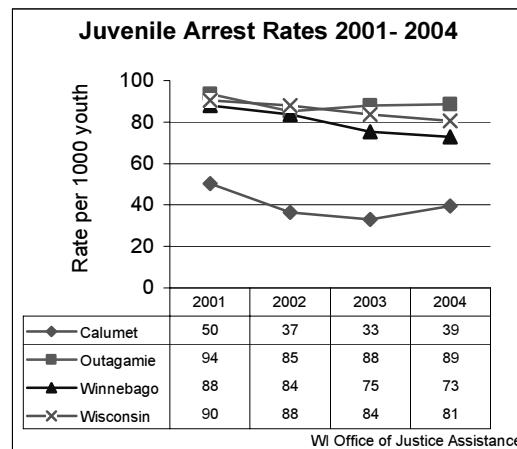


Figure 2

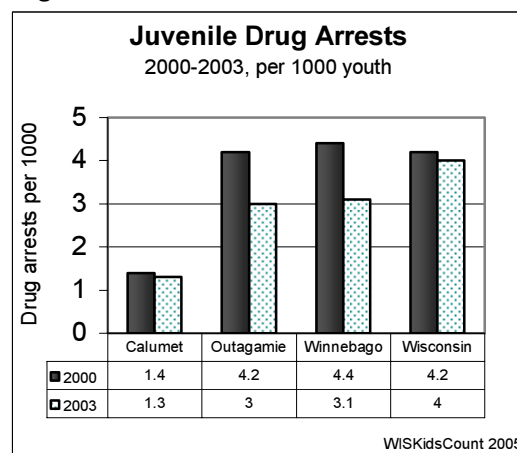
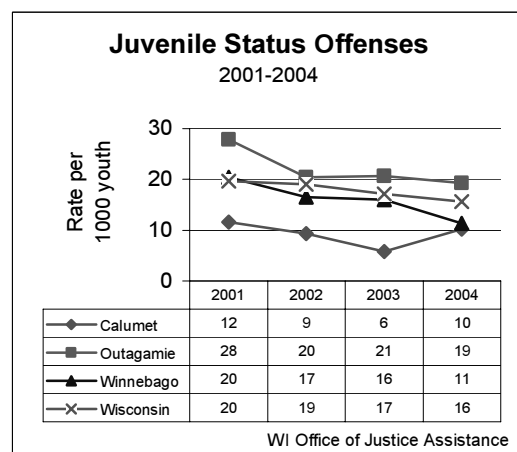


Figure 3



68% of leaders surveyed thought that the region does a good or excellent job preventing juvenile crime

Motor Vehicle Safety

Figure 1

Total Motor Vehicle Crashes 2000-2004			
	Calumet	Outagamie	Winnebago
2000	766	3,668	4,253
2001	671	3,549	3,715
2002	660	3,627	3,744
2003	731	3,768	3,811
2004	741	3,673	3,794
% change 2000-2004	-3.3%	+0.1%	-10.8%

Figure 2

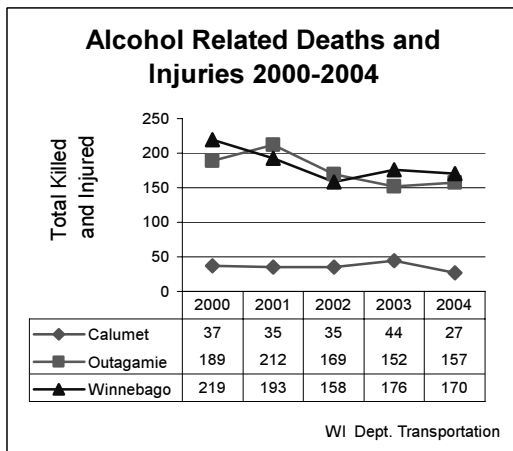
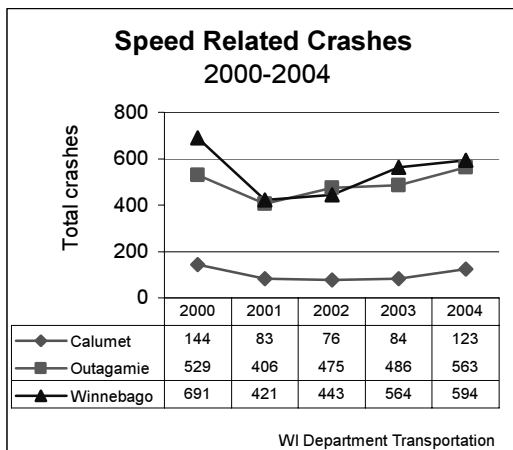


Figure 3



75% of leaders surveyed believed the region is doing a good or excellent job of "promoting safe traffic conditions locally."

Data Highlights

- **Figure 1** Total motor vehicle crashes have declined (Calumet and Winnebago Counties) or remained steady (Outagamie County) since 2000. In the three counties, there were 43 fatalities in 2003 and 45 in 2004, the same as in 2000, despite two years in between with only 27-28 deaths.
- **Figure 2** Alcohol related crashes, deaths, and injuries have declined in all three counties since 2000.
- **Figure 3** In Calumet and Winnebago Counties, the number of speed-related crashes in 2004 was at or below 2000 rates. However, these rates are on an upward trend. Outagamie County's rate in 2004 was higher than in 2000.
- Vehicle-deer crashes increased 8% for combined counties and 16% in Outagamie County between 2000 and 2004.
- More people are driving: in 2004, 91% of employed residents in the Appleton metro area reported commuting alone by car to work (US rate, 81%) compared to 87% in 2002 (US Census) with an average commuting time of 16 minutes (2005 Citizen Survey). Traffic is a major concern of citizens. In responding to the open-ended question, "If you could change one thing about the Fox Cities region," 13% of citizens referred to traffic: road construction, congestion, and safety concerns.
- In 2004 a Department of Transportation study found that 74% of NE Wisconsin residents were wearing seat belts.

Progress and Concerns

Automobile traffic has increased in the region in recent years. Speed-related deaths and injuries have increased in all three counties while alcohol related crashes, deaths, and injuries are steady or declining. Construction delays and safety concerns were the top "write in" responses to the Citizen Survey.

In most focus groups, participants referred to the "good access" they experienced getting around in the Fox Cities area: good roads and short commuting times (16 minutes average commute by survey respondents).

Within many focus groups transportation was identified as an area of concern: not so much about traffic congestion and safety, but about the lack of public transportation options for those who are unable or don't wish to drive cars to all activities. Another dominant topic within most focus groups was the concern about "suburban sprawl" and how it increased reliance on driving by car in the area.

Personal Safety, Adults

Data Highlights

- **Figure 1** In 2004, the forcible rape offense rate in all three counties was lower than that of the US overall (32 per 100,000); Calumet County had a fraction of the rate found elsewhere. Offense rates in Outagamie and Winnebago Counties declined between 2000 and 2004.
- **Figure 2** Reported sexual assaults have increased since 2000 in the Fox Cities area. The number of reported sexual assaults rose 32% between 2000 and 2004 for the three county area taken together, with 529 reports in 2004.
- **Figure 3** In 2000, there were 189 reports of abuse or neglect of an older person in the combined three county area compared to 182 in 2005. In 2004-05, the number of reports of elder abuse/neglect increased in all three counties.
- **Figure 4** There were 2,006 total domestic violence incidents reported in the three counties combined in 2003, a 23% increase over three years.
- Harbor House, a Fox Cities domestic abuse shelter and outreach service, had a 25% increase in crisis calls received between 2003 and 2005. The number of unduplicated persons served rose 47%.

Figure 4

Domestic Violence Incidents Reported			
	2001	2002	2003
Calumet	141	103	75
Outagamie	786	700	1087
Winnebago	700	818	844
TOTAL	1,627	1,621	2,006

Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance

Progress and Concerns

The region demonstrates comparatively low crime rates and effective public and private services to deal with incidents of domestic violence. There is good collaboration across county lines and among emergency response, domestic violence intervention, and sexual assault programs.

Rates of domestic violence and sexual assaults trend upwards in the Fox Cities area overall but are still below national rates. Elder abuse has not increased since 2000 but rose in the past year. While violence in the home affects all racial/ethnic groups, participants in the Multicultural focus group agreed that it is a pressing concern for many minority residents of the area. In other focus groups, experts believed that prevention and rehabilitation efforts for domestic violence are currently inadequate. To a greater extent, treatment must deal with underlying causes like substance abuse and poverty.

