












# LIFE of Self-Sufficiency



## Highlighted Indicators

Current	Trend	
		National Low Income Housing Coalition housing wage
		Percent of households with housing cost burden
		Homelessness
		FoodShare recipients
		Individual poverty rate

Good	
Fair	
Poor	
Not rated	

---

### ***“Excellence” for the Fox Cities is defined as:***

Community members of all ages, income, and ability levels have:

- Enough nutritious 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, affordable and quality housing, legal services, and accurate information and referral to needed services

# LIFE of Self-Sufficiency

The pages listed below contain data from published sources presented in this section. Results from the Community and Leader surveys, sector expert groups, and community focus groups are also presented on most pages.

<u>Page</u>	<u>Data Shown</u>
<b>Access to Affordable Housing</b>	<i>National Low Income Housing Coalition housing wage *</i> <i>Percent of households with housing cost burden *</i> Homeownership rate Home foreclosure rate Requests for rental assistance of nonprofit agencies Median rent
<b>Homelessness</b>	Homelessness at most recent point in time count <i>Homelessness*</i> by descriptive categories Number of individuals housed in largest emergency shelters Number of homeless children in school districts, per child population
<b>Food Security</b>	Number of meals provided by area shelters Number of households served by food pantries <i>Foodshare recipients *</i> Participation in Women, Infant, and Children Nutrition Program (WIC) Free and reduced lunch rates of public schools
<b>Economic Stress</b>	<i>Individual poverty rate *</i> Cost of living expenses Requests for financial help of 2-1-1 service
<b>Support Services</b>	Households receiving utility assistance Number of budget counseling program clients and their debt level Clients receiving W-2 in counties Clients receiving childcare subsidies

\* *Highlighted Indicator*

## **For more information on self-sufficiency:**

Food Share recipients, <http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/em/rsdata/fs-caseload-recv-by-cv.htm>  
Fox Cities Housing Coalition, <http://www.fchc.net/>  
Homeless children in schools, <http://dpi.wi.gov/homeless/data.html>  
National Low Income Housing Coalition, <http://www.nlihc.org>  
United Way Fox Cities Information and Referral service, telephone 2-1-1, <http://www.211now.org>  
Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP), <http://www.homeenergyplus.wi.gov>  
Wisconsin Works (W-2) clients, <http://www.dcf.wisconsin.gov/researchandstatistics/rsdata/w2data.htm>

Selected additional information can be found at our website: [www.foxcitieslifestudy.org](http://www.foxcitieslifestudy.org)

# Access to Affordable Housing

## Data Highlights

- Figure 1** The National Low Income Housing Coalition calculates the hourly wage needed for a local renter household to afford a two-bedroom unit at the Fair Market Rent. ‘Affordable’ is based on spending not more than 30% of gross income on housing costs. The “housing wage” has steadily increased and is \$12.77 in Winnebago County and \$13.21 in Outagamie and Calumet Counties (2011), remaining below Wisconsin’s average wage.
- Figure 2** The percentage of renter households with a cost burden (paying more than 30% of gross income for housing) in the Fox Cities was lower than Wisconsin and U.S. averages in 2007-09, with approximately 40% of households experiencing burdens. Only Outagamie County saw this percentage decrease, to 39% of renter households in 2007-09, compared to 42% in 2005-07. Twenty-eight percent of owner households in Outagamie County reported a burden in 2007-09 (U.S. Census, ACS),
- Figure 3** The home foreclosure rate has grown locally (especially in Outagamie and Winnebago Counties), as it has nationwide.
- Homeownership has risen in two of the three counties in the Fox Cities over the past few years, while rates have decreased in both the U.S. and Wisconsin. In 2007-09 homeownership rates in area counties were: Calumet 83%; Outagamie 73%; Winnebago 69% (U.S. Census).
- In 2010, when asked to rate “the availability of affordable, quality housing for you and/or your family,” community members’ opinions were unchanged from 2005: both samples averaged 3.6 on a scale of 1 (Poor) to 5 (Excels).
- Federal housing voucher programs administered by the three Fox Cities Housing Authorities have lengthy waiting lists. In 2008, the total number of Housing Choice Vouchers in the Fox Cities were: Calumet 62; Outagamie 551; Winnebago 476 (HUD).
- The 2007-2009 median gross rent in Outagamie County was \$653, up slightly from \$644 in 2005-07 (US Census).

