



# 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

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

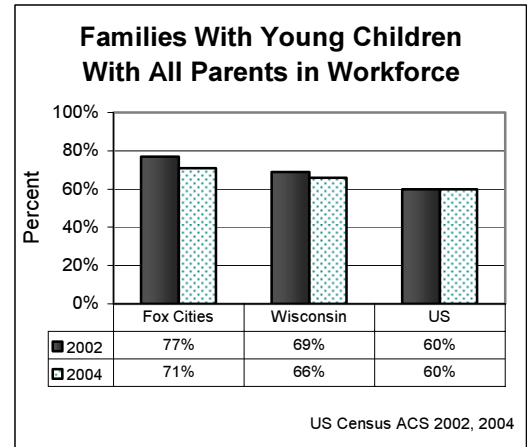


Figure 2

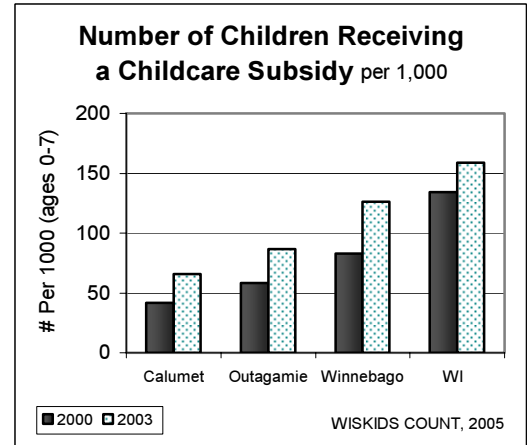
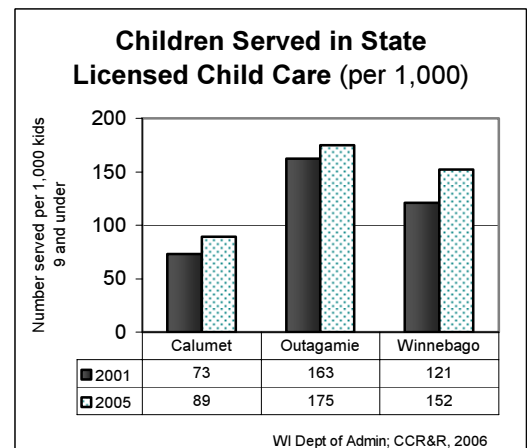


Figure 3



*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

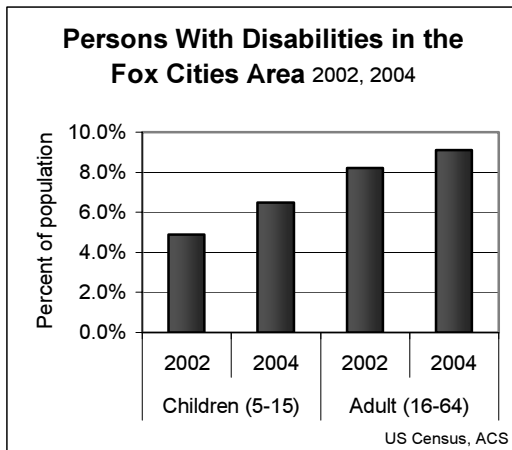


Figure 2

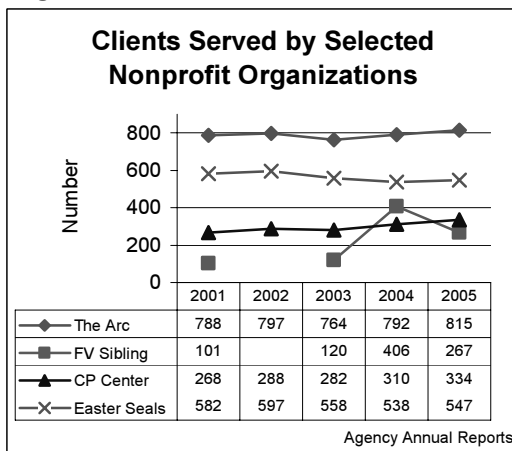
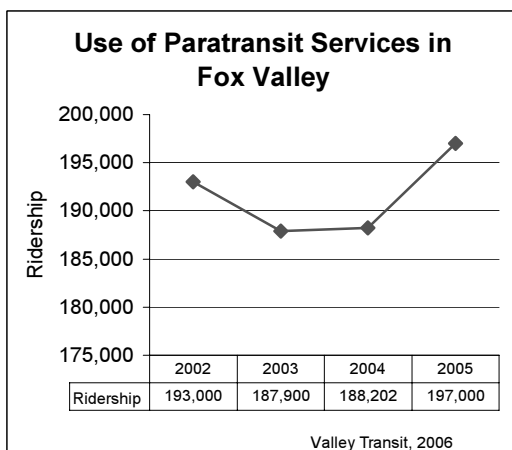


