



EXPLORING HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

A COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT Crawford County, Pennsylvania June 2008

Titusville Area United Way
United Way of Western Crawford County

Prepared by:
Emilee Langer, MPH
Consultant

Table of Contents	2
Acknowledgements	3
I. Executive Summary	4
Introduction	4
Methodology	5
Demographics – Survey Results	6
Households	7
Income	7
Housing	8
Education	8
Employment	9
Insurance Participation and Health Care Access	9
Conclusion	10
II. Agency Awareness	11
III. Educational Programs and Services	13
IV. Health Prevention – General Health and Counseling Services	18
V. Health Promotion – Violence Prevention and Bullying Programs	22
VI. Economic Priorities	24
VII. Community Priorities- Alcohol, Drug and Living Conditions	25
Appendix	
a. Project Proposal	
b. Project Presentation	
c. Survey	
d. Asset Inventory	
e. Community Comments	
f. Data Analysis Tables	

...“never underestimate the ability of a group of committed individuals to accomplish great things and to affect change”...Margaret Mead

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author wishes to express thanks to the many busy professionals who showed an interest in this project, gave generously of their time, and inspired the project’s completion. Special recognition is due Terri Ann Wig, Chief Professional Officer of the Titusville Area United Way for her positive spirit, knowledge and dedication throughout the entire project. Additionally, a debt of gratitude is offered to the staff of the Titusville Area United Way – Jody Lavery and Gretchen Skiba - PPC Violence Free Network, Student Volunteer – Alicia Hetrick – Titusville High School, and Laura Oliver – Allegheny College - Bonner Intern for their help in typing reports, copying information, conducting surveys and creating the database from which the analysis was done.

Special thanks to Sandy Rossi of the United Way of Western Crawford County for printing the final surveys and for arranging help from the Bonner Student. Thanks also to Dr. Bill Shields at the University of Pittsburgh @ Titusville for guidance on the data analysis piece of the study. Your vote of confidence was most helpful. Further, to the government officials, educators, healthcare providers, local business leaders, social service agencies, and citizens of the Titusville area who assisted with, or completed individual surveys, your candid feedback is greatly appreciated. Finally, thank you to the Titusville Area School District for sharing the PA Youth Survey information, which helped in understanding the documented risks associated with underage drinking, teen pregnancy and the student’s value of education. The collaborative nature of the community made the completion of this project possible.

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

In the spring of 2007, the Titusville Area United Way, and the United Way of Western Crawford County began a collaborative study of health and human service needs, and the ability of existing agencies to meet those needs. This was the first collaborative study by the two sponsoring agencies, and a follow up to a previous needs assessment conducted in 2003 by Tripp Umbaugh Healthcare Consulting. The goal was to create a strategic plan that will assist local United Way organizations and the agencies they support with the allocation of resources – both financial and human, in order to build and strengthen programs. The overarching goal is to bring together key stakeholders who can implement the strategic plan, and monitor outcomes. At the outset of the project, emphasis was placed on low income residents, people who are under- or un-insured, minority populations, and the elderly. The following deliverables were identified:

- Asset Inventory – identifies awareness of current area agencies
- Needs Assessment – identifies and analyzes the unmet need for economic, health and education services in comparison to the existing assets
- Data Collection – a task-force developed survey tool to measure community priorities
- Service Improvement Plan – a strategic plan that utilizes information collected through the survey process, and assists local agencies, chambers of commerce, redevelopment authorities and others with action plan development to meet the needs identified by the community at large.
- Consultants Report – Summarizes what was learned during the needs assessment process, and provides a source of information that can be used by agencies in the development of service improvement plans and may be distributed to leaders in the community.

The success of a county-wide assessment is largely determined by collaborative input from key stakeholders, the accuracy of the data collection tool, and the results of the information collected. Several meetings were held with leadership from each United Way agency, and a survey-style methodology was chosen. A Task Force was formed both in Titusville and Meadville made up of representatives from existing agencies, business, health care, education, city government, and the community at large. The need for input from both areas was driven by disparities in population size, employment opportunities, distribution of grant funding, and to ensure accurate representation from across the county. The purpose of each task force was two-fold; first to assist in the development of the survey, and second, to serve as key informants representing urgent issues within the community itself. The results attached represent the year long efforts of individuals and business leaders in Crawford County who understand the importance of conducting a needs assessment as a means of identifying community strengths, learning about the issues and priorities of the community, and evaluating program capacity.

Located in the northwest corner of Pennsylvania, Crawford County is a rural area of 1012 square miles, with a population of predominantly Caucasian or white families living in and around the area. If you were to ask the following question at random, “what do you like most about your community?”, one would expect to hear any of the following responses –

friendly and safe, people helping people, small town atmosphere, beautiful, natural setting, good schools. Not unlike other areas in the region that were industrialized rapidly from the mid 1800s through the 1970's, the loss of major manufacturing, and industry, high unemployment rates, and a drop in the levels of education found across the community have all taken a toll on the quality of life for the residents, and created challenges for health and human service agencies to locate funding for programs that reach the people who most need them.

Methodology

To gain familiarity with the status of Crawford County, the following reports were reviewed:

- Communities that Care – Handbook on Developing Community Prevention Programs
- 2007 State of the City – City of Titusville
- 2005 Pennsylvania Youth Survey
- 2007 Statistical Profile for Crawford County – Compiled by United Way of PA
- 2007 Statistical Profile for Venango County – Compiled by United Way of PA
- 2003 Needs Assessment – Tripp Umbaugh Health Consulting, Inc.

Several meetings were held with each task force, which resulted in the development of a questionnaire to be distributed to the community. A copy of the community survey tool can be found in Appendix C. The survey contains multiple sections representing demographics, educational programs and services, income and employment, agency awareness, health prevention and health promotion, economic and housing priorities, and a general assessment of community living conditions and special needs services.

The program ratings sections of the survey were designed to address two parts of the question. Part A asked respondents to determine the importance of a particular program or service by responding "not important", "somewhat important", "important" or "very important". Section B asked respondents to rate the quality of currently available services as "Poor", "Fair", and "Good" or "Excellent". The Health Promotion section asked respondents to determine what level of priority to place on a specific issue by rating services as "no opinion", "low priority", "medium priority" or "high priority". The Last section asked respondents to determine problem areas or service gaps within the community by rating a specific service as "I don't know", "not a problem", "minor problem", or "major problem".

Multiple venues were selected and interviews were planned at community picnics, ice cream socials, local carnivals, group meetings such as Rotary and Kiwanis, and the Crawford County Fair. Locally, surveys were distributed to employees within the Titusville Area School District, Titusville Hospital, local banks, and industry. A total of 1000 surveys were distributed at random, and employed a face to face interview style. The interview style was selected because of the surveys total 84 questions, and to assist individuals who had difficulty reading or responding independently. The survey assistance may have contributed to selection bias, which is taken into consideration as part of the data analysis. Additional biases are noted in income and education levels reported in both the Titusville and Meadville areas. This can most likely be attributed to the number of responses collected through the schools and professional organizations who participated. The demographic information represented in the proceeding sections is taken from the fall

2007 Crawford County Profile compiled by the United Way of Pennsylvania. This information is used to provide a more accurate cross section of the County area, and to protect the identity of individuals who may have responded locally.

There were several limitations to the data collection process. First, each task force planned a series of Focus Groups targeting parents of children birth – 12th grades (broken down into pre-school, school-age, middle school and high school), and mature citizens ages 50 and older. The focus group information was intended to supplement information collected during the survey interviews, and a specific list of questions was prepared for age specific group discussions. Several attempts to schedule meetings were unsuccessful, resulting in at least three cancelled events. A second limitation was encountered in collecting information for the asset inventory. Although several agencies completed questionnaires, the response was too low to include findings in this report. The asset inventory will be reintroduced as part of the funding allocation process, and as a follow up step to this study. An additional limitation was difficulty distributing surveys to elderly shut-ins, individuals without access to phones or automobiles, and in particular the large Amish population residing throughout Crawford County.

A total of 659 completed surveys were returned and reviewed in preparation of the findings that follow. After reviewing the surveys for completeness, a final total of 511 surveys were entered into the database for analysis. SPSS 11.0 for Windows was the software tool used to complete the data analysis, and a combination of frequency and cross tabulation analyses were performed.

A statistical validity test was performed on the county-wide population as well as the local population groups for both Meadville and Titusville to determine the number of responses needed for reporting (CI = 95 percent). 255 valid surveys were included from the Meadville area and 254 valid surveys were included from the Titusville area. It is important to note, that when the total number of respondents is less than the valid number needed, or if a personal identity may be revealed, US Census data are used, where available, to preserve the integrity of the overall results.

Demographics (Crawford County Profile 2007)

Crawford County is located in the northwest corner of Pennsylvania, and is a largely rural area totaling just over 1000 square miles. Eighty-six percent of municipalities reported populations less than 2,500 residents; and the average number of persons per square mile is 89.2, compared to the balance of Pennsylvania, whose population density is 274.0 persons per square mile.

In 2006, the population of Crawford County was 89,389, a decrease of 1.1 percent from April 2000. Persons under 5 years of age represented 5.6 percent of the population, persons under 18 years of age represented 22.6 percent of the population, persons 18-64 years of age represented 61.6 percent of the population, and persons 65 years old and older represented 15.8 percent of the population. Females represented 51.3 percent of the population.

Identifiable race or ethnic diversity is defined as 97.0 percent Caucasian or white, 1.8 percent African American or black, 0.2 percent Asian, 0.3 percent Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, 0.7 percent Hispanic or Latino and 0.6 percent persons reporting two or more races (totals may not equal 100 percent).

According to the report "State of the City 2007", Titusville reported a total of 6,146 people in 2007, a decrease of 8.9 percent from 2000. Twenty-four percent of Titusville's population is under age 18, consistent with countywide figures, and 20.2 percent of the population is over age 65, or 28 percent higher than the county total. Meadville reported a total population of 13,685. Nineteen percent of Meadville's population is under 18 years of age, 15% below countywide figures, and 18.7 percent is over age 65, or 18 percent above the county's overall total.

Households (Crawford County Profile 2007)

There were 35,000 households in Crawford County in 2005, and the average household size was 2.4 persons. 62.9 percent of individuals in Crawford County reported living in the same house for five years or longer and only 5.4 percent of households reported speaking a language other than English. Families made up 71 percent of the households in the county. This figure includes both married-couple families (57 percent) and other families (14 percent). Non-family households made up 29 percent of all households in Crawford County. Most of the non-family households were people living alone, but some were comprised of people living in households in which no one was related to the householder.

Income (Crawford County Profile 2007)

The average income in Crawford County in 2005 was \$35,386. Thirty-six percent of households had incomes below \$25,000, and 13.2 percent of people were in poverty. Almost 19 percent of related children under 18 were below the poverty level compared to 8 percent of people 65 years of age and older. Twelve percent of all families and 35 percent of families with a female householder and no husband present had incomes below the poverty level.