## Progress and Concerns

The Housing Partnership of the Fox Cities renovated Appleton Wire Works to expand affordable rental housing options, while several programs have begun to support older adults maintaining housing (e.g., Midwest Stay at Home Care, Living With Assistance—described in LIFE at Home). Although the Fox Cities remains an affordable place to live for many and homeownership rates are high, the percent of residents with a cost burden continues to increase (to about one in three households), and foreclosures are up. More local efforts are underway to *prevent* foreclosure.

Figure 1



Figure 2

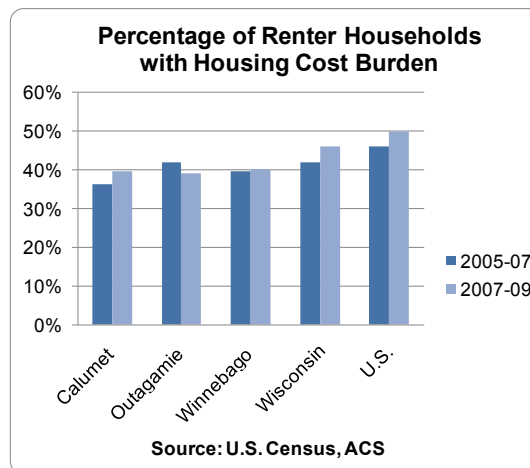
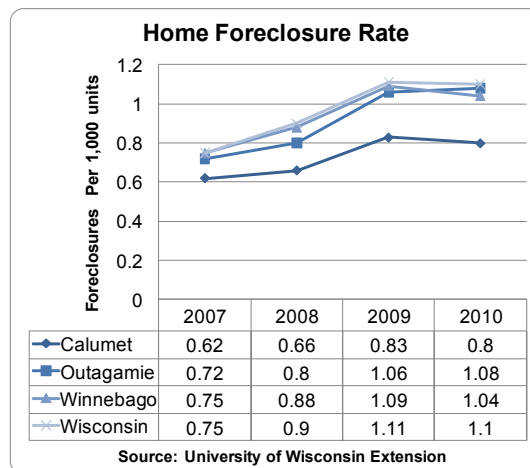