Figure 1

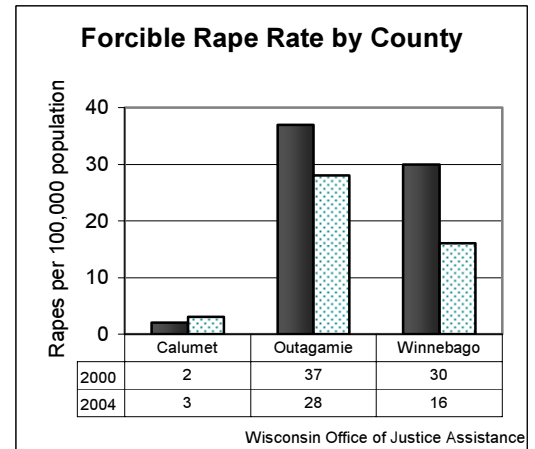


Figure 2

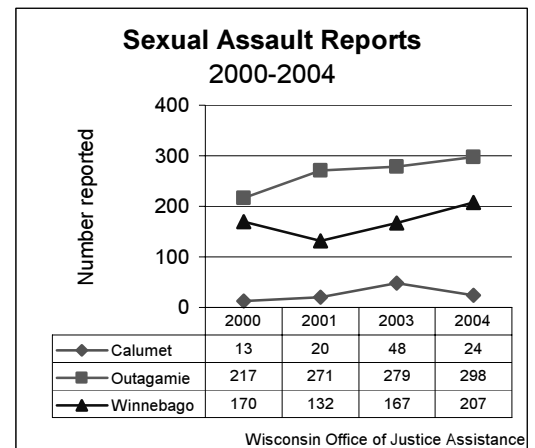
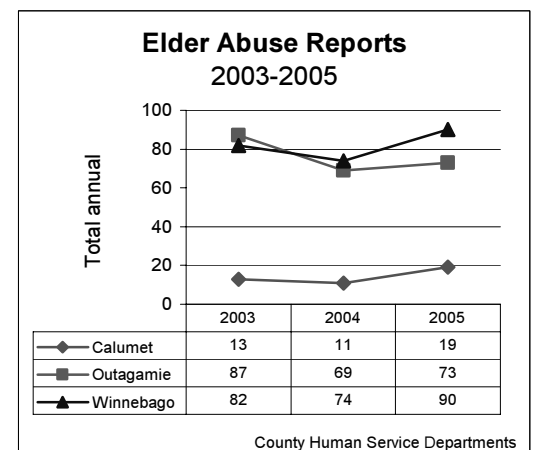


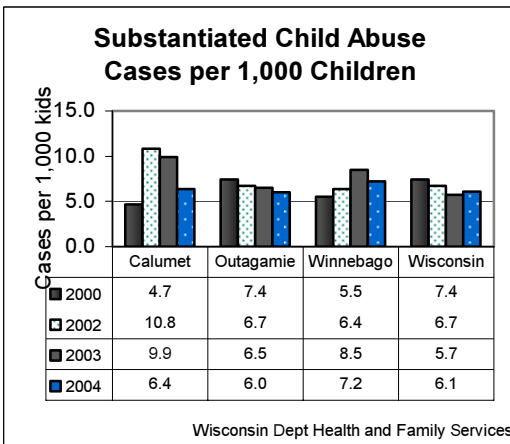
Figure 3



24% of citizens said the region was doing a good or excellent job dealing with abuse and neglect of the elderly and children

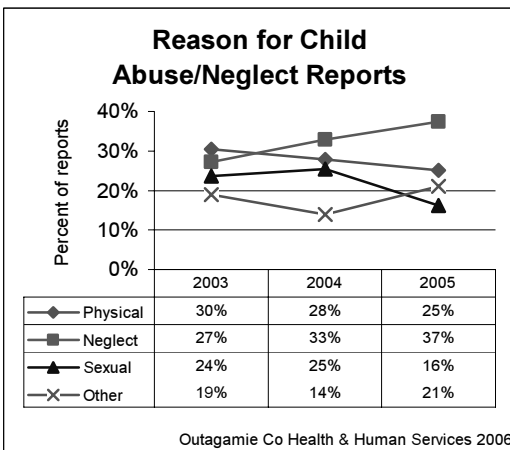
Personal Safety, Children

Figure 1



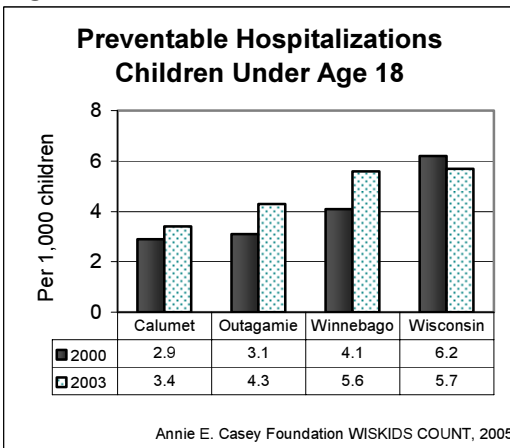
- **Figure 1** All three counties demonstrated declines in rates of child abuse and neglect between 2003-04. In 2004, for every 1,000 children, 6 to 7 were found to have been abused. Outagamie County followed the statewide trend to lower a abuse rate in 2004 compared to 2000, while Calumet and Winnebago Counties demonstrated higher rates than in 2000. In 2004, for the combined three county area, there were 640 substantiated cases of child abuse or neglect compared to 487 in 2000.

Figure 2



- **Figure 2** Neglect overtook physical abuse as the leading reason that child abuse or neglect reports were made in Outagamie County between 2003-2005.
- **Figure 3** The rate of preventable hospitalizations of children was lower than that of Wisconsin overall in 2003, yet in all three counties had increased since 2000. Between three and five children of every area 1,000 had been hospitalized for reasons thought to be preventable in 2003.
- In 2003, the rate of foster, group home or residential placement per 1,000 children ranged from 1 child in Calumet and Outagamie Counties to 4 children in Winnebago County, compared to 5 in Wisconsin (WisKids Count, 2005).
- In 2004, the Children's Hospital of Wisconsin-Fox Valley Child Advocacy Center (described more below) opened with the mission to alleviate secondary trauma to children who have been victims of maltreatment. The Center worked with 256 children and their families in 2005.

Figure 3



Progress and Concerns

The newly opened Child Advocacy Center provides a multidisciplinary response to support children who have been abused and their families. Its staff work in coordination with county child protection and justice department staff to minimize the suffering of victims of abuse. The rate of documented child abuse and neglect trends downward in all three area counties in most recent years.

Neglect is now the most-often reported reason for abuse or neglect of children in at least one local county. Perhaps in a related issue, preventable hospitalizations of children have increased.

77% of leaders and 68% of citizens rated the Fox Cities good or excellent at caring for children and other vulnerable people.

Public Safety

Data Highlights

- **Figure 1** Violent crime rates are well below national and state averages, but while the national rates declined, Fox Cities violent crime rates increased slightly.
- **Figure 2** shows the index crimes committed by type in the combined three county area for 2003 and 2004.
- **Figure 3** Crime trends vary by county. Calumet County, while experiencing less than half the crime rate of the other two counties, showed an increase in both violent and property crimes between 2001 and 2004.

Figure 1

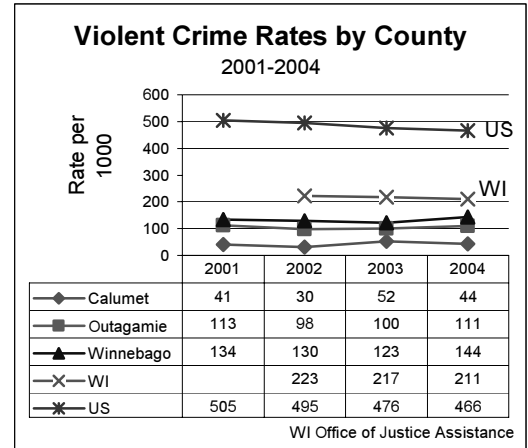


Figure 3

Violent and Property Crime Rates 2001, 2004 (Crimes per 100,000 residents)						
	Calumet		Outagamie		Winnebago	
Year	2001	2004	2001	2004	2001	2004
Violent Crime	41	44	113	111	134	144
Property Crime	1001	1171	2273	2433	2514	2296

Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance

Figure 2

Total Index Crimes, 2003 and 2004 Combined, Calumet, Outagamie, Winnebago Counties				
		2003	2004	
Violent	Murder	3	3	
	Rape	55	77	
	Robbery	62	58	
	Assault	271	300	
Property	Burglary	1151	1164	
	Larceny Theft	6783	6965	
	Car Theft	293	301	
	Arson	42	29	
	Total	8660	8897	

Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance

Progress and Concerns

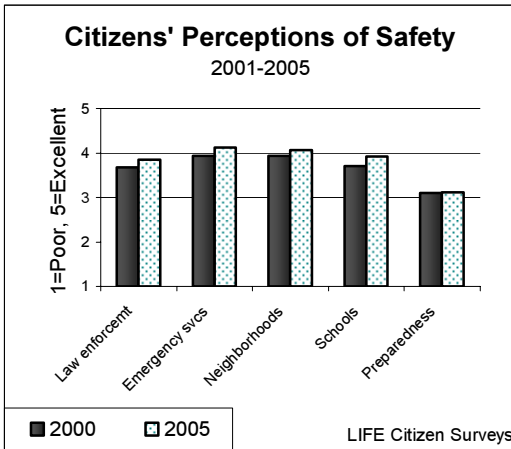
Residents experience the Fox Cities area and their own neighborhoods as very safe. Faster growing communities of the region show upward trends in criminal activity. Emergency services are viewed as excellent and service providers across county and municipal borders increasingly team up to provide more efficient and effective services. There is growing recognition and evidence of the value of crime prevention and rehabilitation programs. Leadership in the region tends to be proactive in identifying and addressing safety-related problems.