In Titusville, 62.4 percent of households reported incomes less than \$35,000, and another 28.6 percent made less than \$15,000 per year. Over 1,200 people (19.6 percent) in Titusville were living below the federal poverty level, a characteristic of municipalities in fiscal distress (State of the City 2007).

The total population receiving cash assistance in Crawford County rose 107 percent between 2000 and 2006, with 2,145 people receiving cash assistance in 2006. The survey results indicated that almost 30 percent (29.6%) of the local people used credit cards to pay for food, shelter and clothing to supplement income. 19.4 percent of the population was eligible for Medical Assistance benefits, an increase of 38 percent over 2000, and 11.5 percent of the population were participating in the food stamps program, an increase of 62 percent over 2000. 1,414 people were receiving homeless assistance benefits, an increase of 13.9 percent over the last ten years. On average, there are 15.7 homeless residents per 1000 residents in Crawford County.

Housing (Crawford County Profile 2007)

There were a total of 43,393 housing units in the county in 2005, and 18 percent of all units were vacant. Of the total housing units, 73 percent were single unit structures, 11 percent were multi-unit structures and 15 percent were mobile homes. Sixteen percent of all housing units were built after 1990. Of the 35,000 occupied housing units, 27,000 (75 percent) were owner occupied and 8,700 (25 percent) were renter occupied.

In Titusville, 1,129 (48%) housing units were renter occupied, compared to only 25 percent throughout Crawford County. Four percent (1,400) of the households did not have telephone service and 8 percent (2,800) of households did not have access to a car, truck or van for private use. The median housing values for Pennsylvania are \$97,000 and for Crawford County \$72,800. However, the median housing value for Titusville is \$50,100, or 48 percent below the state average, and 22 percent below the county average. The median monthly housing costs for mortgaged owners was \$962.00, non-mortgaged owners \$366.00, and renters \$516.00. Thirty-six percent of owners with mortgages, 18 percent of owners without mortgages, and 38 percent of renters in Crawford County spent 30 percent or more of their household income on housing.

A study completed by the National Low Income Housing Coalition (www.nlihc.org) provides information about the amount of money a household must earn in order to afford a rental unit at a range of sizes (0, 1, 2, 3 and 4 bedrooms) at the area's fair market rent (FMR), and based on the generally accepted standard of paying no more than 30 percent of income for housing costs. From this calculation, the hourly wage a worker must earn to afford the fair market rental price for a two bedroom unit is considered the "housing wage" (Out of Reach 2006).

In Crawford County, the current housing wage is \$9.92 per hour for a two-bedroom rental unit costing \$516.00 per month. Using the median income of \$25,945 in Titusville, and assuming no more than 30 percent of income is spent on housing; this would require 1.9 full-time jobs at minimum wage to afford a two bedroom FMR rental unit.

Education (Crawford County Profile 2007)

In 2006, there were 59,684 persons age 25 years or older living in Crawford County. The chart below illustrates the highest level of education attainment for the county. Of the survey respondents, almost half (48.2%) had children enrolled in one of three districts in the combined United Way Service areas. 82.9 percent of children attended public schools, 1.8 percent attended private schools, 2.7 percent were receiving home schooling and 9 percent were listed as "other" types of schooling. These numbers were consistent with the countywide statistics. On average, schools spent \$10,610 per student during fiscal year 2004-2005, an increase of 18.9 percent. 39.5 percent of enrolled students were eligible for free or reduced school lunches.

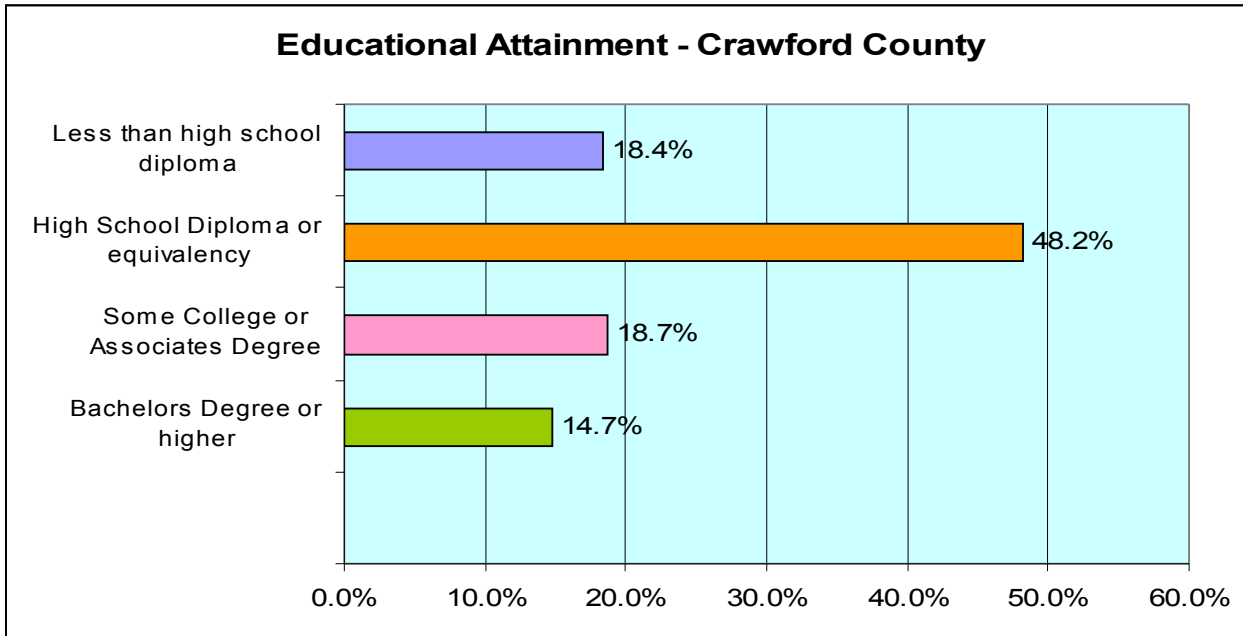


Table 1

Employment (Crawford County Profile 2007)

According to the 2007 Crawford County Profile, 94 percent of the population in Crawford County is employed and only 6 percent are unemployed. However, the responses to the survey data for the Titusville area suggest that 85.8 percent of respondents were employed, and 14.2 percent were unemployed. Local data are inconsistent with county wide statistics, which may be an indication of fewer new business opportunities when compared to other municipalities around the county. It is important to note however that the high number of survey respondents who are over age 65 may have also contributed to this result.

Twenty-six percent of respondents who are currently employed have been in their current job at least 5 years, and 61.8 percent have been in their current job 5 years or longer. The average distance traveled to work is 6.1 miles, with 91.6 percent of respondents traveling less than 20 miles to work daily. Eighty-nine percent of workers drive their own car to work and 7 percent of respondents walk or bike to work. Among the county’s top 50 employers (based on number of employees), Meadville Medical Center ranked first, Wal-Mart ranked 5th, Titusville Area School district ranked 11th and the Titusville Hospital ranked 16th.

Insurance Participation and Health Care Access

In June 2001, the Health Investment Insurance Act (Act 77 of 2001) invested the proceeds of the state’s tobacco settlement in the health of Pennsylvania’s consumers. The funding lead to the creation of adultBasic, a program designed to offer basic benefits, including preventative care, physician services, treatment of illness and injury, in-patient hospitalization, out-patient hospital services, emergency accident and medical care. The overwhelming response to the program outstripped the available funding by early 2003.

In February 2005, Governor Edward G. Rendell announced an agreement with Pennsylvania's four Blue Cross/Blue Shield plans for an ongoing annual commitment of nearly \$1 billion over the next six years through the Annual Community Health Reinvestment (ACHR). By early 2007, adultBasic provided coverage for approximately 50,000 Pennsylvanians with 100,000 people remaining on a waiting list. In spite of these efforts, almost 13,000 residents in Crawford County are still without health insurance according to the PA Department of Welfare. Among the uninsured, 43.8 percent stated they did not have access to health insurance through their employer, and another 31.3 percent indicated that the coverage offered by their employer was too expensive.

Nearly 6 percent of all children in Crawford County are enrolled in the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), an increase of 11.6 percent 2000-2005. This increase may be attributed to Governor Rendell's "Cover All Pennsylvanians" health initiative signed into law in early 2005; however, it is also indicative of the rising cost of health care premiums for employers. Another factor which may have contributed to the increased enrollment in CHIP is the expansion of the program to offer benefits to families with incomes greater than 200% of the federal poverty level (FPL), but no greater than 300% of the FPL through reduced premiums. Additionally, families with incomes greater than 300% FPL are able purchase CHIP benefits by paying the state's full negotiated rate, resulting in a further increase in CHIP enrollments.

In addition to the rising number of uninsured in Crawford County, access to primary and specialty care remained a concern for survey participants. Among survey respondents, 57.7 percent reported finding a primary care physician who accepts their insurance as a minor or major problem. Seventy-six percent of respondents reported finding a specialist who accepts their insurance as a minor or major problem. Specific concerns raised in the community commentary indicated that finding primary and specialty care physicians who accept Medical Assistance is a major problem.

For dental services, 47.1 percent of respondents reported finding a general dentist who accepts their insurance as a minor or major problem. 61.4 percent of respondents reported finding a specialty dentist or pediatric dentist who accepts their insurance as a minor or major problem, with the greatest problems occurring with individuals enrolled in Medical Assistance.

The rural setting found in Crawford County directly affects access to health and dental services for community residents. Combined with higher than average unemployment and fewer new business opportunities, the need to create avenues for affordable health, prescription and dental care services is apparent. Additional agency and direct marketing support is needed to increase the number of physicians and dental providers participating in the Medical Assistance program as a first step toward increasing access to health care for many of the county's low-income residents. Small employers must be encouraged to explore collaborative group benefit opportunities to develop lower cost premium rates for employee coverage as an alternative to eliminating benefits for their employees.

Conclusion

The purpose of this community needs assessment was to identify local strengths, to prioritize issues that are important to us and to mobilize local resources in a collaborative fashion to make a difference. The results of this study lead to three key areas of focus for further recommendation and planning: Health, Income and Education.

Health Recommendations

- Promote a Drug Free Community
- Improve education programs for children and adults in the following topics:
 - Drug Sales and Drug Use Prevention
 - Adult Alcohol Use and Rehabilitation
 - Underage Drinking Prevention
 - Smoking Cessation
 - Obesity Prevention
 - Teen Pregnancy Prevention
 - Diabetes Education
- Improve access to primary and specialty care physicians and dentists participating in Medical Assistance
- Create avenues for more affordable health and dental insurance and prescription drug coverage through small business collaboration.