Figure 3



**55% of community members rated the Fox Cities area above average for affordable housing (10% said below average)**

# Homelessness

Figure 1

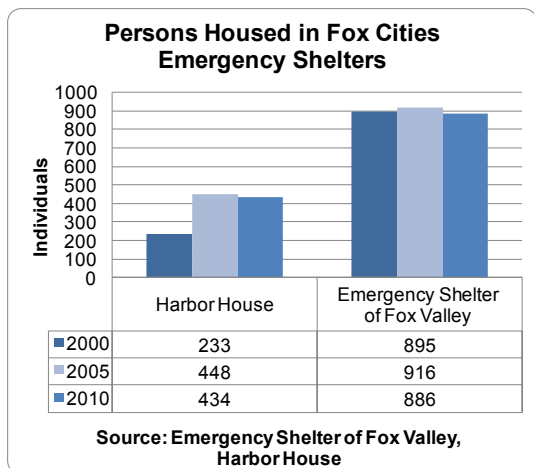


Figure 2

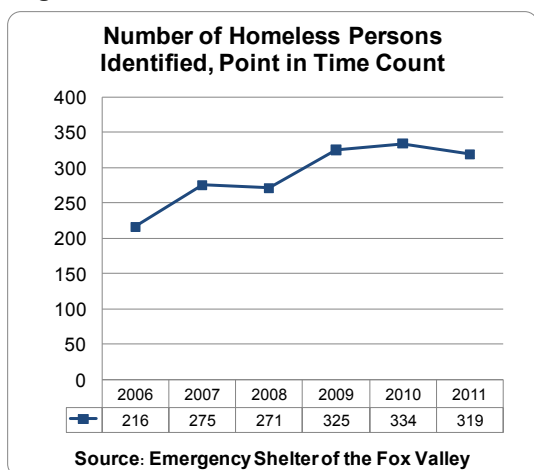
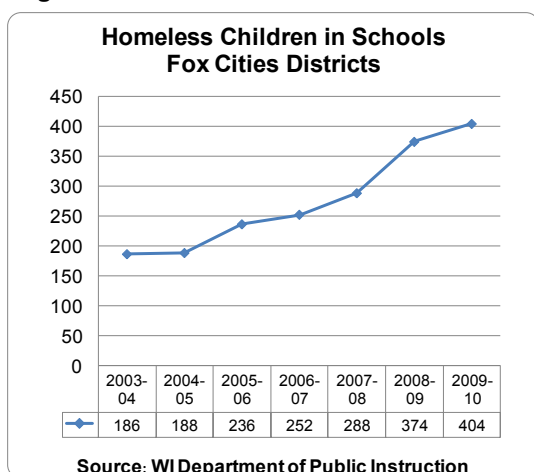


Figure 3



*11% of community members reported not having adequate finances to obtain the housing and food their family needs in the past year*

## Data Highlights

- Figure 1** Two of the largest emergency shelters provided data on the number of individuals they have served in recent years. Emergency Shelter of the Fox Valley served 886 individuals in 2010, the highest number in the last four years. The shelter reports being at full capacity very often.
- Figure 2** Twice annually, collaborating providers and law enforcement personnel attempt to identify the total number of people that are homeless in shelters, motels, and outside on the streets on a single night. The number of homeless individuals has risen 48% since 2005. In 2010 (as in 2008 and 2009), unemployment was the most common, primary reason for homelessness. The number of homeless persons with mental health concerns rose to 46 individuals in July 2010, up from 30 in 2006. The Point in Time count represented here is from January each year and the 2009-11 count includes the Warming Shelter.
- Figure 3** The number of homeless children in schools in the Fox Cities area (combined districts) has been steadily increasing. Since the 2007-2008 academic year the count has grown 40%, with 404 homeless students reported in 2009-10.
- Figure 4** Fox Valley Warming Shelter, Inc. opened in 2008. Most clients in 2010-11 were white (76%) and male (82%), among them 29 veterans.

Figure 4

Fox Valley Warming Shelter, Inc.			
	2008	2009	2010
Persons Served	140	214	287

Source: Fox Valley Warming Shelter, Inc.

## Progress and Concerns

The Fox Cities Housing Coalition (with 27 partner agencies) continues its effort to strengthen the housing continuum and identify gaps or duplication. Several Fox Cities initiatives are noteworthy: the Fox Valley Warming Shelter, Inc. began offering overnight, temporary shelter in the winter of 2008 and is now located behind the St. Vincent DePaul thrift store in Appleton. The C.O.T.S. program has expanded, offering temporary transitional housing for up to 2 years with a Living Skills program that works with clients. Other shelters have expanded their work to prevent homelessness by offering more programs that teach clients important life skills. Perhaps most concerning is the steep rise in the number of homeless children in the area.