According to our safety system experts in their focus group discussion, the reductions in government services (especially for persons with mental illnesses) coupled with the increasing financial pressures experienced by low-income residents may contribute to growing crime rates if unchecked. Internet safety concerns grow, especially identity theft and predatory crimes victimizing youth.

75% of citizens rated the safety of their own neighborhood as above average, unchanged from 2000.

Public Safety System

Figure 1



Data Highlights

- **Figure 1** When surveyed in 2005, citizens perceived law enforcement, emergency services, the safety of neighborhoods and schools to be very good, and in fact slightly better than in 2001. As shown, citizens rated most safety items approximately a “4” on a scale where 5 is excellent.
- **Figure 2** Leaders we surveyed reported an equally high positive regard for safety services in the Fox Cities area, although they indicated that disaster preparedness was just above “fair.”
- **Figure 3** The number of Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) placed in the Fox Cities has more than doubled (from 140 in 2001) and major efforts are underway to blanket area schools with AEDs.
- 77% of leaders perceived that the region is good or excellent at implementing policies that prevent crime. 92% of leaders surveyed thought the region is heading in the right direction in providing for the safety of its residents.

Figure 2



Figure 3

	AED placements	People trained
Public access	196	2500
Professional responders	250	700

Progress and Concerns

Crime rates have remained low as regional leadership has created an effective infrastructure for safety and tends to be proactive in identifying and addressing problems. From most perspectives the region experiences excellent safety-related services. Key informants in the “Safety” focus group noted that increased teamwork has led to improvements in emergency response, including across county lines. Leadership in the region One reason for low crime rates has been the region’s historically strong economy.

Public services currently face the threat of reduced funding as local governments trade off spending scarce dollars on numerous competing needs. While safety system experts believe that the region is well prepared for a major safety threat or disaster, the public and regional leaders aren’t sure.

Key informants in our focus groups believe that the region should invest more in early intervention and related efforts to prevent crime. For example, persons with untreated mental illness increasingly wind up in the justice system. According to experts within several focus groups, ex-offenders with felony records need greater follow up support once released from prison to prevent relapse back into the lifestyle that got them in trouble initially.

94% of leaders and 82% residents said the region does a good or excellent job of ensuring safety.



LIFE of Self Sufficiency

“Excellence” for the Fox Cities is defined as:

Citizens of all ages, income, and ability levels have

- Enough food daily to go without hunger
- Access to emergency services such as financial support, rental assistance, food pantries, short term shelter, and assistance with utility bills
- Access to reliable transportation, quality housing, legal services, and good information and referral to needed services

LIFE of Self-Sufficiency

Access to Affordable Housing	Homeownership rate and median value Percent of households with housing cost burden Housing wage Leader perceptions of availability of affordable housing
Homelessness	Homelessness at point in time Homeless persons by descriptive categories Individuals housed in largest emergency shelters
Economic Stress	Poverty rate by type of household Costs of living expenses Self sufficiency wage FISC client visits and number of payday lenders Leader perceptions of area priorities
Nutrition	Meals provided by counties Food stamp recipients in counties Emergency assistance provided by Salvation Army Participation rate in WIC by women of childbearing age
Support for Basic Needs	Clients served by LEAVEN, Inc. and type of assistance needed Clients receiving W-2 in counties Debt level of FISC clients and number of persons counseled Callers to 2-1-1 requesting financial or housing help Number of clients seen by Legal Services

For more information on self-sufficiency:

Appleton Housing Authority, <http://www.appletonhousing.org/>
Fox Cities Housing Coalition, <http://www.fchc.net/>
Fox Valley area job and wage projections, http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dwd/publications/oea/pdf/oea_14838_p.pdf
Outagamie County Annual report with statistics, http://www.co.outagamie.wi.us/human_services/hhs-home.htm
Food stamp statistics, WI Dept Workforce Development, http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/dws/rsdata/data_statistics.htm
United Way Fox Cities Information and Referral service, telephone 2-1-1, <http://www.unitedwayfoxcities.org>
Wisconsin subsidy programs and utilization http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/dws/rsdata/data_statistics.htm
CAP Services website, <http://www.capserv.org>

Selected additional information for each section of the 2006 LIFE Report can be found in Appendices at our website: <http://www.foxcitieslifestudy.org>

Access to Affordable Housing

Data Highlights

- Figure 1** Three of 4 households in the area were owner-occupied compared to 2 of 3 households in the US (2004). The median home value in the Fox Cities was \$129,424 compared to \$151,366 in the US (2004, US Census).
- Figure 2** The number of *owner* households with a cost burden (that paid more than 30% of income for housing) rose from 19% to 23% between 2002 and 2004). *Renter* households with a cost burden increased from 31% to 43%. In 2004, the median rent in the Fox Cities area was \$575, up 7% from 2002 (US Census).
- Figure 3** The hourly wage needed to afford housing is calculated annually by the National Low Income Housing Coalition. In 2005, the housing wage in the Appleton area (excluding Oshkosh) was \$11.27, up from \$10.83 in 2004 (WI, \$12.45; US, \$15.78).
- 39% of leaders we surveyed indicated that “expanding the number of housing opportunities for low income households” was of the “highest priority” for the region. 62% of leaders rated the region fair or poor for maintaining affordable housing for people with low incomes.
- Federal housing voucher programs administered by the three Fox Cities area Housing Authorities have lengthy waiting lists: in Appleton, the estimated wait between application and receipt of a rental subsidy is 5 years. Two Authorities have closed their waiting lists.
- According to the Appleton Housing Authority in its Blueprint to Affordable Housing (2004), “the inventory of deep-subsidy rental units that can serve very low income people has not grown in many years,” despite a growing population. In addition, in its “Blueprint Update” the Authority listed “development of special needs housing” as its top priority. The need for increased supportive housing for the elderly and persons with disabilities was highlighted in a previous section, LIFE at Home. In early 2006, the Authority reports having 159 units for special needs, with a waiting list of 28.

Progress and Concerns

The Fox Cities area has a higher home-ownership rate and fewer households with a cost burden than the US or Wisconsin overall. While the Peter Street Project created more affordable housing locally, it is apparent that more affordable housing like this is needed: the number of renters with a housing cost burden jumped in just two years. According to our focus groups, much of the rental housing in the area is unaffordable for very low income households. Supportive housing for those with disabilities and the elderly is increasingly needed and appears to be in short supply locally.

Figure 1

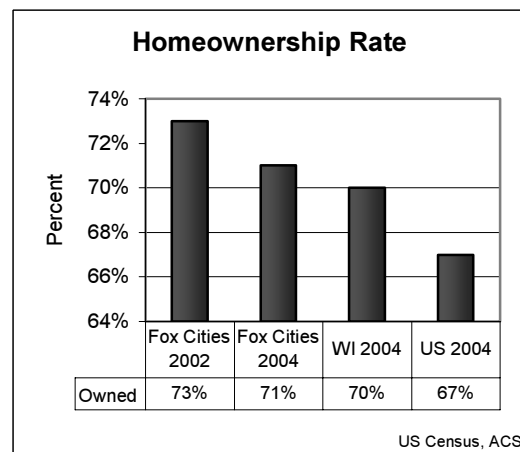


Figure 2

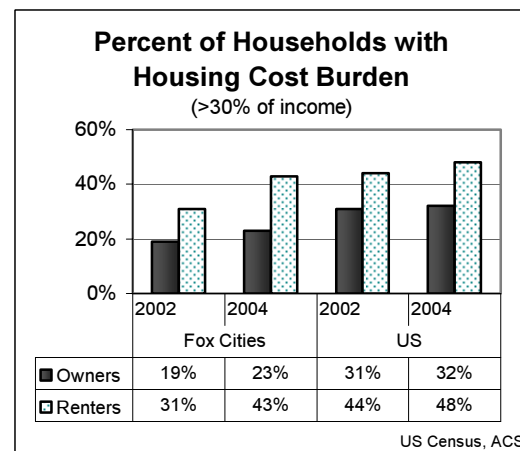
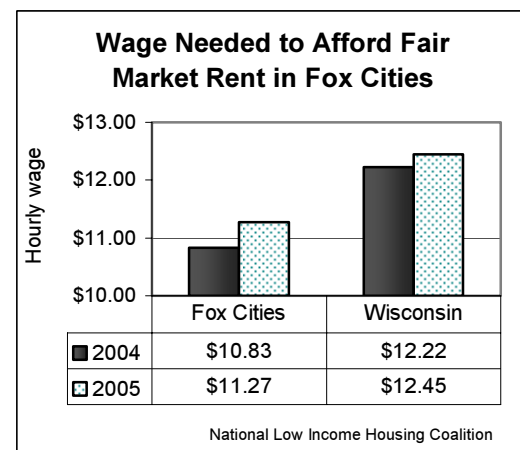


Figure 3



47% of citizens rated the Fox Cities area above average for affordable, quality housing for their families (same as in 2001).