Education Recommendations

Public Schools:

- Increase the number of full-time pre-school and day care programs
- Reduce the High School Drop Out Rate
- Improve Testing scores for High School Students

Agency Level:

- Budgeting and Home Economics
- Parental Support in Education and Homework
- Basic Parenting Skills
- Bullying and Violence Prevention
- Adult Continuing Education and Job Skills Training
- Computer Literacy and Internet Safety
- Domestic Violence Prevention
- Juvenile Justice and Juvenile Delinquency

Income Recommendations

Promote financial stability for lower income residents and a move toward independence:

- Create opportunities for low-income families to purchase property through improved financing arrangements
- Develop education in budgeting, credit counseling and home economics
- Improve job skills training programs to improve employment in existing and emerging job markets
- Increase unemployment counseling programs for local residents
- Increase the number of low-income residents who maintain checking and savings accounts.
- Increase energy assistance and food assistance counseling services

- Improve Competitive Wage Employment opportunities

II. Agency Awareness

Section (3) of the survey evaluated the community’s familiarity with local social and human service agencies. A list of agencies was compiled through recommendations by each task force. The final list is not meant to be all inclusive, but rather a representation of the most widely used programs within the county. Data were compiled using the total number of “yes” responses to this statement “The following is a list of agencies throughout Crawford County. Please check (Yes) if you are familiar with these agencies and services (Check all that apply). Please check (No) if you are not familiar with the agency or services.”

Agency Name	Response %
Titusville Area YMCA	93.5%
Titusville Area YWCA	92.6%
Big Brothers/Big Sisters	90.4%
American Cancer Society	89.7%
American Red Cross	89.2%
Girl Scouts of America	88.7%
Head Start Programs	88.3%
Salvation Army	86.5%
Titusville Area United Way	86.1%
Associated Charities of Titusville	86.1%
Boy Scouts of America	84.8%
Crawford County Hospice	84.8%
Crawford Area Regional Transport	83.9%
Crawford County Area “READ” Program	83.0%
Visiting Nurses Association	80.9%
Titusville Food Bank	79.4%
Stairways Behavioral Health	79.0%
Alcoholics Anonymous/Narcotics Anonymous	77.7%
Genesis Project, Inc	74.5%
Council on the Arts	73.3%
Recreation and Leisure Services	73.0%
Religious Organizations	72.7%
Titusville Food Pantry	71.7%
Titusville Health and Aging Services	71.3%
Titusville Area Hospital Mobile Dental Van	65.4%

The data shown in table (2) were summarized from the Titusville area completed surveys. When compiling the information for the Agency study, those agencies with fewer than 60 percent of "yes" responses were not considered statistically valid according to the study criteria and have been omitted from this analysis.

Several assumptions may be made for those agencies whose data scored fewer than 60% of the "yes" response. Agencies receiving support from a national based structure were more likely to receive a "yes" response than smaller agencies in the area. Many of the agencies identified in the survey are specific to either the Meadville or Titusville area. Fewer respondents in either location may have access to an individual agency, and/or may not be familiar with the services provided. Moreover, marketing materials such as brochures or advertisements may not be available on a countywide basis. Some smaller agencies (serving 10 or less individuals per year), whose programs are less well known, may not have marketing materials available to the public. A complete list of agencies can be found in the survey tool in Appendix C.

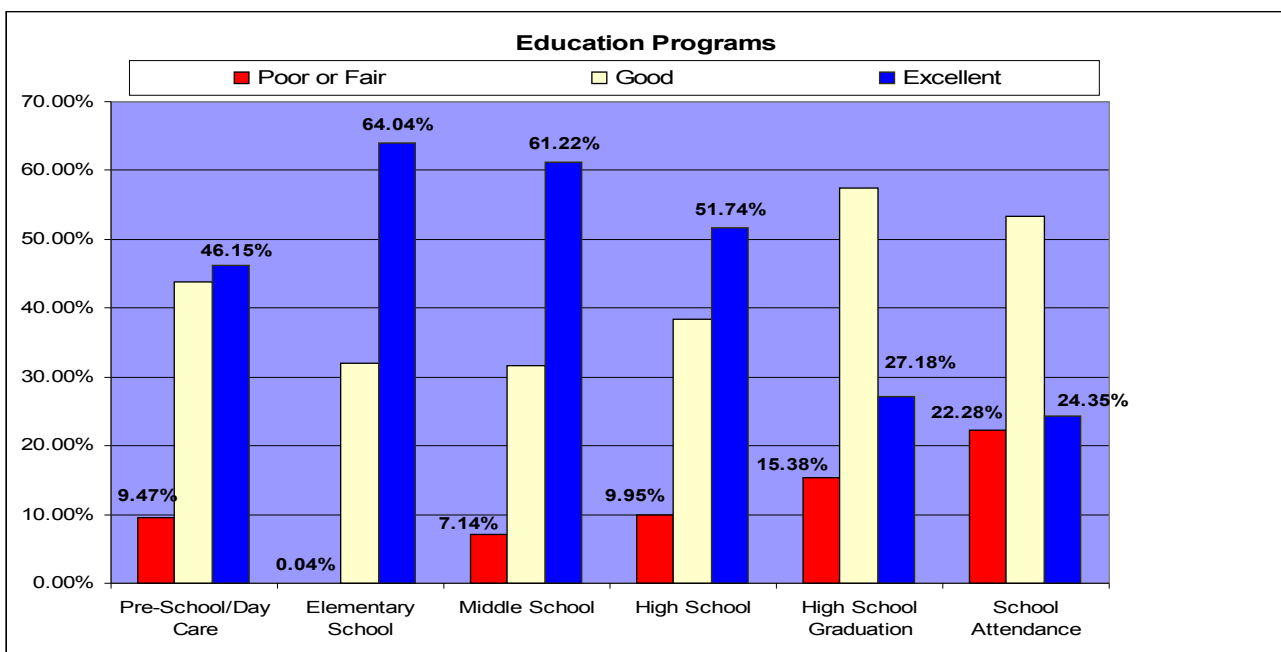
To summarize services provided by the agencies listed above, 40 percent provide services related to healthcare, with at least 33 percent of those agencies focused on alcohol and substance abuse counseling and recovery type programs. Twenty-eight percent of local programs provide educational programming or assistance in education, 20 percent provide assistance with food clothing or shelter, and 12 percent provide services in recreation and leisure services for children and adults.

There were a number of limitations to this portion of the asset inventory. First, the minimum number of completed surveys made it difficult to provide a comparative analysis of the scope of services for any specific agency. Second, no conclusions may be drawn as to program access, or program success because the responses were designed as a "yes" and "no" answer, and did not provide any outcomes measures around the numbers of individuals served over a specific timeframe. As a side note, the asset inventory will be continued as part of the annual funding allocation process so that data may be incorporated into the strategic plan.

III. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Section (4) –part A of the survey assessed the importance of educational programs spanning pre-school through adult continuing education within the community. Part B of each question asked respondents to rate the quality of existing educational programs.

Table (3) illustrates the responses from participants who considered the available school programs very important. Among respondents who rated day care and pre-school programs as very important, 46 percent rated current pre-school or day care programs as excellent, while nearly 10 percent rated existing programs as fair or poor. Two common themes reflected in the community comments include concerns over the limited number of pre-school and day care programs that are available, and the growing waiting lists at each program. Another concern was blending head start with other day care programs and the overall impact on the children who would not normally be enrolled in head start. Other comments included concerns about the cost of day care for families who were just above the FPL and were therefore ineligible for education assistance.



Among 97 percent of survey respondents who considered elementary education as very important, 64 percent rated elementary schools as excellent, and 32 percent rated elementary schools as good. Middle school education was considered very important by 92 percent of respondents, and current middle schools were rated excellent by 61 percent of the same survey respondents, and another 32 percent considered middle schools as good.

Although 91 percent of respondents considered high school education to be very important, only 51 percent considered area high schools excellent, while 10 percent rated high schools as fair or poor. Ninety-three percent of respondents considered high school

graduation very important, but only 27 percent of those respondents considered current graduation rates as excellent, and 15 percent of respondents rated graduation rates as fair or poor. A review of local drop out rates between 2002 and 2007 indicated an overall drop out rate of 2.4 percent and a six percent decrease in the number of high school students who completed all grades 7th -12th. It is important to note however that drop out rates include the numbers of students who de-enroll in the district due to a move out of the area. School attendance, also considered very important by 92 percent of respondents, was rated excellent by 24 percent of respondents, while another 22 percent of the participants considered school attendance to be fair or poor.

Non traditional education such as vocational technical schools and trade programs were considered important or very important to over 90 percent of survey participants. While 67 percent of those respondents considered current programs to be good, another 64 percent who considered non-traditional education to be very important rated current programs as fair or poor.

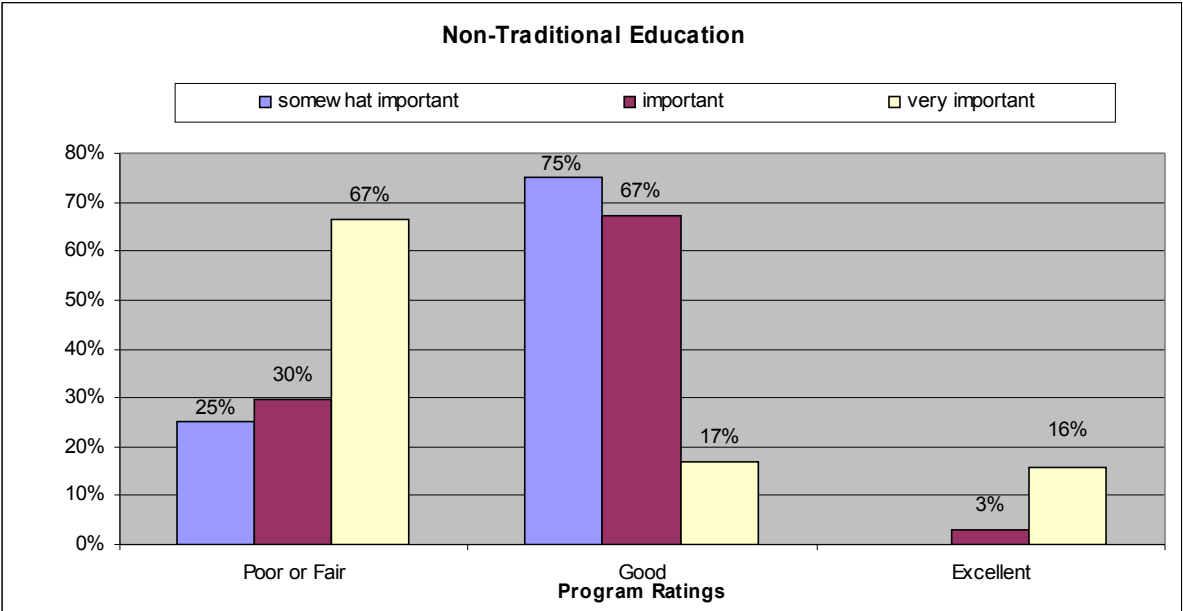


Table 4

Ninety-four percent of survey respondents considered parental support in education and homework to be important or very important. Table (5) shows that almost 70 percent of participants who considered parental support in education as somewhat important rated current levels of parental support to be fair or poor, and another 46 percent who rated parental support as very important rated indicated that current levels of parental support as poor or fair. Thirteen percent of respondents rated parental support as excellent.