# Food Security

## Data Highlights

- Figure 1** The Food Share program in Wisconsin helps individuals and families who have little money to buy the food they need for good health. The number of Food Share recipients in the Fox Cities has been continuously increasing to nearly double the number served in 2006.
- Figure 2** The Free & Reduced Lunch program is provided by the U.S. government for qualifying low-income children in schools. Between 2005 and 2010, most area districts saw an increase in eligibility, but the increase is most pronounced in Appleton (36%), Little Chute (32%) and Menasha (52%).
- Figure 3** The Emergency Shelter of the Fox Valley provides meals prepared by volunteers, serving more than 77,000 meals in 2010, a 15% increase from the 67,000 meals served in 2007 (Emergency Shelter of the Fox Valley). The Salvation Army helps families in need of food assistance noon meal program.
- Several food pantries supply families in the area, including those provided by area churches. The number of households served by the Salvation Army food pantry rose 27% between 2008 and 2010, when they provided food to 2,826 households (Salvation Army). St. Joseph Food Program, Inc. is one of the largest food pantries in the Fox Cities area, on average serving over 3,800 households each year. In 2010 they served 3,826 families, a decrease from 4,016 families in 2009 (St. Joseph Food Program, Inc.) (unduplicated households).

## Progress and Concerns

Goodwill, Inc. has involved people of all ages in growing healthy foods through its Community Garden Partnership program. The nonprofit organization offers many educational classes and activities throughout the year, helping people learn to grow, preserve, and eat healthy foods. More children are being helped with free lunches.

At the same time, 16% of area youth reported going hungry on the Youth Risk Behavior Survey; this has major impact on performance in school, and achievement scores of low income youth fall far short of their financially better off peers.

Duplication of food pantries is a concern of nonprofit providers (19 pantries are identified here), making it difficult for donors, community members and referring organizations to understand schedules and availability. Food insecurity and hunger are key issues with widespread impacts.

Figure 1

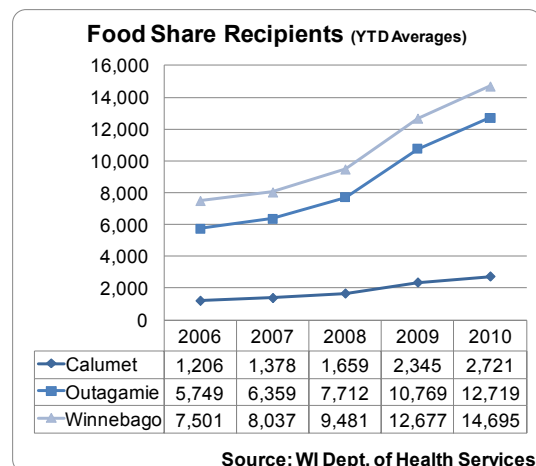


Figure 2

	2005	2010
Appleton	26%	36%
Freedom	15%	19%
Hortonville	11%	15%
Kaukauna	16%	25%
Kimberly	8%	11%
Little Chute	19%	32%
Menasha	35%	52%
Neenah	18%	26%

Source: WI Department of Public Instruction

Figure 3

	2008	2009	2010
Emergency Shelter of the Fox Valley	71,000	75,000	77,000
Salvation Army	53,639	53,821	52,616

Source: Supplied by organizations

*52% of leaders rated the Fox Cities area good or excellent at addressing local problems that contribute to poverty*