Homelessness

Figure 1

Homeless persons by location	Street	Emergency shelter	Transitional shelter
January 26, 2006			
Single individuals	8	58	72
People in families	0	32	41
Total, 2006	8	90	113

WI Continuum of Care Gaps Analysis

Figure 2

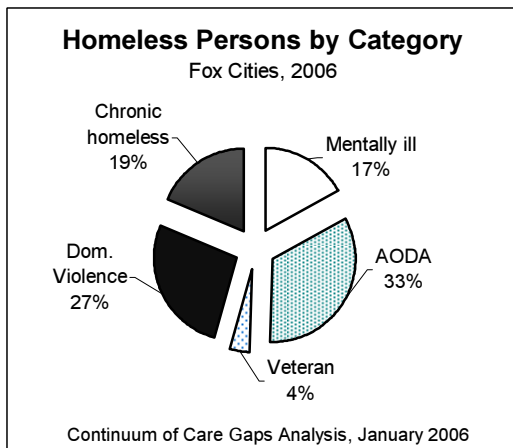
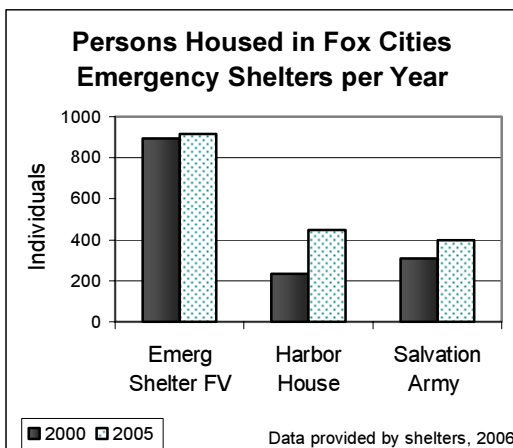


Figure 3



58% of citizens felt confident most or all of the time that they could afford adequate housing for their families.

Data Highlights

- Figure 1** Twice annually, collaborating providers and law enforcement personnel attempt to identify the total number of people on a single night that are homeless in shelters, motels (using vouchers from emergency assistance programs), and outside on the streets. In January, 2006, there were 211 people identified in this count, including 101 people with families. These totals do not include people who are “doubling up” or staying with a friend or relative due to not having their own permanent housing. In 2001, the Fox Cities Housing Coalition counted 175 persons homeless (2001 LIFE Study). The Appleton Area School District reported that during the 2005-06 year, the third year of its Education for Homeless Children program, they will serve 175 children (compared to 175 in 2004-05; 155 in 2003-04).
- Figure 2** Of those people identified as homeless in January, half were classified as having addictions or mental illness, one-fourth were victims of domestic violence, and one-fifth were chronically homeless. Emergency Shelter of the Fox Valley reported that 76% of clients served in 2005 had a substance addiction or mental illness, or both.
- Figure 3** Three of the largest shelters in the area provided statistics on the number of people they served each year since 2000. This number grew by 23% through 2005, largely due to the increase in the number of people served by Harbor House Domestic Abuse Shelter, which expanded its capacity. Emergency Shelter of the Fox Valley has actually seen a decrease in the number of nights of shelter provided for the past two years due in large part to the success of its prevention program implemented in 2003 (described below).

Progress and Concerns

The Fox Cities area benefits from excellent human service providers, many of whom assist people to meet their basic needs, according to our focus group research. The number of persons staying at the Emergency Shelter of the Fox Valley has declined in large part due to the success of a new prevention program offered only in the Fox Cities and in Madison. Staff of this prevention program work with clients at risk of homelessness. Numerous other support programs are part of the continuum of care system mapped by the Fox Cities Housing Coalition.

Providers of basic needs in the Fox Cities area expressed concerns about increasing poverty and growing requests for support to help people meet basic needs. According to providers, many people that require these supports experience untreated mental illness and addictions. Many of their clients hold jobs but do not earn enough to make ends meet.

LIFE of Self-Sufficiency

Economic Stress

Data Highlights

Note: for data on use of selected public benefit programs see "Support Services" at the end of this section.

- Figure 1** The total poverty rate for individuals in the Fox Cities metropolitan area (including Oshkosh) was 6% in 2004, up from 5.8% in 2002 yet less than half the US rate. This equates to approximately 21,600 persons estimated to be in poverty locally (the 2006 federal poverty level for a family of four was \$19,350). Another 38,000 households earned from \$25,000-50,000, just above the poverty level.
- Figure 2** We presented area leaders with 16 items and asked them whether they were low, medium, or high priority issues for the area. All four of their top-rated items related to economic stress for families with low incomes.
- Figure 3** The five occupations with the largest projected employment growth in the Fox Valley Workforce Development Area average between \$7-11 an hour, with one exception (Registered Nurses).
- The costs of certain essential services rose significantly between 2001-2005: gasoline, 107%; natural gas, 34%; electricity, 21%; child care, 30% (WI Energy Statistics, CCR&R, Inc.). In comparison, between 1999 and 2003, per capita income rose 14% in the area. In 2004, before the most dramatic increases in energy costs were seen, the hourly self-sufficiency wage (income needed to afford area cost of living) in the Fox Cities for a single adult was \$6 an hour; for one adult with two children, \$18/hour; for a two parent family with two children, \$10/hour (each adult, total \$20/hour--household) (WI Women's Network).
- Lending practices targeted for low income families have emerged recently: mortgage loans allowing borrowers to exceed recommended debt levels, car loans with interest rates of 300-500%, and "payday lenders" with annual interest rates of between 528% to 800%. In the Fox Valley Area, clients of Financial Information and Service Center (FISC) have outstanding debts to at least 20 different "payday lenders" (FICS).

Progress and Concerns

In 2004 the poverty rate of the Fox Cities area was well below state and US averages, and the area unemployment rate remains low (see LIFE at Work). More recent data (2005-06) suggests that financial pressures for those with limited budgets have increased (see "Support Services" at the end of this section). The largest number of jobs projected to be available in the region in the next few years pay low wages, below the amount required for self sufficiency. Leaders we surveyed earmarked low income-related issues as their top concerns.

Figure 1

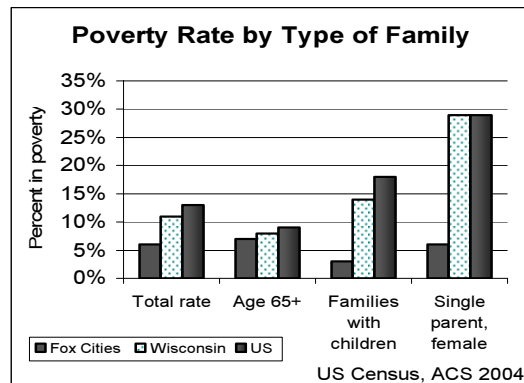


Figure 2

Five Highest Ranked Priorities of Leaders		%
1	Increasing higher wage jobs	70
2	Helping to meet basic needs	41
3	Expanding low income housing	39
4	Addressing poverty	38
5	Strengthening education	37

Figure 3

Jobs with Most Annual Openings Fox Valley Area					
Estimated Employment					
Occupation	2002	2012	% Change	Training	Avg. Wage
Health Care Occupations	18,550	24,400	31.5%	Varies	\$9.50/aide \$23.03/RN
Retail Sales	8,870	10,070	13.5%	1 month	\$10.69
Cashiers	6,760	7,580	12.1%	1 month	\$7.72
Waiter/Waitress	4,640	5,270	13.6%	1 month	\$7.05
Food prep/Server	4,470	5,370	20.1%	1 month	\$7.45

WI DWD, Office of Economic Advisors

47% of residents felt financially secure all or most of the time in 2005.

Nutrition

Figure 1

Total Meals Served by Counties					
County	2002	2003	2004	2005	% '02-05
Outagamie	70,367	58,173	58,701	58,524	-17%
Calumet	25,422	29,907	32,414	33,921	33%
Winnebago	122,160	124,835	125,795	127,123	4%
Total	217,949	212,915	216,910	219,568	1%

County Human Services Departments

Figure 2

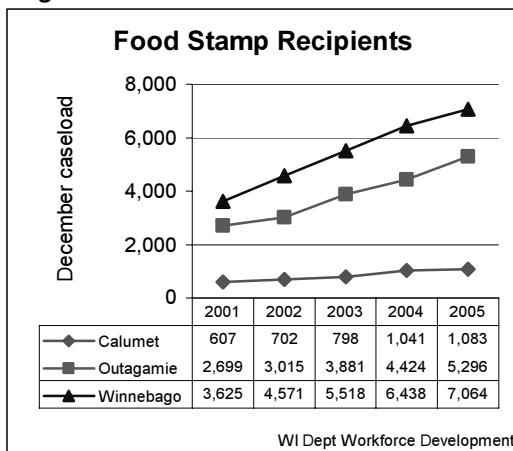


Figure 3

Salvation Army Assistance Programs			
	2004	2005	% change
Noon Meals	63,849	60,289	-6%
Pounds of Food	368,294	380,981	3%
People assisted, emergency support (vouchers, food)	17,583	18,154	3%

83% of residents seldom or never worried about having enough food for their families.