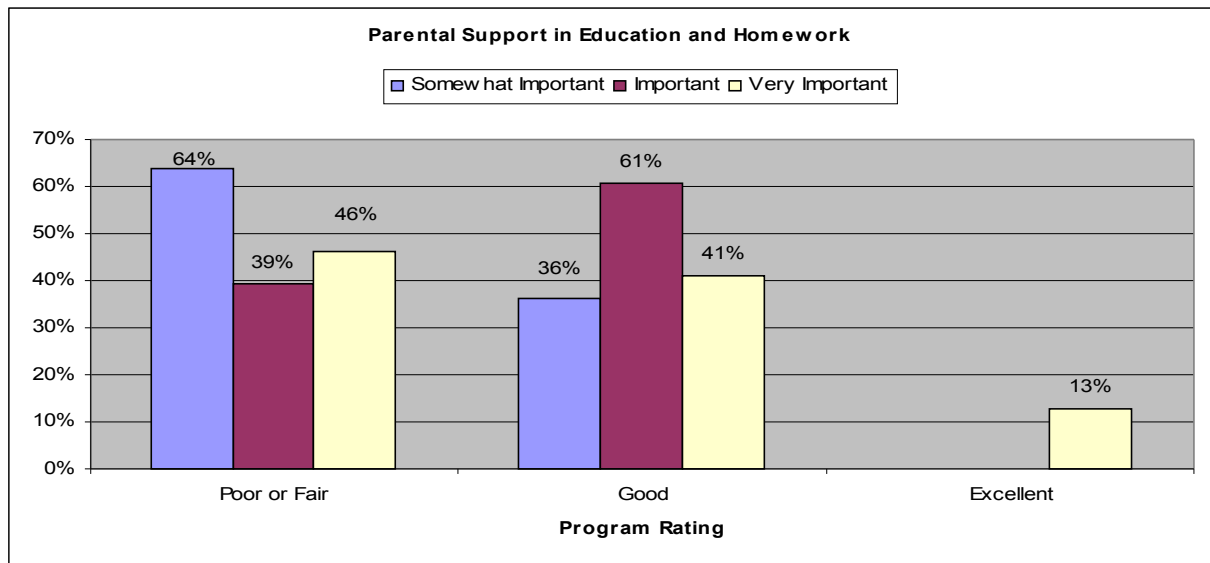


Table 5

Next, the survey evaluated programs in basic parenting skills, job skills training, adult education and computer literacy and internet safety programs. More than 90 percent of respondents valued basic parenting skills as important or very important. The majority (>50%) of the respondents rated the quality of parenting skills programs as poor or fair.

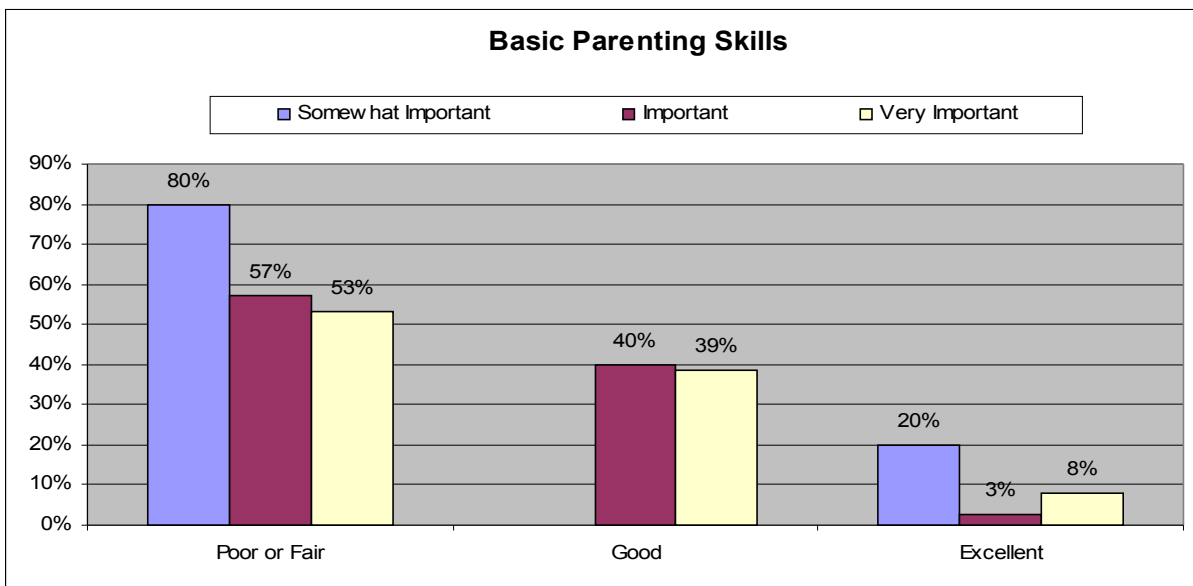


Table 6

Training for job skills is the fifth highest priority identified among community respondents. The loss of heavy industry and manufacturing jobs in the area over the past 20-25 years left many area workers without the proper skills or education to compete in emerging markets of technology based businesses. Current programs for job skills training were rated poor or fair by more than 45 percent of individuals who considered these programs to be important or very important.

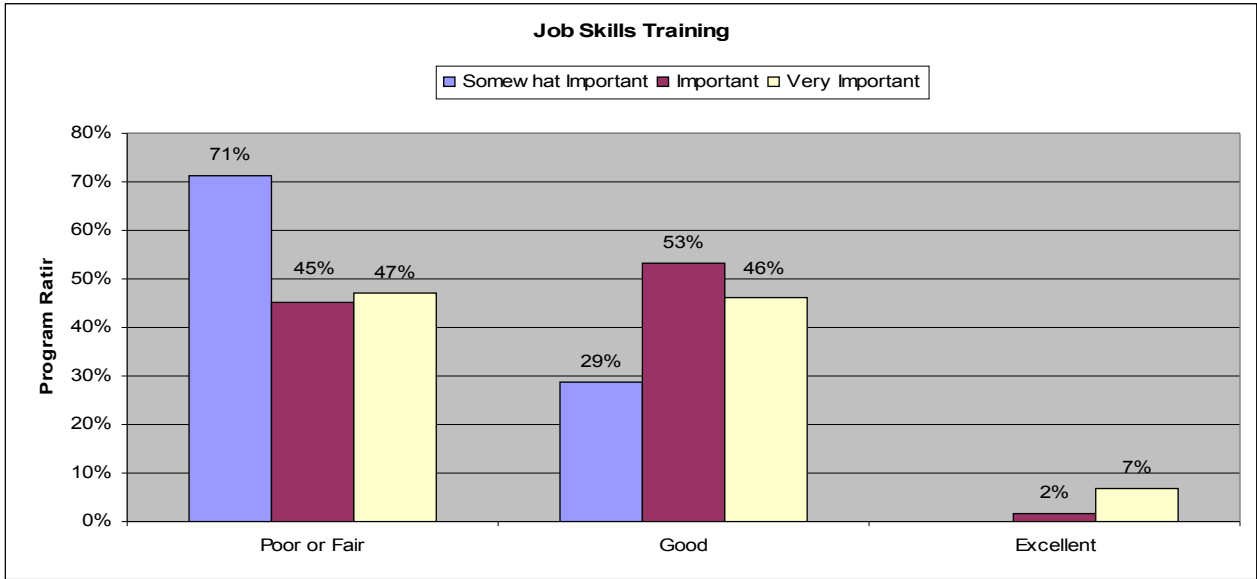


Table 7

Another 45-55 percent of respondents who considered job skills training as important or very important rated current programs as good. Fewer than 10 percent of respondents ranked current programs for job skills training as excellent.

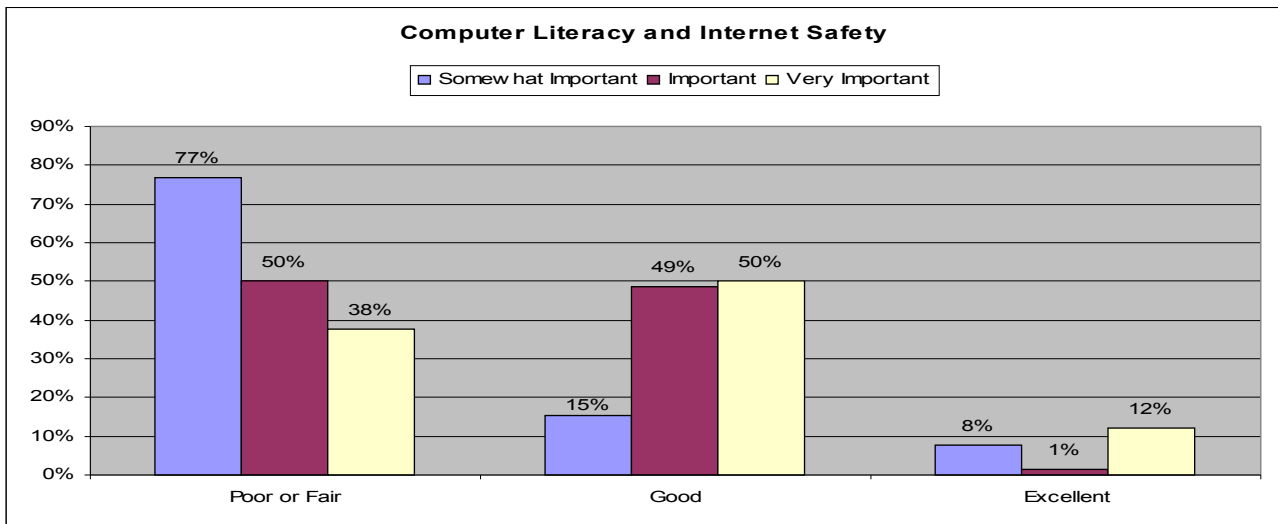


Table 8

Computer literacy and internet safety were considered important or very important by at least 50 percent of survey respondents. Among those same respondents, almost half (50 percent) considered current internet use education to be good, and another 35-50 percent of respondents considered programs to be fair or poor.

An evaluation of budgeting and home economics education revealed that 94 percent of participants considered budgeting and home economics to be important or very important. Among those same survey respondents, 65 percent considered current programs to be

poor or fair, while only 32 percent considered programs to be good. Note that less than two percent of respondents considered programs to be excellent.