# Economic Stress

Figure 1

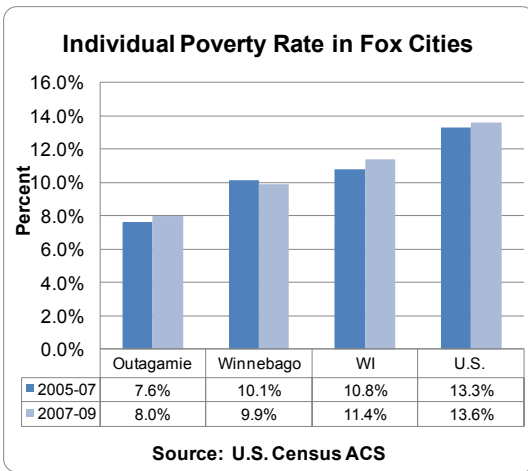


Figure 2

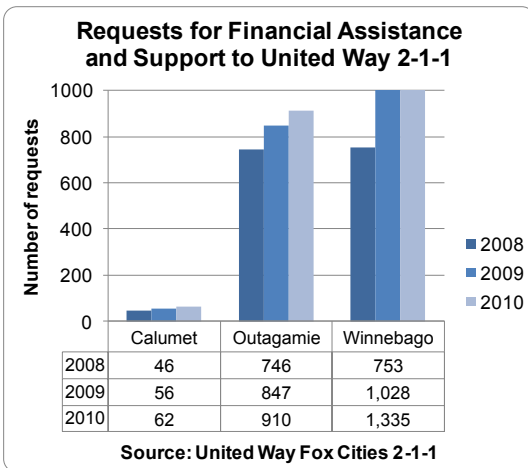
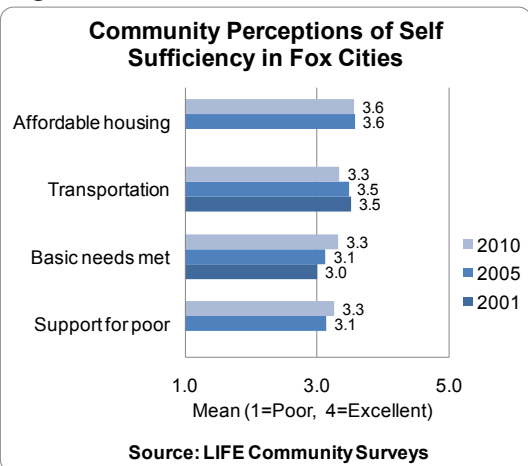


Figure 3



*75% of leaders rated the Fox Cities area good or excellent at promoting the economic well being of the middle class*

## Data Highlights

- Figure 1** The poverty rate is the percentage of individuals whose income in the past twelve months is below the poverty level (2009-10 Federal Poverty Level for a family of four was \$22,050; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services). In the Fox Cities this rate has fluctuated within the three counties. In the most recent three year estimate by the U.S. Census, county poverty rates were: Calumet, 5.8%; Outagamie, 8.0%; Winnebago, 9.9%.
- Figure 2** Requests for ‘financial assistance and support’ received by the United Way Fox Cities 2-1-1 service have been among the top five reasons for individual calls in each of the last three years across all three counties. In each county, calls for this reason peaked in 2009 and decreased in 2010. Winnebago County accounted for the largest change with a 69% decrease. While financial assistance requests continue to be high, the 2-1-1 service makes referrals for these individuals to receive the type of assistance they need and become educated on what the community has to offer.
- Figure 3** On a scale from 1 (Poor) to 5 (Excellent), community members rated various aspects of the Fox Cities such as availability of affordable housing, efforts to reduce poverty, availability of support services for the poor, and the ability of people to meet their own basic needs. Most items show an improving trend since 2001, however residents score transportation services lower than they did in either of the past LIFE Studies.
- In 2010, UW-Extension Outagamie County gathered baseline data on financial literacy of the public, partnering with over 40 organizations and businesses. Results of the study indicated three areas for improvement: emergency savings, credit card debt, and budgeting. Children and youth were identified as key target audiences.

## Progress and Concerns

The findings of the previous LIFE Study, in part, led to the creation of the U.S. Venture Fund for Basic Needs, a funding partnership that “assists non-profit organizations with a proven track record of success in maintaining solid, critical programs that address the root causes of poverty (U.S. Venture).”

The challenges of poverty are difficult and seem to be growing in the area. Many children experience poverty. Several strong initiatives have begun to support the development of important life skills that will enable individuals to be self sufficient, but much more support is needed to reach all who need these skills.