Data Highlights

- Figure 1** The three counties in the Fox Cities area provided almost 220,000 partially subsidized or free meals to low-income or homebound residents in 2005 (both home delivered and at congregate sites). In 2005, two-thirds of the meals provided in Calumet County were home delivered compared to half in 2002. Meals provided in the other two counties have remained fairly steady.
- Figure 2** The number of food stamp recipients at year end for the three counties combined grew 95% between 2001 and 2005, compared to 44% in Wisconsin overall. Eligibility is based on income and household expenses. Typical beneficiaries are low-income workers, W-2 participants, or persons with high housing or utility costs. In 2005, more than 50% of recipients were age 16 or under; 18% were elderly or had disabilities.
- Figure 3** The Salvation Army in Appleton provides food, vouchers for motels and utility payments, and other aid so that clients can meet basic needs. In 2005, the agency provided emergency assistance to 18,154 people (for some, more than once).
- Between 2000 and 2004, St. Joseph Food Program, Inc. in Menasha tracked a 26% increase in households they served, providing meals to almost 3,500 households in 2004.
- In Winnebago and Outagamie Counties combined, participation in WIC, the food subsidy program for women, infants, and children, grew from 57 to 67 women per 1,000 women of childbearing age. About three-fourths of the people served by the program were infants and children.

Progress and Concerns

The majority of local residents (on the 2005 LIFE Citizen Survey) expressed no concern with having enough food for their families. Many people are participating in meal programs locally. In Calumet county, greater numbers of people receive home delivered meals than in the past. The WIC program serves a higher proportion of women of childbearing age and their children compared to recent years.

Eligibility for receiving food stamps grew about twice as fast in the Fox Cities area than it did statewide. As financial struggles mount for low income families (see "Economic Stress," the first page in this section), food security may become a concern for a growing number of people locally.

Support Services

Data Highlights

- Figure 1** In 2005, housing and utility assistance were the most frequent needs requested by callers to LEAVEN, Inc., one of the major nonprofit organizations that provides assistance with basic needs to residents of the Fox Cities. Between 2000 and 2005, the number of persons LEAVEN served nearly doubled, rising to 5,480 client households (2,000 of whom were new clients in 2005). Two-thirds of clients were women, three-fourths Caucasian, and 16% were people with disabilities (LEAVEN, Inc).
- Figure 2** Since 2001, the number of people receiving W-2 (the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) in the three county area has remained about the same or declined. As a result, in 2005, 1.20 persons per 1,000 received W-2 support compared to 1.43 in 2001.
- Figure 3** Financial Information and Service Center (FISC) has seen a decline in the number of clients *eligible* for debt management payment arrangements with creditors (in order to reduce late fees and interest rates), while at the same time, those that *are* eligible have increased debt. FISC provided in-person counseling services to 1,277 clients in 2005, a 23% increase since 2003.
- In fall, 2005, the United Way Fox Cities announced the transition of its information and referral service to a 2-1-1 call center. The website and telephone line helps the public find needed health and human services. Through the end of March, 2006, 21% of callers asked for information about financial or housing assistance.
- In 2004, Legal Services of NE Wisconsin provided legal advice to 859 adults in Calumet, Outagamie, and Winnebago Counties, compared to 358 in 2000.

Figure 1

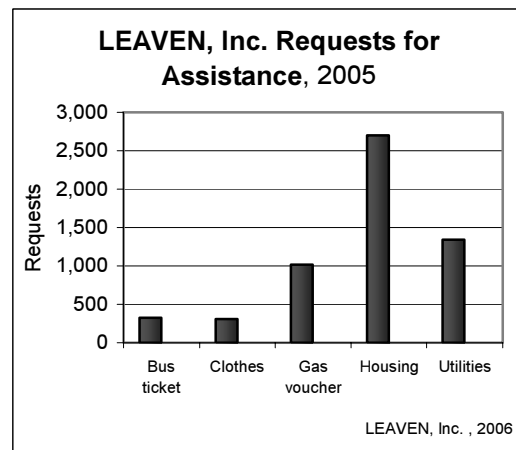
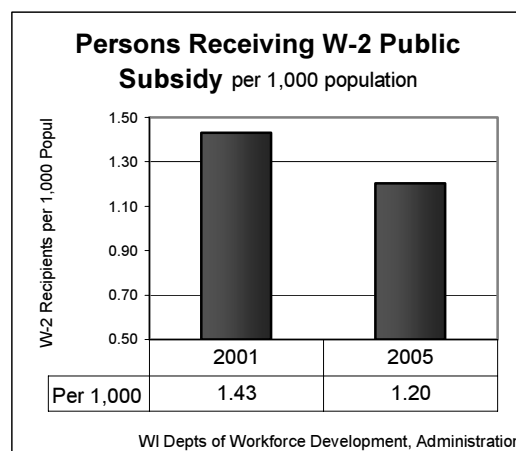


Figure 2



Progress and Concerns

Experts in several different focus groups pointed to the need for training and support to assist adults to expand basic skills like financial management, employment, and parenting. One program that addresses these needs, CAP Services, initiated a Skills Enhancement Program locally (serving 150 low-income persons) that is now being expanded to 11 counties statewide with funding by Governor Doyle's discretionary grant fund. The participant must maintain employment while completing a training program. Another program, ADVOCAP's Project POWER (Providing Opportunities for Women's Employment and Retention), completed its third year of federal funding in 2005 and now continues to offer the proven program to a more limited extent. With support, clients develop self sufficiency plans, maintain employment, and work toward goals.

Figure 3

	2003	2004	2005
Debt management	913	725	607
Average debt	\$3,349	\$3,563	\$3,833
Financial counseling clients	898	1,004	1,277

25% of citizens rated the Fox Cities above average as "a place where people with low incomes can meet their basic needs."



LIFE at Work

“Excellence” for the Fox Cities is defined as:

Citizens of all types experience:

- An economy that offers a lifelong continuum of job and career training opportunities
- Pathways from school to work
- Employment opportunities that enable them to support an acceptable quality of life for their families
- A growing economy that attracts and maintains an available, skilled, and motivated workforce
- A regional vision of economic growth that is explicit, widely shared, and pursued through partnerships

LIFE at Work

Cost of Living	Median home sales price Cost of living index Local property tax rates Household monthly budget
Earnings and Wages	Median household and per capita income Income distribution Median effective buying income Median wages and trends for selected jobs
Economic Development	Businesses with increased profits in past year Leader perceptions of local economy and infrastructure Employers planning to increase employment Commercial/industrial business permits
Economy	Largest employers in the area, employment by industry Manufacturing sector size Retail sales and tourism dollars Citizen and leader ratings of economy
Employment	Job growth by industry sector Unemployment rate trends Citizen rating of current employment situation Labor force participation rate
Transportation	Average commute time Use of public transportation Flights and freight
Workforce Excellence	Highest educational attainment of area workforce Availability of qualified workers Leader rating of ability to attract and retain young professionals

For more information on work and economic topics:

Economic Policy Institute cost of living comparisons, http://www.epi.org/content.cfm/datazone_dznational
Wisconsin Economic Indicators, <http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/oea/>
Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce and Industry, reports on local economic issues, <http://www.foxcitieschamber.com>
Unemployment statistics and trends, http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/oea/unemploy_rates_labor_stats.htm
Labor force and employment by industry sector, http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/oea/xls/wi_msa_quick_table.xls
Bureau of Labor Statistics, http://stats.bls.gov/eag/eag.wi_appleton_msa.htm
WI Department of Workforce Development, <http://worknet.wisconsin.gov/worknet/datablist.aspx?menuselection=da>

Selected additional information for each section of the 2006 LIFE Report can be found in Appendices at our website: <http://www.foxcitieslifestudy.org>

Cost of Living

Data Highlights

- Figure 1** In 2005, the median home sales prices for Calumet, Outagamie, and Winnebago Counties were below the national average, and with the exception of Calumet County fell below the statewide average. Home prices had increased in all three counties: Calumet 6%, Winnebago, 12% and Outagamie County, 20%. During that time, prices increased 23% in the US.
- Figure 2** The ACCRA Cost of Living Index compares the relative price levels of consumer goods and services around the United States. The overall cost of living in the Fox Cities area is 92.6% of the US average. Transportation and health care costs exceed the US average.
- Figure 3** The county property tax rates in the Fox Cities area slightly exceeded the state average in 2004-05. These tax rates declined for Calumet and Outagamie Counties. On the Wisconsin level (not graphed), the percent of personal income allocated for state and local taxes in 2004 was 12.1%, down from 13% in 2000 (WI Taxpayers Alliance).
- The Economic Policy Institute estimated the monthly dollar cost for a family of four living in the Appleton-Neenah-Oshkosh area in 2004 was \$3,022 (to cover all basic necessities). This amounts to a household net income of \$36,264 annually. In the Fox Cities area, almost 51,000 households (35%) had total household incomes below \$35,000 in 2004.