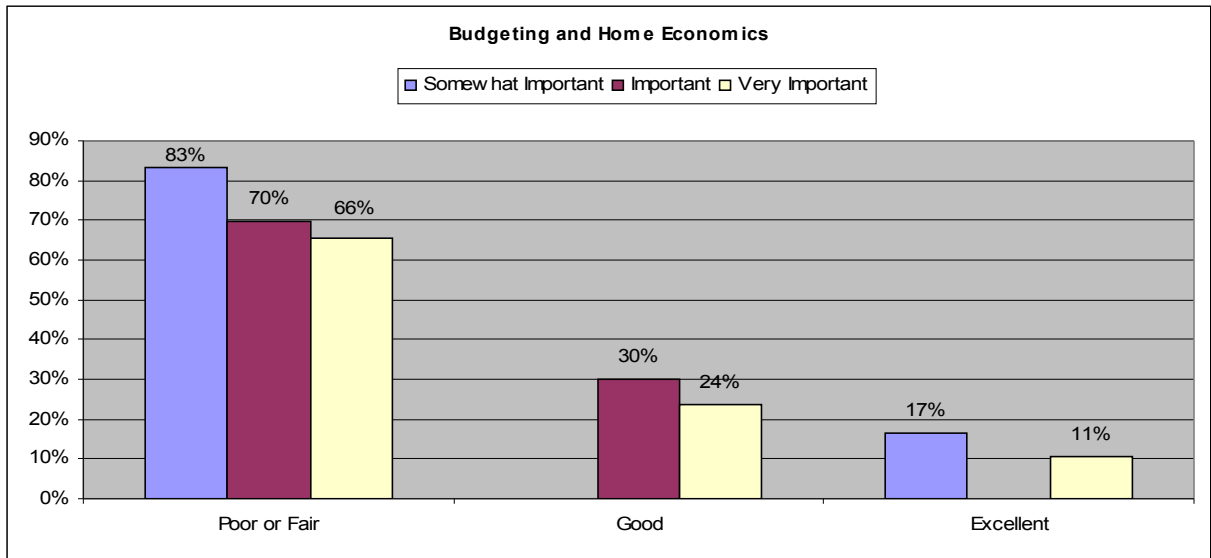


Table 9

Next, Music, Arts and Cultural activities and Sports and Recreation offered during off-school hours were considered important or very important among 90 percent of survey participants. Tables 10-11 below show the community response to each activity.

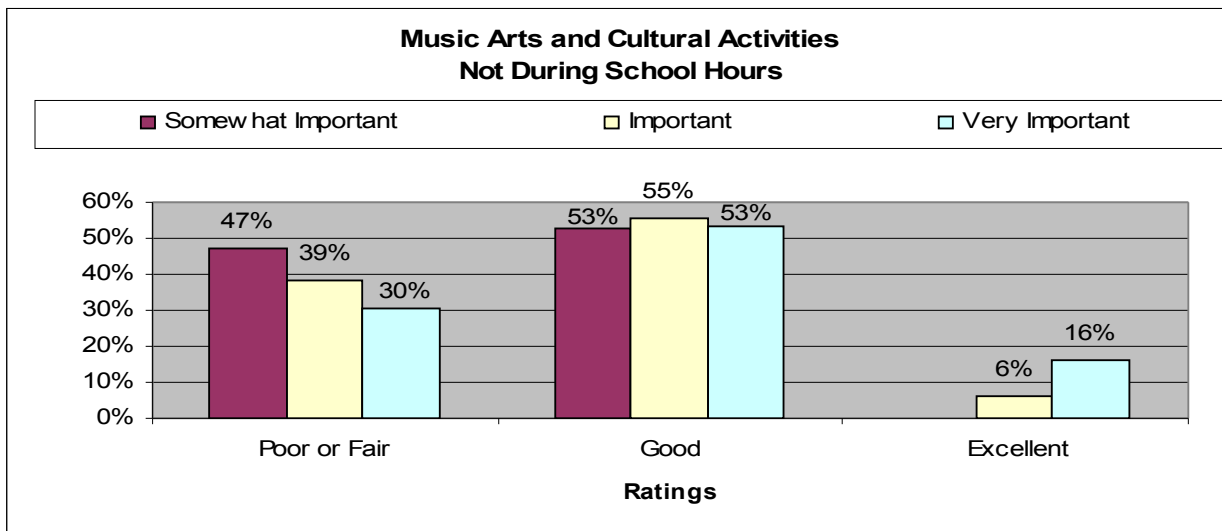


Table 10

Sixty four percent of participants rated music, arts and cultural activities during off school hours as good or excellent, while another 35 percent rated the same programs as poor or fair.

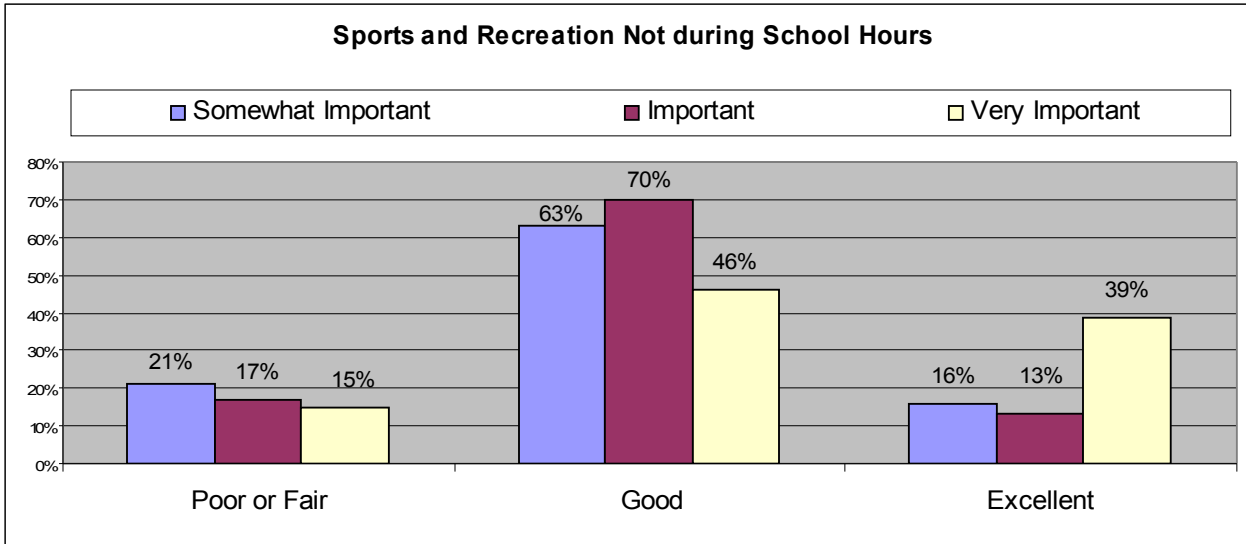


Table 11

Among the same respondents, 95 percent who considered sports and recreation after school as very important rated after-school programs in sports and recreation as excellent, and another 83 percent rated programs as good. Fewer than 25 percent of respondents thought sports and recreation programs after school were poor or fair.

Educational programs of all types are clearly a priority in Crawford County spanning public and private schools, and a variety of off-hours programming in arts, music, culture, sport and recreation, adult literacy, job skills and computer literacy. Although a number of programs were rated good by a majority (>50%), additional program strength is needed for adult education, computer literacy, job skills training, parental support in education, basic parenting skills and budgeting and home economics. On a broader basis, more programs are needed for day care and preschool, and additional emphasis needs to be placed on reducing the number of drop outs across all grades 9th -12th.

IV. HEALTH PREVENTION – General Health and Counseling

Traditionally, the health of a community is determined by morbidity and mortality statistics, taking into consideration risk factors that affect the social and health behaviors among community residents. In Crawford County, the leading causes of death according to the PA Department of Health are:

Diseases of the Heart	Diabetes Mellitus
Cancer	Influenza/Pneumonia
Stroke	Nephritis (Kidney Disease)
Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease (CLRD)	Septicemia
Accidents	Alzheimer’s disease

The leading adult health risk factors include fair or poor overall health, obesity and being overweight, smoking, binge drinking (defined as five or more drinks in a row within a two

week period), lack of health insurance, diabetes diagnosis without treatment, risky sexual behavior, and asthma.

The needs assessment questionnaire asked respondents to evaluate the importance of health education programming for risk factors such as obesity/overweight, tobacco cessation, drug and alcohol use and abuse among teens and adults, teen pregnancy, and programs for the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases (STD). Programs in prevention for obesity, smoking cessation, drug and alcohol education and rehabilitation, and prevention of sexually transmitted disease were considered important or very important among more than 90 percent of the survey respondents. Teen pregnancy prevention was considered important or very important among 95 percent of survey respondents. The tables (12-14) below illustrate the importance of and ratings for current programming discussed above.

Obesity, characterized as a body mass index (BMI) ≥ 30 or approximately 30 pounds overweight, is the fastest growing health concern in the United States. In 2003, almost 25% of all US adults were reported to be overweight or obese. Health conditions related to being overweight or obese include increased prevalence of heart disease, hypertension, Type 2 diabetes, and certain respiratory conditions. The prevalence of overweight and obesity is reflected across all ages, race and ethnicity, education levels and income groups. The trend is skewed higher among lower-income individuals and those with less education.

The impact of overweight and obesity is affecting adults and children alike. Nearly 25-30% of all adults' obesity cases began in childhood. In the past 20 years, the proportion of children ages 6-11 who are overweight has doubled, and the number of adolescents ages 12-19 has tripled. Factors contributing to the increases in obesity include lack of physical activity, poor nutrition, socioeconomic status, lower education levels and underlying genetic factors.

Our survey asked respondents to rate the importance of obesity education programs and to evaluate the quality of programs that are currently available. With nearly 100% of respondents answering, 66 percent of respondents who rated obesity education as very important also rated current education programs as fair or poor. Fewer than 10 percent of respondents who rated obesity education as important or very important rated current obesity programs as excellent. In the community comments, special emphasis was placed on the need for more education for both parents and children about the importance of reducing childhood obesity.