# Support Services

## Data Highlights

- Figure 1** Wisconsin Works (W-2) is a financial support program based on work participation and personal responsibility. Since 2006, the number of people receiving W-2 in Fox Cities counties combined has increased by 124%, compared to a 45% increase in Wisconsin.
- Figure 2** Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP) enables a household to receive one-time payment during the heating season for a portion of heating costs. Households with income at or below 60% of the Wisconsin state median income (SMI) may be eligible. In all three counties of the Fox Cities area, the number of households receiving WHEAP has increased: in 2011 the following number of households per county were served: Calumet 1,063; Outagamie 4,678; Winnebago 5,833.
- Figure 3** In 2010, according to the Financial Information and Service Center (FISC), the average debt of clients was over \$24,000, many of those clients had little or no cash savings. While FISC currently does not have a waiting list, consumer demand remains strong and with predatory agencies offering troubled consumers “too good to be true” deals and high home foreclosure rates - financial education is more important than ever (FISC).
- LEAVEN is a nonprofit organization in the Fox Cities that utilizes volunteers to provide assistance for basic needs. In 2010, LEAVEN had 250 volunteers offer 18,214 hours of time. LEAVEN conducted 7,339 household visits and allocated \$229,039 to help these households with utilities, an increase from \$181,420 in 2009 (LEAVEN, Inc.).
- On a scale from 1 (Poor) to 4 (Excellent), both leaders and community members scored the Fox Cities area 2.9 on “meeting the overall needs of the poor.”

## Progress and Concerns

Transportation challenges were noted among several sector expert panels and on our surveys. The Connector has been a successful community initiative to ensure that persons with poor access to automobiles can have a reliable, efficient, affordable means to get to work, especially individuals working the evening shift. The program is a joint initiative of the United Way Fox Cities and Valley Transit, relying on philanthropic dollars to remain in operation. Experts we spoke with, across almost all sectors, were concerned about how recent state budget cutbacks might reduce the ability of local municipalities to provide support, putting an additional burden on nonprofit organizations to grow programs and raise funds.

Figure 1

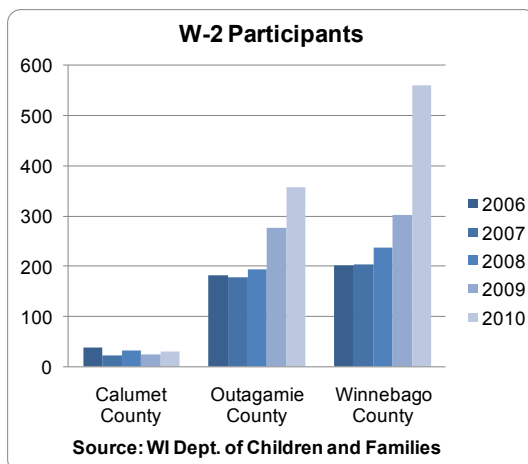


Figure 2

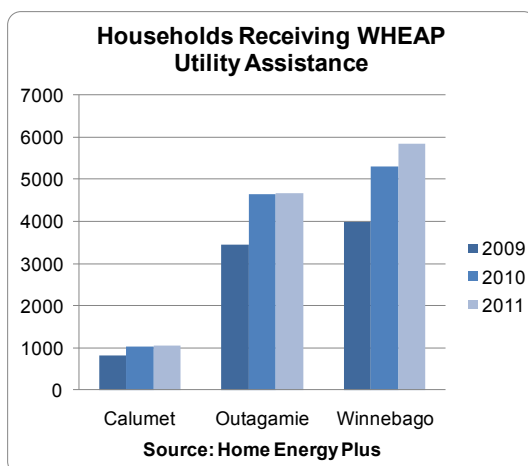


Figure 3

Financial Information and Service Center (FISC) Clients and Average Debt			
	2008	2009	2010
<b>Counseling Clients</b>	1,585	1,697	1,328
<b>Average Debt*</b>	\$28,989	\$29,471	\$24,914
<b>Delinquent on Mortgage</b>	25%	28%	30%

\* Client average across FISC's service coverage area  
Source: FISC

*51% of leaders rated the Fox Cities good or excellent at providing public transportation that meets the needs of all residents*