Figure 1

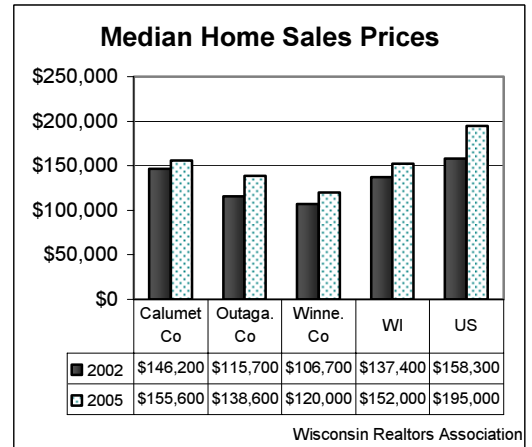
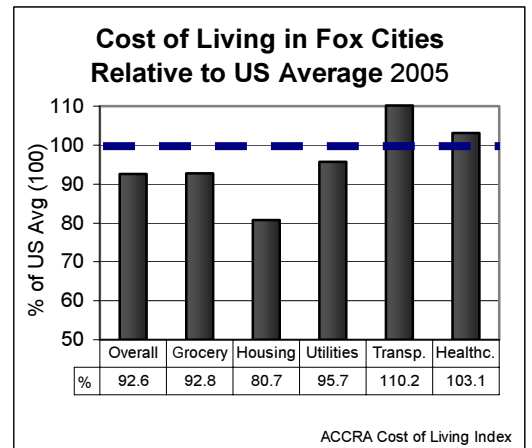


Figure 2

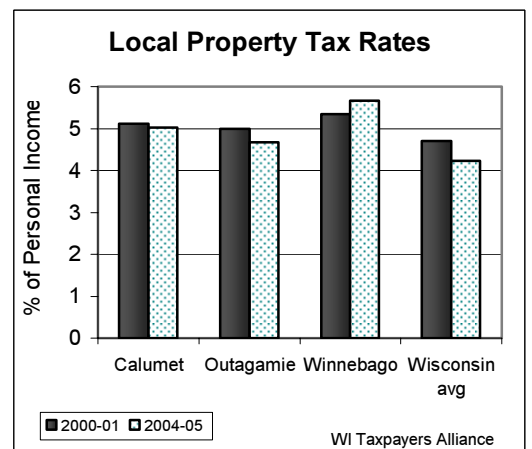


Progress and Concerns

The cost of living in the Fox Cities is well below the national average, especially for housing. In some areas, local property tax rates have declined and there is continued interest in reducing the tax burden in Wisconsin.

In a number of key sectors, especially energy and health care, the United States faces significant price increases. (See "Economic Stress" in LIFE of Self-Sufficiency.) Within the majority of focus groups, participants shared concerns about growing health care costs, including higher deductibles and co-payments for those with insurance.

Figure 3



47% of citizens reported that they felt financially secure all or most of the time, while 18% said they did so seldom or never.

Earnings and Wages

Figure 1

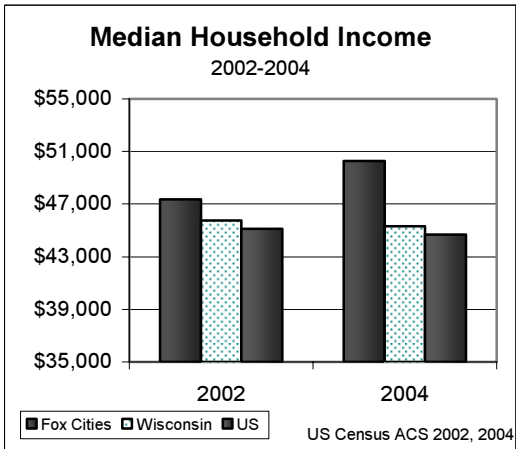


Figure 2

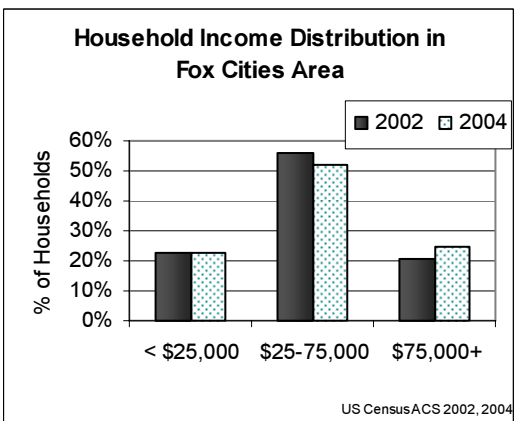
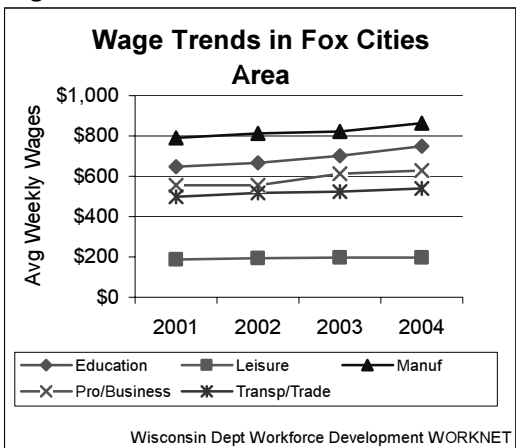


Figure 3



Data Highlights

- Figure 1** In 2004, the median *household* income in the Fox Cities exceeded that in Wisconsin and the US. Income grew in the Fox Cities while in Wisconsin and the US, household income declined (American Community Survey). In 2004, the median *per capita* income in the Fox Cities metropolitan area was slightly lower than in Wisconsin and the US. It rose 7% since 2002 compared to 11% nationally.
- Figure 2** While the percent of Fox Cities area households earning below \$25,000 remained constant between 2002 and 2004, the number of households with earnings in the middle ranges declined from 56% to 52% while the highest earning households increased from 21% to 25% of total households locally. Each percentage point represents about 1,453 households. This follows the national trend.
- Figure 3** For some of the most common types of jobs in the Fox Cities area, weekly wages (for full time work) have risen over the past four years. Leisure service jobs, however remained near the minimum wage level (WI Department of Workforce Development).
- The median hourly wage in 2004 was \$13.90 in Wisconsin and \$13.98 in the US (WI Department of Workforce Development).
- The median household effective buying income (disposable income) in the area increased between 2002-2005, from \$40,107 to \$41,905 (Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce and Industry).

Progress and Concerns

Wages and income tend to be increasing for the major job sectors in the area. Household income in the area exceeds state and national levels despite the fact that per capita income lags behind. Growing household income is largely due to higher workforce participation rates locally which we highlight on the "Workforce Excellence" page.

The recent decline in the often higher-wage manufacturing jobs (locally and nationally) and the increase in lower-wage jobs in retail and service sectors poses a threat to earnings potential of local residents.

70% of area leaders gave "increasing higher wage jobs" a top priority ranking, by far the most pressing local issue in their opinions.

Economic Development

Data Highlights

- Figure 1** In 2006, 68% of local employers surveyed indicated that their profits had increased in the past year compared to only 58% in 2005.
- Figure 2** Leaders we surveyed were highly positive about the area's infrastructure and quality of life features to support business locally. When it comes to building a strong Fox Cities economy, 63% of leaders said that the area was good or excellent. Only 40% thought the area was good or excellent at "implementing regional strategies for adapting the local economy to changing global economy."
- Figure 3** In 2005, 57% percent of employers in the Fox Cities area were planning to increase employment compared to 50% in 2006, up from 38% in 2002 and 2003.
- The total value of building permits for commercial/Industrial projects in NE Wisconsin: \$215 million in 2002 (880 permits), \$146 million in 2003 (706), \$173 million in 2004 (749) and \$190 million in 2005 (1084).
- When asked about regional priorities, 70% of leaders gave highest priority to increasing higher wage jobs. 30% of leaders believed that "building a broader regional partnership" in northeast Wisconsin was a top priority for the area. Focus group participants echoed the need for regional partnership and were pleased about the New North initiative (described below).
- 42% of citizens believed that the Fox Cities area is "above average" at doing the things necessary to have a strong economy in the future (36% said "average.")

Progress and Concerns

Area leadership is proactively addressing local economic concerns. The New North initiative received \$390,000 from the State of Wisconsin (matched by local dollars) to form an 18-county partnership in northeast Wisconsin. Announced in the fall of 2005, the initiative will promote the area by creating positive brand recognition and providing leadership for economic development. The initiative was highlighted in a majority of focus groups as key to maintaining a strong local economy.

Fox Valley Technical College supports economic development locally: the Venture Center, a collaborative effort with University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, opened in early 2006 and will support entrepreneurs and enterprise development. The KUKA Robotics Training Center aims to develop state-of-the-art robotics capabilities in the region.