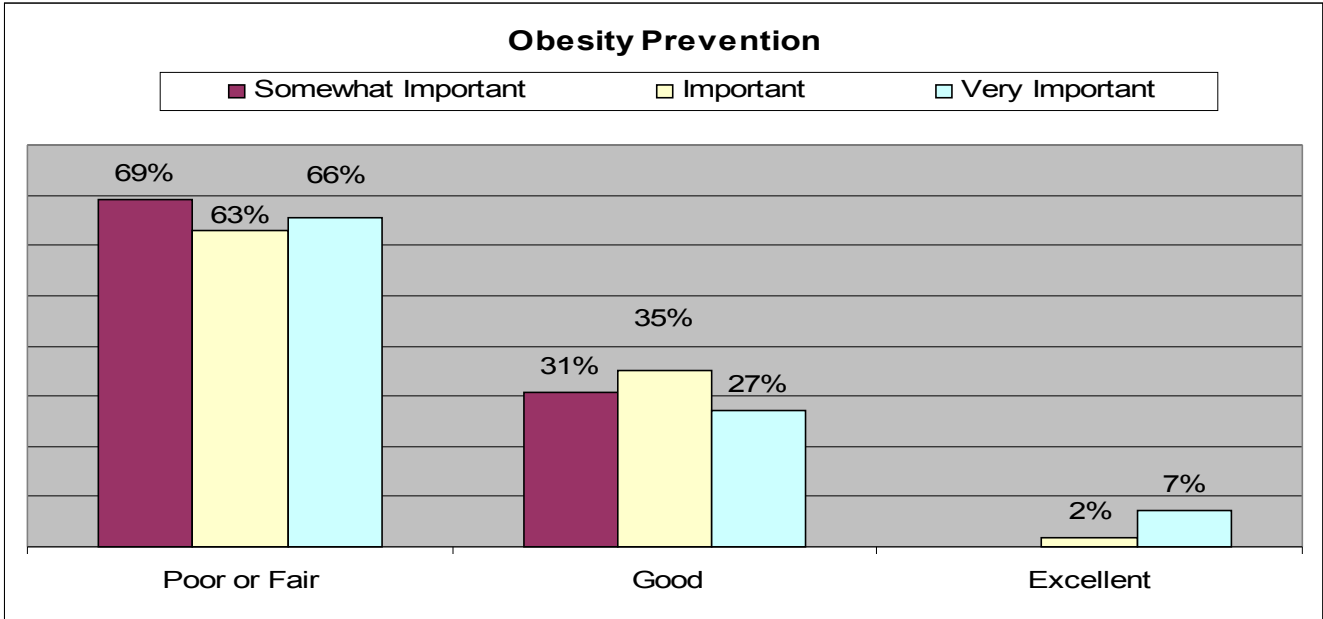


Table 12

Next the survey reviewed tobacco prevention and smoking cessation programs. Ninety two percent of the survey participants considered tobacco prevention education and smoking cessation programs to be important or very important. Almost half (49.4 %) of the respondents consider tobacco cessation programs as good, while another 41 percent considered tobacco prevention programs as poor or fair. The movement in Pennsylvania and other states to ban smoking from public facilities such as restaurants continues to have a positive impact on the declining numbers of people who smoke. The need for strong tobacco prevention education and smoking cessation programs is especially important in reducing the incidence of adolescents and teens who try smoking as an entry drug.

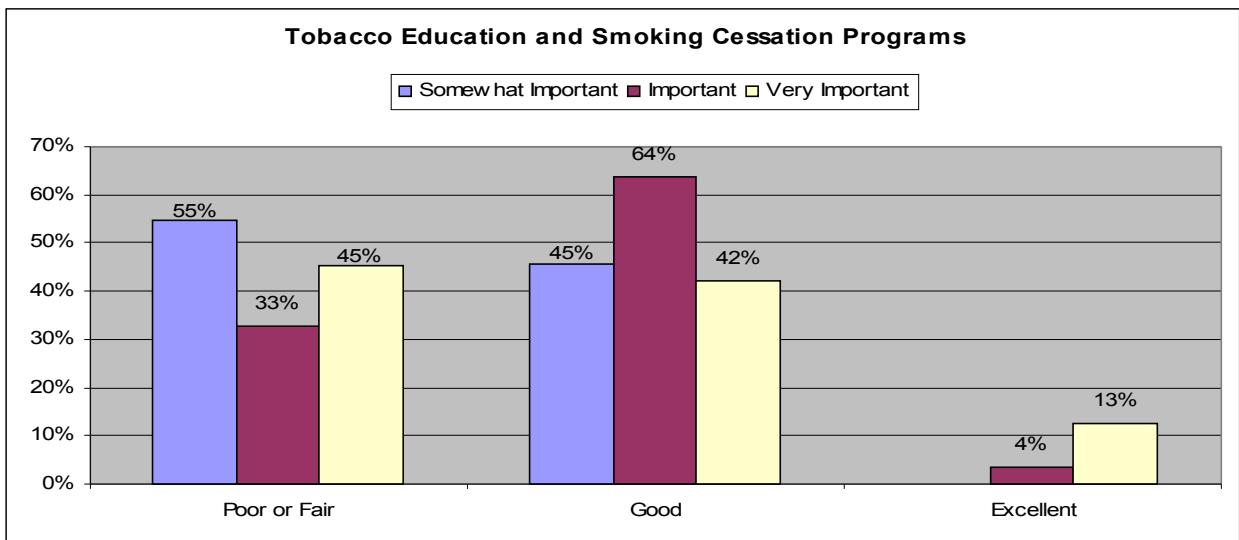


Table 13

According to the most recent Pennsylvania Youth Survey (PAYS), cigarette smoking has declined among teens with just 15.4% reporting current use. Among high school seniors, smoking has dropped from a high of 40.4% in 1990 to its current 31.9%. In a recent PAYS survey, 86.1 percent of all students surveyed agreed that nicotine is an addictive drug.

Alcohol and drug use remains the top community priority in Crawford County. Most will agree that alcohol and drug use are related to risk factors or conditions that increase the likelihood that someone will develop a dependency or a particular behavior.

Locally, one of the most common risk factors is widespread acceptance of alcohol use, and the media's portrayal of drinking as a socially acceptable standard of behavior. Parent behavior and attitudes toward alcohol directly influences the attitudes of adolescents and teens.

On a biannual basis, Pennsylvania conducts surveys of school students in 6th, 7th, 9th and 12th grades to assess their attitudes and behaviors toward tobacco, alcohol and other drugs (ATOD). The survey is repeated every other year, and provides important benchmarks of alcohol, tobacco and drug use among adolescents and teens, as well as providing community planning coalitions with insight into which programs are working. According to the most recent PAYS report (2005), alcohol remains the most frequently used substance. Although the number of teens in grades 6 – 9 who try or use alcohol has declined from 60.2% in 1989 to 17.5% in 2001, the number of 12th graders who engaged in binge drinking (defined as five or more drinks in a row within the past two weeks) reached a high of 33.7% in 2005. It is important to note that this high prevalence of binge drinking among 12th graders was higher in Pennsylvania than the national average for all 12th graders.

The 2005 PAYS included questions designed to measure non-medical prevalence of use rates across four categories of drugs: amphetamines, sedatives, tranquilizers, and narcotics other than heroin. In general, compared to national findings, Pennsylvania's 10th and 12th graders reported higher 30-day rates than their peers nationally for both amphetamines and sedatives. Pennsylvania's 12th graders reported higher than average 30 day use of tranquilizers and narcotics other than heroin, when compared to their national peers. An alarming 5.4 percent of Pennsylvania's 12th graders reported narcotics use within the past 30 days.

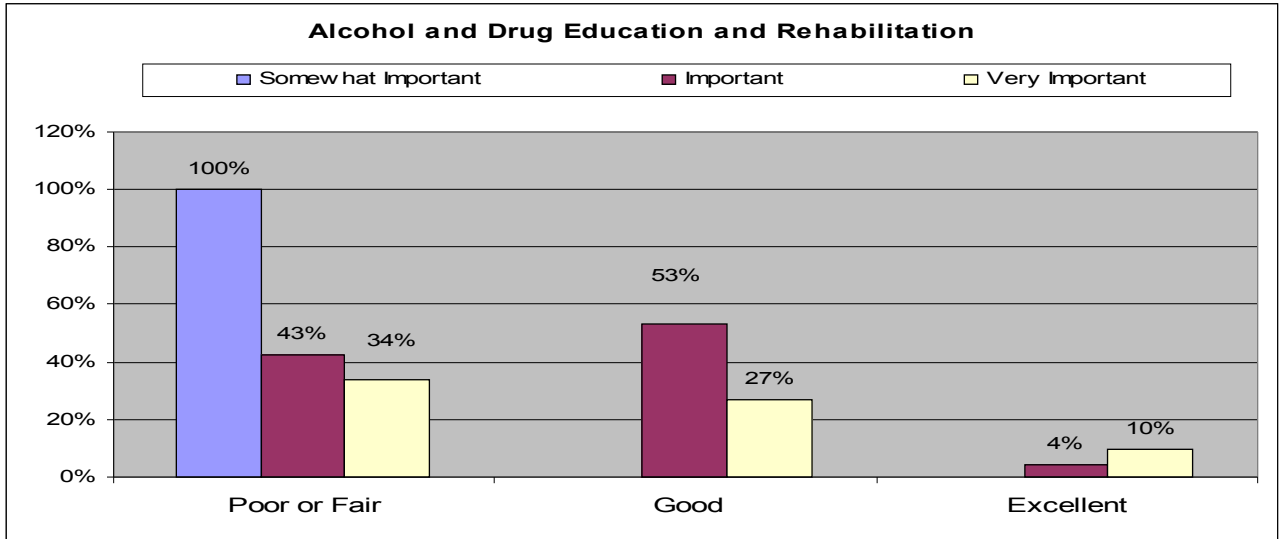


Table 14

The increased incidence of alcohol and drug use can be directly related to economic deprivation, and/or a family or peer history of alcohol and drug related problem behaviors. The community's perception of the ready availability of alcohol and drugs can also lead to an increased number of people seeking to purchase illegal substances. Table 14 shows the results of the community survey regarding the importance of, and quality of programs involving alcohol and drug rehabilitation and counseling for families of alcohol or substance abusers. Ninety-nine percent of respondents considered alcohol and drug education programs to be important or very important. However, current education and rehabilitation programs were rated fair or poor by 47 percent of the participants and another 41 percent rated programs as good and only 10 percent rated programs as excellent.

The need for stronger programming for alcohol and drug rehabilitation, and parental education to enforce attitudes toward abstention is critical to reducing the numbers of adults and teens who abuse alcohol or drugs on a regular basis. Continued arrest and elimination of drug sales, especially methamphetamines are crucial to restoring the Drug Free Community stressed by nearly 100 percent of the survey participants.

Nationally, teen pregnancy rates are on the rise. This is an alarming change in a trend which had reported significant decreases in the past 10 years. When asked to evaluate current programming in teen pregnancy education, 95 percent of respondents considered education in teen pregnancy prevention to be important or very important. Among those same respondents nearly 60 percent rated current teen pregnancy education fair or poor. Another 30 percent rated current programs as good, and only 10 percent rated teen pregnancy education excellent.

