

3 National Goals of Community Action agencies:

- Goal 1: Individuals and families with low incomes are stable and achieve economic security.
 Goal 2: Communities where people with low incomes live are healthy and offer economic opportunity.
 Goal 3: People with low-incomes are engaged and active in building opportunities in communities.

Purpose of Community Needs Assessment



Key Findings

Key Finding #1: Lack of Income & Economic Segregation Maintain a State of Poverty and Inequality

The 2017 Ohio minimum wage is \$8.15. A person with 1 child, earning minimum wage who works full time, 52 weeks a year, earns less than the poverty level.

Key Finding #2: Causes & Conditions of Poverty:

- Lack of Education & Resources
- Lack of Income/Livable Wage Employment
- Cyclical Poverty

Poverty is a vicious cycle. Income is needed to get ahead in life, but one cannot get ahead in life without income. Adequate income equals upward mobility. Upward mobility means financial stability, more housing options, better neighborhoods, quality education.

Key Finding #3: Programs Most Needed to Improve Poverty:

- More Income
- Financial Training
- Housing
- Health & Wellness
- Stable Affordable Housing
- Transportation

Eighty-seven percent of low-income residents surveyed, identified specific services and supports required to help them move out of poverty. Without sufficient income to meet daily needs, surviving takes precedence over planning.

Key Finding #4: Service Gaps:

- Affordable Housing
- Career/Vocational Training
- Assistance Identifying and Accessing/Coordinating Resources
- Prevention/Education
- Transportation

Surveys identified programs, services and activities that were either not available, not accessible, or not known. "In the USA, for women receiving public benefits access to a car was a stronger correlate with successful transition from welfare to work than education or training."

Key Finding #5: Agency Opportunities and Recommendations

- Affordable Housing
- Employment
- Transportation
- Case Management (Assistance)
- Community Partnerships
- Community Outreach
- Prevention Services

To address poverty head on, IMPACT must develop comprehensive, multifaceted approach to poverty reduction, focused simultaneously upon mitigating family crisis situations, preventing poverty situations and stabilizing families, through financial support, resource coordination, community and family advocacy and education and career track employment training and work opportunities.

Program Opportunities

Housing

1. IMPACT is currently working towards the provision of affordable housing through its social enterprise venture, IMPACT Community Action Real Estate Holdings, LLC.
2. Increase housing options by establishing closer ties with existing housing coalitions in Franklin County as well as private landlords and housing entities
3. Evaluate creative strategies to increase safe & affordable housing options and increasing community revitalization efforts by rehabbing abandoned or neglected buildings.

Employment

1. Align priorities on Career Pathways through vocational training and certification that match the job growth forecast through 2024, while also providing soft skills training and post-employment support.
2. Increase formal partnerships through local employers that match the growth industries for Columbus and Franklin County.
3. Increase employment opportunities with social and educational supports for youth.

Transportation

1. Include transportation in the evaluation for services during intake.
2. Provide transportation assistance (bus passes, gas cards, vehicle repairs, etc.) as a main assistance category as an existing barrier.

Assistance

1. Assist individuals to identify, coordinate and access available community resources, services and programs.
2. Assist individuals and families with creating and executing comprehensive strategies and clear pathways out of poverty [Case Management Model].

Community Partnerships

1. Establish formal partnerships beyond referrals with cross-discipline (Mental Health Providers, Addiction Services, Senior Services, Homeless Shelters, Charitable Pharmacies and Clothing, Health Department).
2. Increase access to programs and services to non-English-speaking/reading residents.

Community Outreach & Awareness

1. Increase IMPACT's presence in the community by ensuring agency literature and programs are available at other community-based organizations.
2. Inform and educate IMPACT customers about other community resources by having other resource materials displayed and available in the lobby and program areas.

Prevention Services

1. Identify and provide comprehensive education and poverty prevention strategies targeted towards youth.
2. Provide assistance, planning and supportive services to individuals and families just above the poverty line, and those experiencing a life event that will place them below the poverty line.

Challenges

Identifying and securing adequate funding to provide services and assistance to individuals and families that are between 125% - above 200% of Federal Poverty Guidelines.

Credit: Promoting Two-Generational Strategies: A Getting-Started Guide for State and Local Policymakers. Christopher T. King Cynthia J. Juniper Rheagan Coffey AUGUST 2016 Tara C. Smith Revised and Updated

Components of an Education and Workforce Oriented Two-Generation 2.0 Strategy

- Quality early childhood education
- Quality workforce and education services for parents
 - Career pathway training and postsecondary education with stackable credentials
 - Employer engagement via workforce intermediaries
 - Contextualized adult education 'bridge' programs
- Wrap-around family support services
 - Career coaching/navigation
 - Peer community building
 - Financial education
 - Childcare
 - Transportation assistance