Figure 1

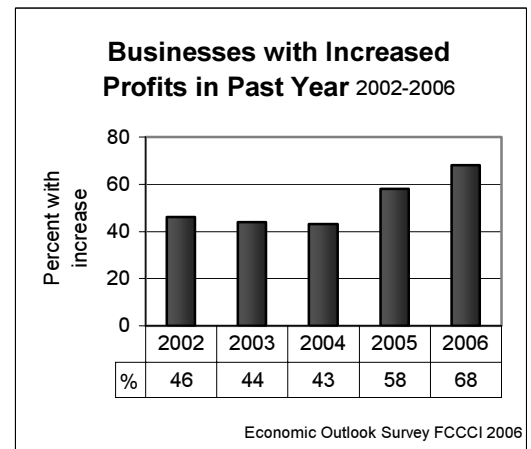


Figure 2

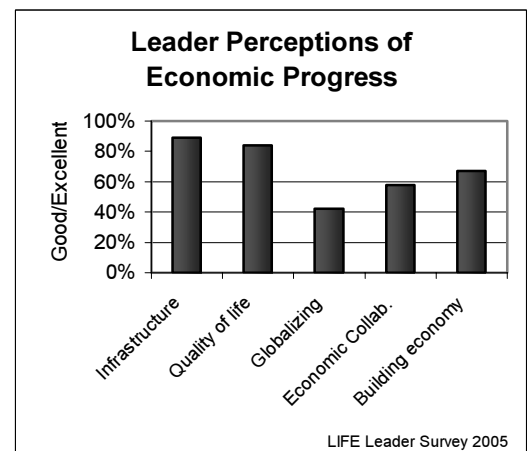
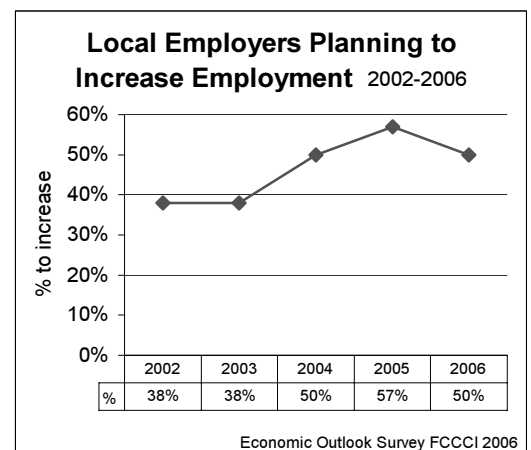


Figure 3



81% of Fox Cities leaders believed that the area's efforts to build a strong economy were heading in the right direction.

Economy

Figure 1

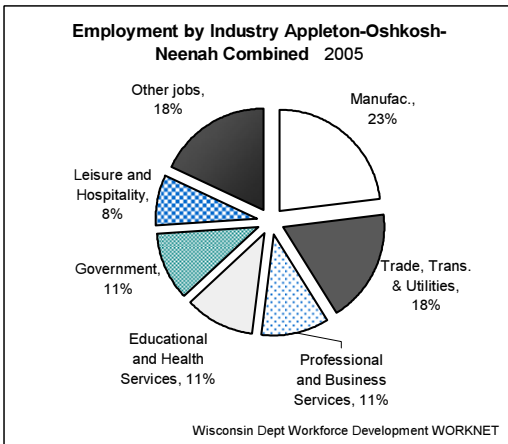
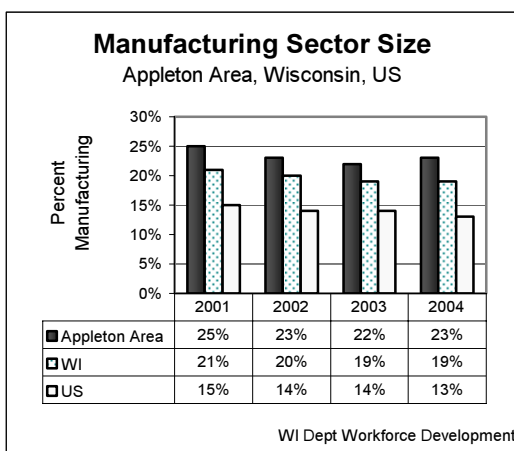


Figure 2

Major Fox Cities Area Employers	2005 employment
Kimberly-Clark	5,782
ThedaCare	5,000
Affinity Health System	4,300
Appleton Papers	2,500
Plexus Corporation	2,200
Banta Corporation	1,850
Appleton Area School District	1,724
Thrivent Financial for Lutherans	1,719
Pierce Manufacturing	1,500
International Paper	1,475

Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce & Industry

Figure 3



Data Highlights

- Figure 1** The largest sectors of the local economy include manufacturing (23% of jobs), trade, transportation and utilities (18%), professional and business (11%), education and health (11%) and government (11%). Recent employment trends for these jobs are presented in the "Employment" section.
- Figure 2** In 2005, Kimberly-Clark was the largest employer in the Fox Cities area with 5,782 jobs. This number is likely to decline as this report went to press due to recently announced layoffs. Paper production and health care were among the largest employers locally.
- Figure 3** In 2004, the manufacturing sector in the Appleton area was a larger percentage of the workforce (23%) than in Wisconsin (19%) or the US (13%). This sector's share of the local economy has declined since 2001.
- Total retail sales in the Fox Cities area (including Oshkosh) grew by 69% between 1995 and 2005, from \$3.6 million to \$6.1 million. A featured destination, the Fox River Mall attracts retail business from around the region and state, having adopted the tagline, "Wisconsin's Shopping Place."
- Outagamie County ranks 8th and Winnebago County 9th among Wisconsin counties based on the economic impact of tourism. The two counties combined earned over \$500 million traveler dollars in 2004 (The Business News, 2005)

Progress and Concerns

The Fox Cities area economy has historically been dominated by manufacturing and continues to have a very strong base of manufacturing enterprises both large and small.

Unemployment has trended downward recently (see "Employment") and many employers report being in a hiring mode. Retail shopping draws in tourism dollars and provides an anchor to regional retail activity.

According to many we spoke with the national economic shift away from manufacturing toward services impacts the local economy strongly. Retail, leisure, health and education sectors will continue to grow in relative size.

In 2005, 88% of Leaders and 73% of citizens rated the local economy as good or excellent (not asked in 2000).

Employment

Data Highlights

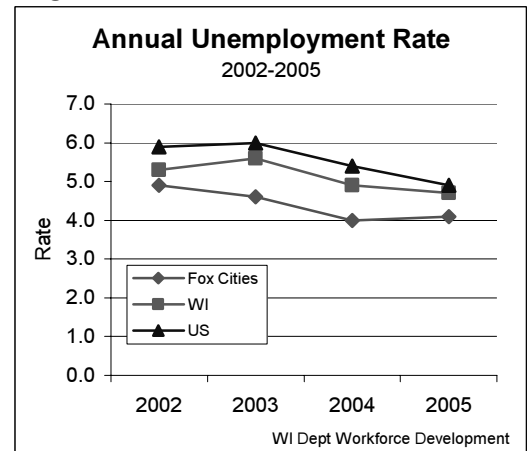
- Figure 1** In 2005, nearly 209,000 workers were employed in non-farm jobs in the Fox Cities area (including Oshkosh), a slight increase over 2000. In that time period, jobs in professional and business services grew by 38% and information services jobs by 37%. Manufacturing jobs decreased by almost 19%. 23% of the region's workforce was employed in manufacturing compared to 19% in Wisconsin and 13% nationally (2004).
- Figure 2** The annual unemployment rate in the Fox Cities is lower than in Wisconsin and the US and has declined since 2002. In 2005, only 4.1% of Fox Cities workers were unemployed compared to 4.7% and 4.9% rates for Wisconsin and the US, respectively.
- Figure 3** In 2000, 61% of residents believed that the Fox Cities was above average in providing job opportunities offering a good standard of living for their families; in 2005, only 50% said so.
- In 2004 the labor force participation rate in the Fox Cities was 71%, higher than Wisconsin (70%) and the US (66%) (these figures were unchanged from 2002). A higher percentage of females (65%) were in the workforce in the Fox Cities compared to the US (59%).
- 48% of leaders believe the area is good or excellent at attracting and retaining young professionals; another 42% rated the area fair or poor at doing so (the rest were not sure).