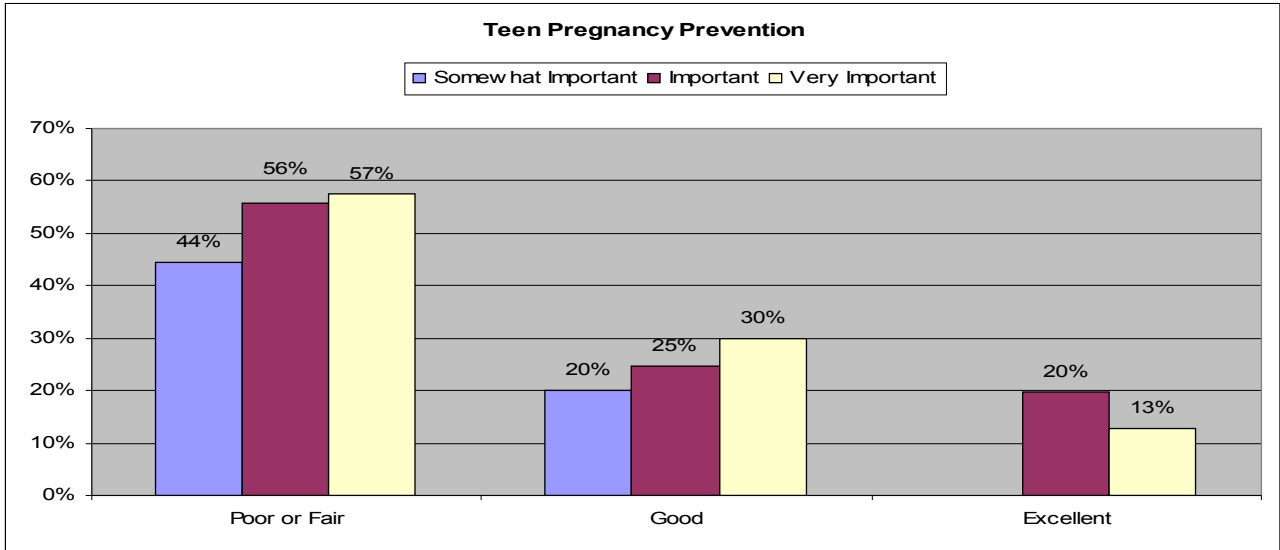


Table 15

Health education topics such as drug and alcohol use and teen pregnancy prevention require constant review to ensure that materials are reaching the target audience, and metrics should be assigned to evaluate the effectiveness of such programs already in place.

Community comments suggest that while there are a number of programs in place, which provide alcohol and drug counseling, some people in the community do not know about their services, and/or may not know how to seek assistance for alcohol, drug or teen related issues. Moreover, there is a general concern that the some employees working in alcohol and drug counseling programs lack the right education or may not have the proper training to provide the right level of assistance to families seeking care.

These feelings can contribute to a sense of mistrust among families seeking assistance, and lead to challenges for program administrators to reach families most in need of assistance. Programs could be strengthened through more widespread marketing campaigns, and also through additional training for staff. An additional tool for raising the community's awareness of available services is through community health fairs. This venue is a very effective method for organizations to distribute materials about programming and services, and serves as a method to introduce staff members without a need for personal commitment.

V. HEALTH PROMOTION – VIOLENCE PREVENTION

The Health Promotion category asked participants to rank the importance of and quality of programming for juvenile justice, domestic violence prevention, bullying prevention, child abuse and neglect and elder abuse and neglect. Questions around juvenile justice included juvenile delinquency, and juvenile discharge with a focus on reintroduction into the family. Almost 100 percent of respondents considered programs to be important or very important. The quality of current programming was rated fair or poor by an alarming 70 percent or greater for each response.

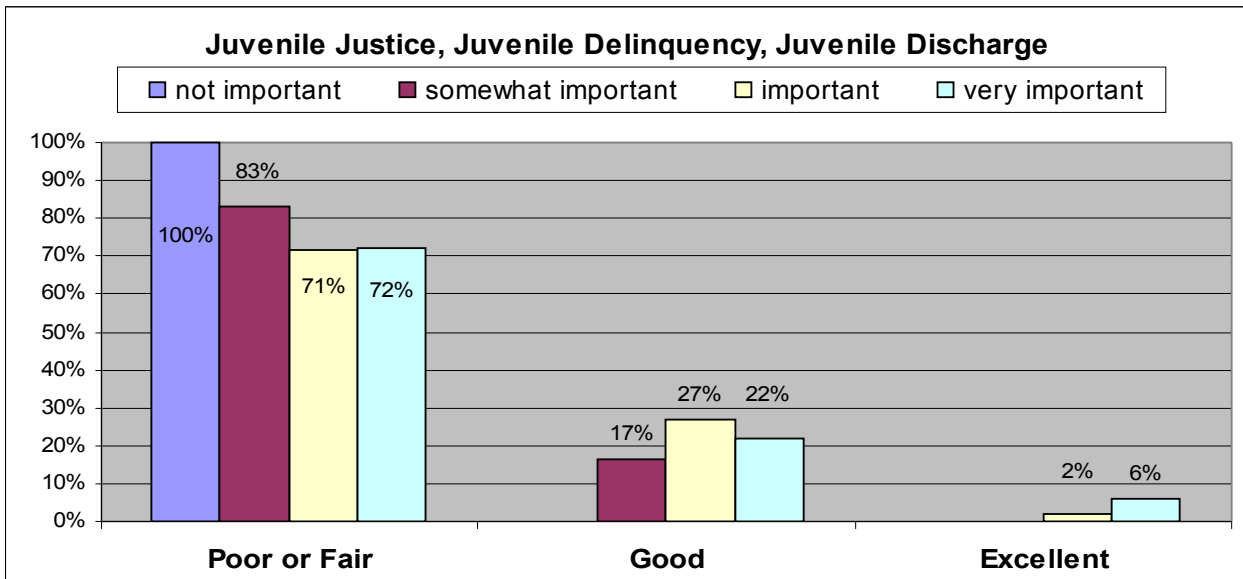


Table 16

Domestic Violence prevention programs were considered important for 90 percent of respondents and very important for almost 100% of respondents. Among those same respondents, 40-60 percent considered programs to be fair or poor, while another 30-50 percent of respondents considered programs to be good. At least 20 percent thought current programs were excellent.

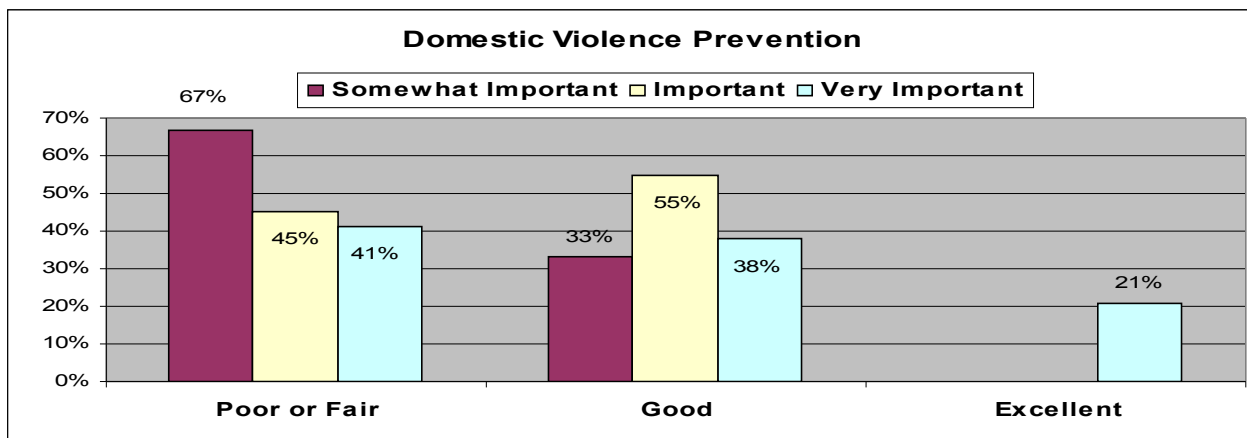


Table 17

Area school districts post signs and hold regular workshops for students, teachers and parents on the topic of bullying. Evidence of the Zero Tolerance policy can be seen in the signs hanging in various areas of every school. It was startling to learn from the 2005 PAYS reported that there was a statewide prevalence of 11.7% of students who reported attacking someone with intent to do harm, making it the most prevalent of the seven behaviors measured by this statewide study. From the survey we learned that programs to prevent bullying were rated as important or very important for 95 percent of respondents. In spite of the local school efforts to reduce or eliminate incidents of bullying, current programs were rated as poor or fair by more than 50% of those same respondents.

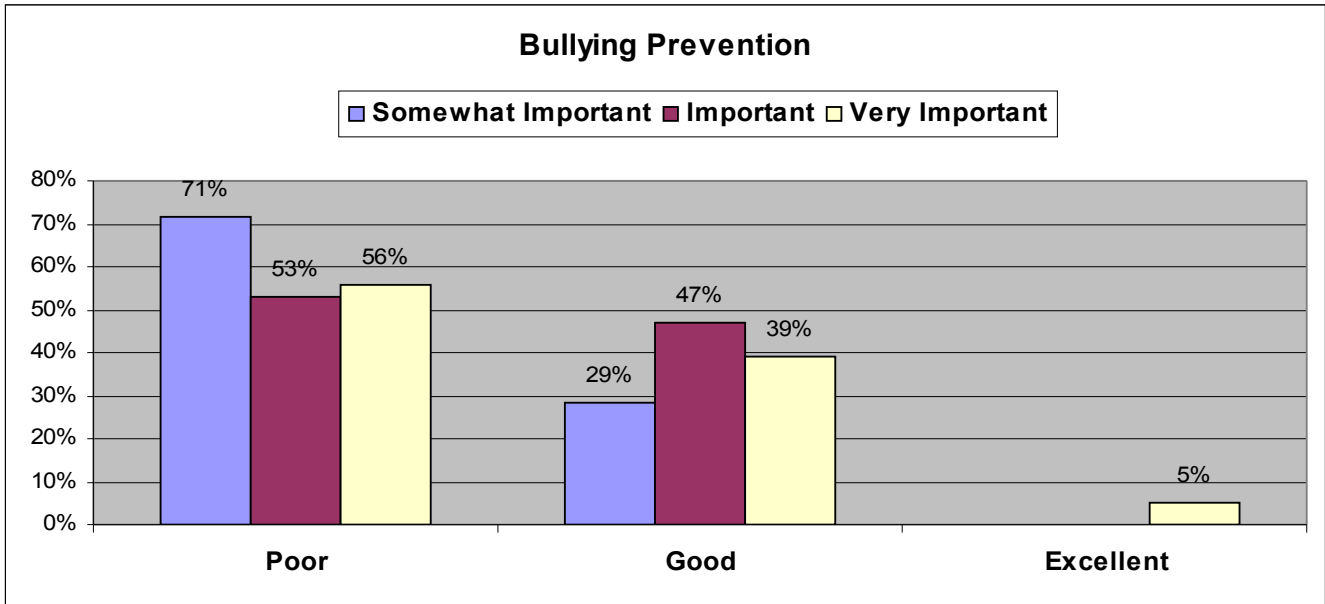


Table 18

It is difficult to draw conclusions from the information reported about bullying prevention programs. Program ratings do not necessarily indicate that existing programs are not working; but rather, suggest that bullying prevention programming at school is not enough by itself to change the behavior of adolescents or teens. Moreover, without educational programming aimed at adults, school-based programs will not impact bullying behavior that occurs at home between parents and school age children or among siblings. Additional programming aimed at parents, and the community at large might be one solution to improving the outcomes of programs aimed at eliminating bullying.