Figure 3



## 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

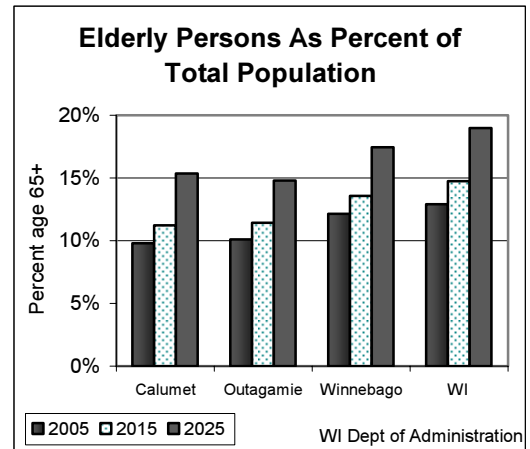


Figure 2

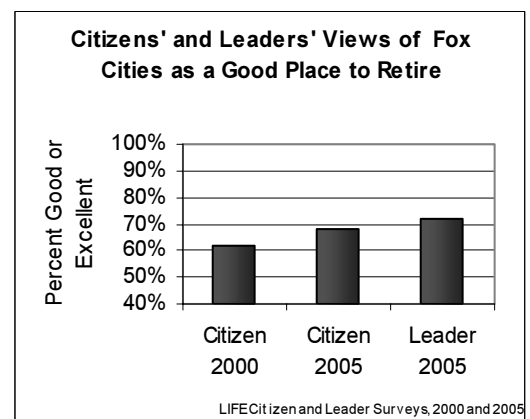
Figure 2

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

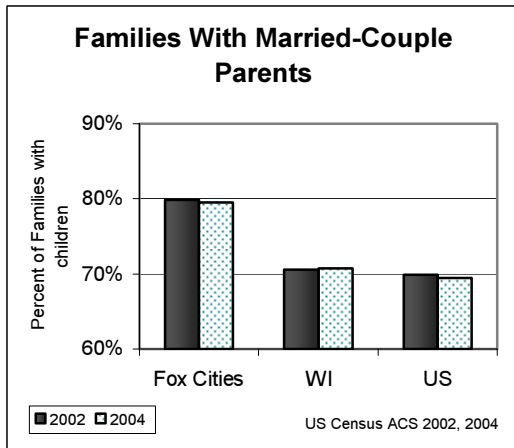
Figure 3



*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

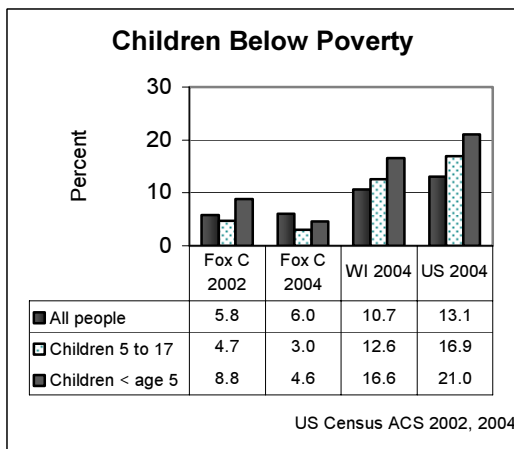
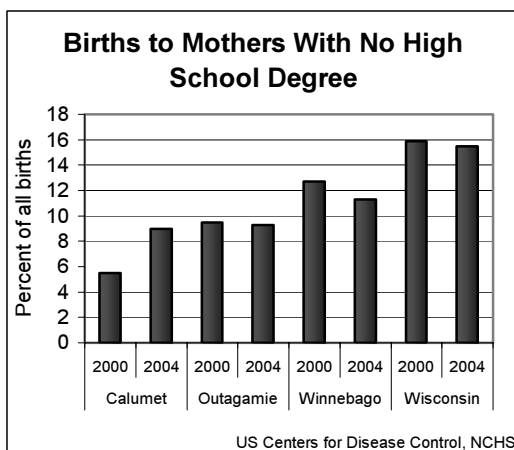


Figure 3



## 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

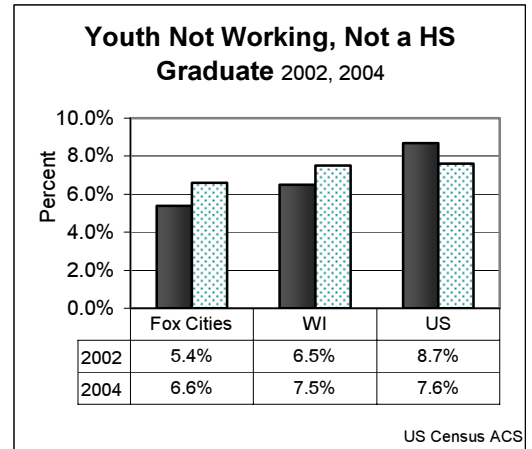
| Present                   | Lacking                           |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Family support            | Family communication              |
| Boundaries for behavior   | Caring school climate             |
| *Positive peer influence  | Useful 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  |
|--|
| <b>Positives</b>   |
| 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"  |
| <b>Negatives</b>   |
| 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   |
| <b>Recommendations</b>   |
| 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.*