Figure 1

Appleton-Neenah-Menasha-Oshkosh Metropolitan Area	2005	Percent Change 2000-2005	Percent of Non-Farm Workforce
Total Non-farm Employment	208,700	1.3%	100%
Mining & Construction	12,800	-4.5%	6%
Manufacturing	47,100	-18.9%	23%
Trade, Transportation, & Util.	37,600	-2.1%	18%
Information	3,700	37.0%	2%
Financial Activities	10,600	12.8%	5%
Professional & Business	22,900	38.0%	11%
Educational & Health	22,600	15.9%	11%
Leisure & Hospitality	17,200	15.4%	8%
Other Services (non-public)	10,400	5.1%	5%
Government	23,800	2.6%	11%

Wisconsin Dept. of Workforce Development WORKNET

Figure 2

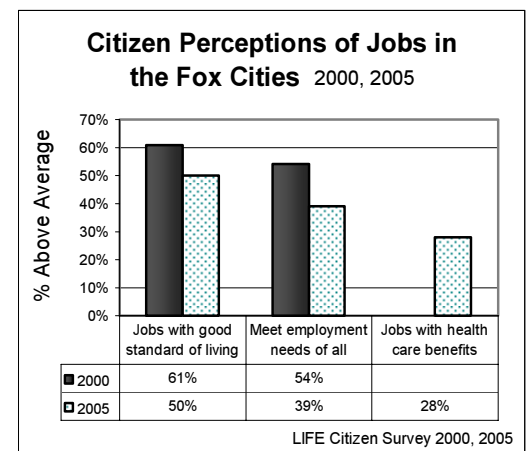


Progress and Concerns

Many employment figures show positive trends locally. A higher percentage of Fox Cities residents work compared to Wisconsin and the US.

Yet a change in the local employment mix is being acknowledged, as focus group participants and survey respondents pointed to the replacement of high paying jobs offering health care coverage with lower paying service sector jobs offering no benefits. The region's higher than average labor participation rate by women translates into greater need for quality child care with over 2/3 of households having all adults at work (see LIFE at Home, Caring for Children).

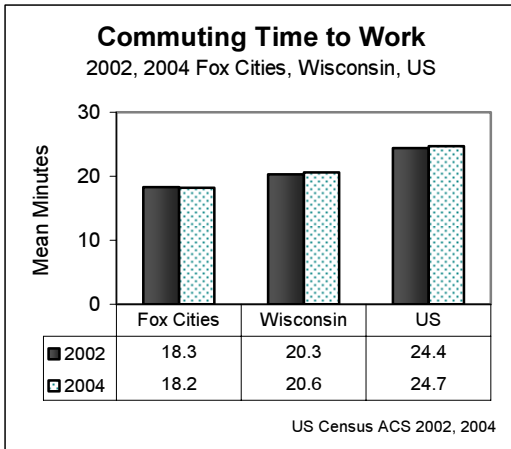
Figure 3



18% of citizens scored the Fox Cities area below average at providing jobs with health care benefits.

Transportation

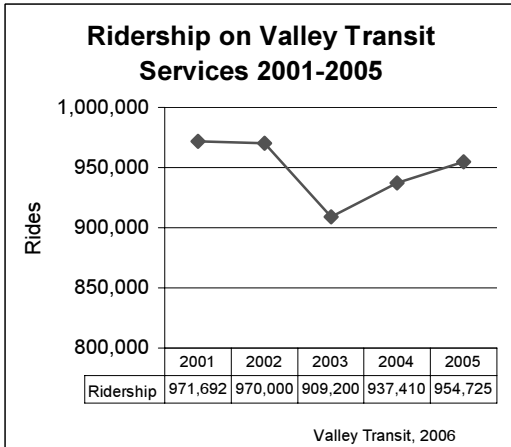
Figure 1



Data Highlights

- Figure 1** Commuting times for those that drive to work averaged just over 18 minutes for Fox Cities area residents in 2004 compared to almost 25 minutes across the United States. 91% of workers in the region commuted alone to work in 2004 compared to 81% of US workers.
- Figure 2** Use of public transportation in the Fox Cities declined between 2002 and 2003 but increased in the following two years; fares rose from \$1 to \$1.50 per trip. Valley Transit reports increased requests for later scheduled transit service and extended routes.
- Figure 3** Use of the airport is increasing, especially for freight. Between 2002 and 2005, freight shipped through the Outagamie County Regional Airport grew 73%, the number of passengers grew 15%. In 2005, 10,098 flights arrived or departed on the airport runways.
- 45% of citizens scored the overall transportation system (roads, traffic, bus service) as above average, with another 37% indicating the system was average.

Figure 2



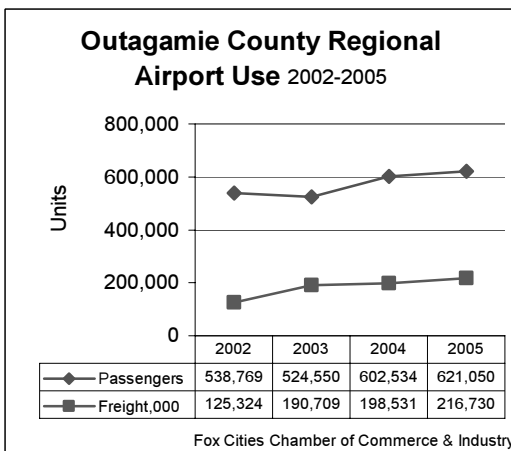
Progress and Concerns

The area experiences short travel times to most locations by automobile. A large percent of residents believe that the transportation system is meeting the needs of the expanding region. A community initiative has recently outfitted numerous transit buses with bike racks to support biking as an alternative travel mode, as municipalities like Neenah make greater efforts to develop on-street trails for commuting. Young professionals (in their focus group) enthusiastically cited the “great airport” with good connections to hubs and major cities. Development of biking/walking trails has increased.

At the same time, respondents to the Citizen Survey pointed to transportation issues more often than any other issue when asked, “if you could change one thing about this area, what would it be?” Many of their comments related to safety concerns due to speeding, construction, and traffic congestion.

Within several focus group discussions, participants expressed interest in having options other than cars for travel around the area, including convenient, more frequently available public transportation and safe bike or pedestrian options. While public transportation shows increasing use, the limitations of routes and time-of-day pose a challenge for some.

Figure 3



In 2005 42% of citizens felt that the transportation system was keeping up with growth, compared to 32% in 2000.

Workforce Excellence

Data Highlights

- Figure 1** In 2004, the Fox Cities area was characterized by a higher than (US) average rate of high school completion but lower than average percent of adults holding higher education degrees. Locally 23% of adults over age 25 hold a college or graduate degree compared to 24% in Wisconsin and 27% in the United States.
- Figure 2** The percent of employers locally that believe the availability of qualified workers was good or excellent rose from 55% in 2005 to 61% in 2006, up from 34% in 2002 but below the peak of 65% in 2004. Focus group participants highlighted the workforce as a particular strength of the area.
- The strong work ethic and generally friendly attitudes of the local workforce emerged as consistent positive themes in several focus group discussions.
- Fox Valley Technical College (FVTC) continues to expand enrollment in health care programs, a growing sector for employment. Between 2001 and 2005, enrollment grew from 1,000 to over 2,500 and the number of graduates with degrees in health professions rose from approximately 330 to almost 800.
- FVTC reports a number of programs have reached a point where demand for education services exceeds capacity: fire protection, construction, welding, truck driving, automotive technology/repair, natural resources.

Progress and Concerns

Current workforce qualifications appear strong, and the work ethic in the Fox Cities area comes across as a vital asset. The quality of life and affordability of the region help attract qualified workers.

Questions arise regarding the workforce's preparation for the future. Several focus groups addressed the topic of preparing for future employment needs in the area, specifically for the health care occupations as the population ages. They urged regional leaders to more strongly link secondary schools with career fields needed by area employers, like skilled trades and health care occupations.

Young professionals we spoke with felt that the area was fairly "homogeneous" and needs to attract more people with different kinds of backgrounds to bring in new ideas and add flavor to the local economy.

Figure 1

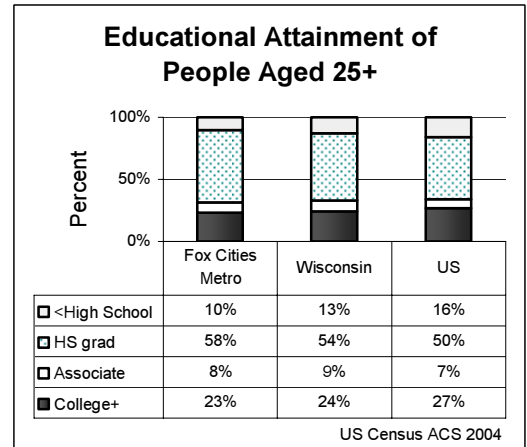
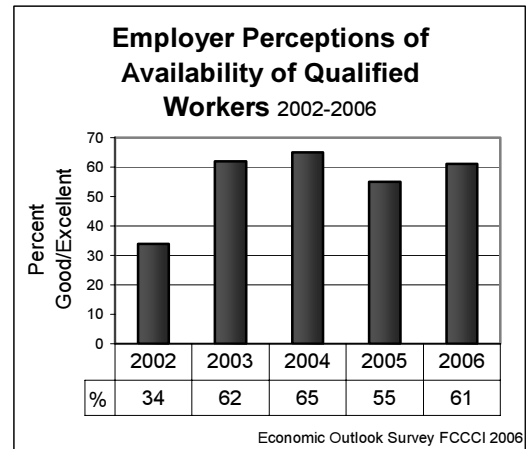


Figure 2



48% of leaders rated the Fox Cities good or excellent at attracting, cultivating, and rewarding talented young professionals.



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