VI. HOUSING AND ECONOMIC PRIORITIES

Section 5 asked respondents to review a list of economic and housing priorities, and to rank their importance using a scale of responses including "no opinion", "low priority", "medium priority" and "high priority". Data were summarized, and the total percentages for each priority were ranked in numeric order. The top priorities were selected for any category scoring a total of 90% or higher. First, they were ranked in descending order based on the total number of "high priority" responses recorded. Next a comparison was made by combining the total number of medium and high priority responses, and the

listing was reclassified. The table below illustrates the top 12 priorities identified by community respondents.

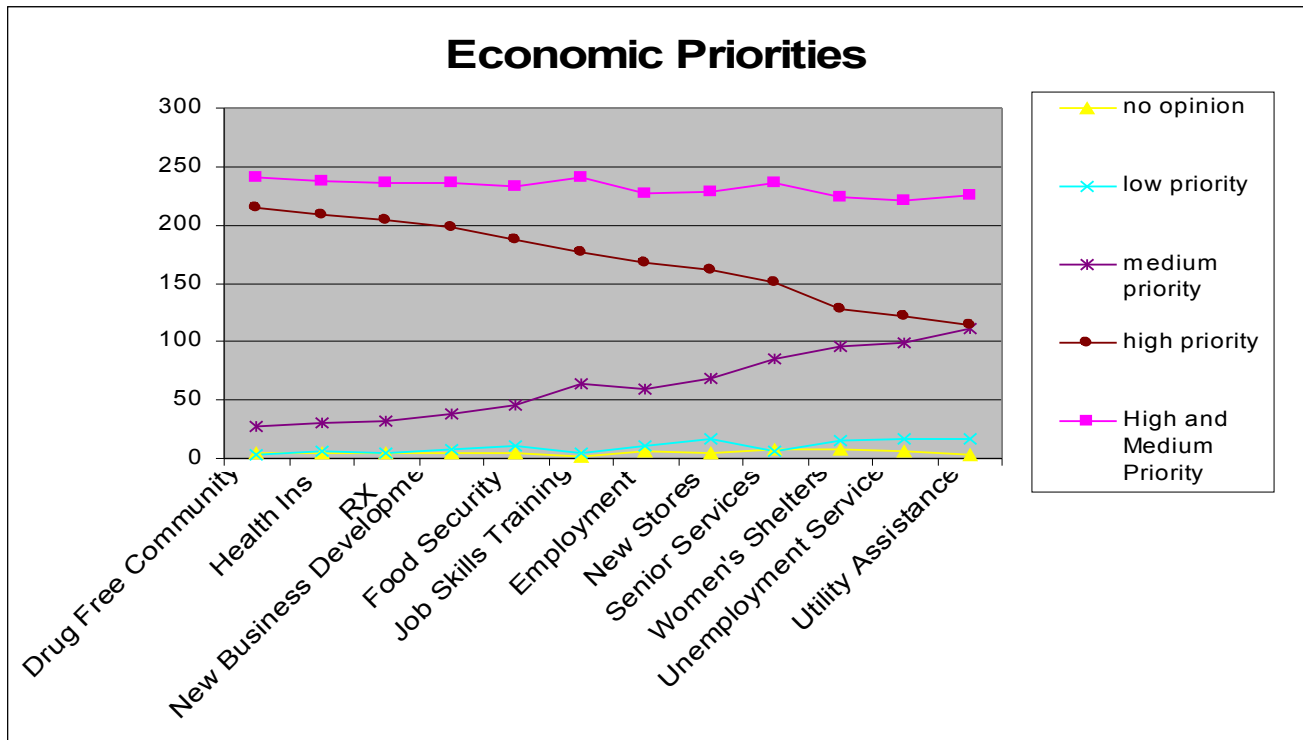


Table 19

Having a Drug Free Community was listed as the top priority by 86 percent of respondents, followed closely by affordable health insurance - 84 percent, affordable prescription drugs - 83 percent, new business development - 80 percent and having enough food to eat - 76 percent. Other priorities in the top 12 included job skills training - 71 percent, competitive wage employment - 69 percent, new retail stores - 65 percent, services for seniors and the aging - 61 percent, shelters for women - 52 percent, unemployment services - 50 percent, and utility assistance - 48 percent.

VII. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The final section of the survey asked respondents to review a list of service objectives and to identify problem areas with possible responses including I don't know, not a problem, minor problem or major problem. Table 19 illustrates the top 12 community identified problems.

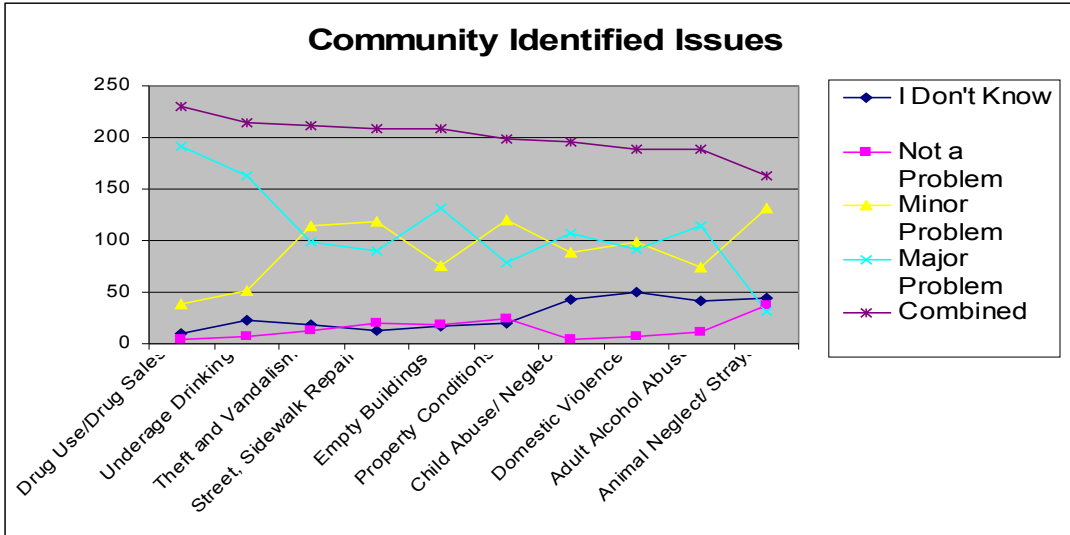
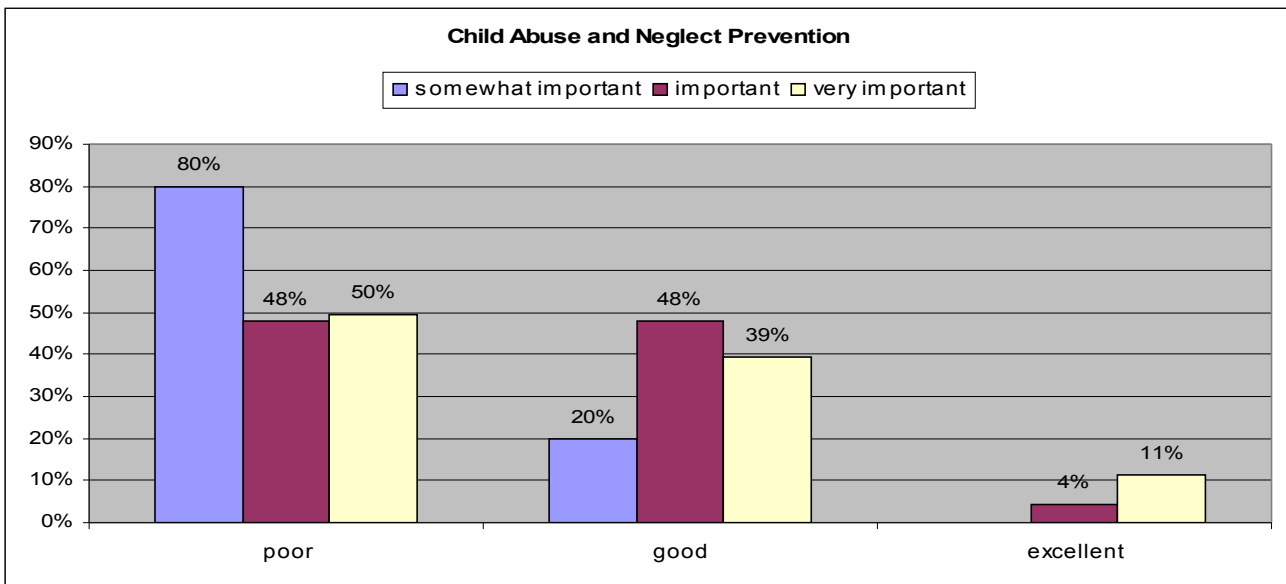


Table 20

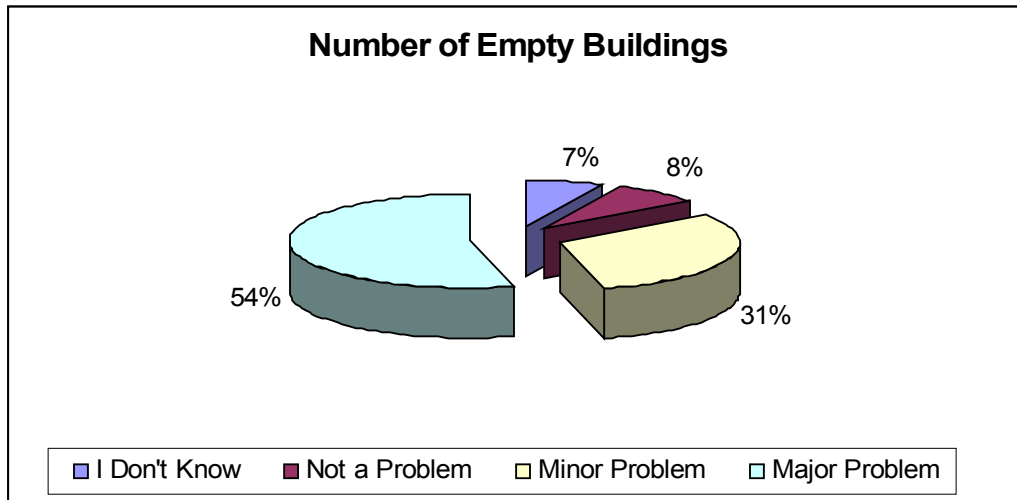
Drug Use and drug sales were rated the number one problem in the community by 79 percent of respondents, followed closely by underage drinking – 67 percent, and alcohol abuse among adults – 47 percent. From the community perspective, the major risk factor contributing to alcohol abuse among teens is parental acceptance of alcohol consumption as a social function. Many view this as a long standing issue in the community, where a greater emphasis on education must be placed with parents as well as their teen and pre-teen children.

An additional area of concern that was raised through the community commentary was incidents of child abuse and neglect, directly related to alcohol abuse and/or use and sales or drugs in the community. Survey data revealed that 95 percent of respondents considered child abuse prevention programs to be very important, but of those same respondents, 50 percent considered current child abuse and neglect education programs as fair or poor, while less than 40 percent considered programs good.

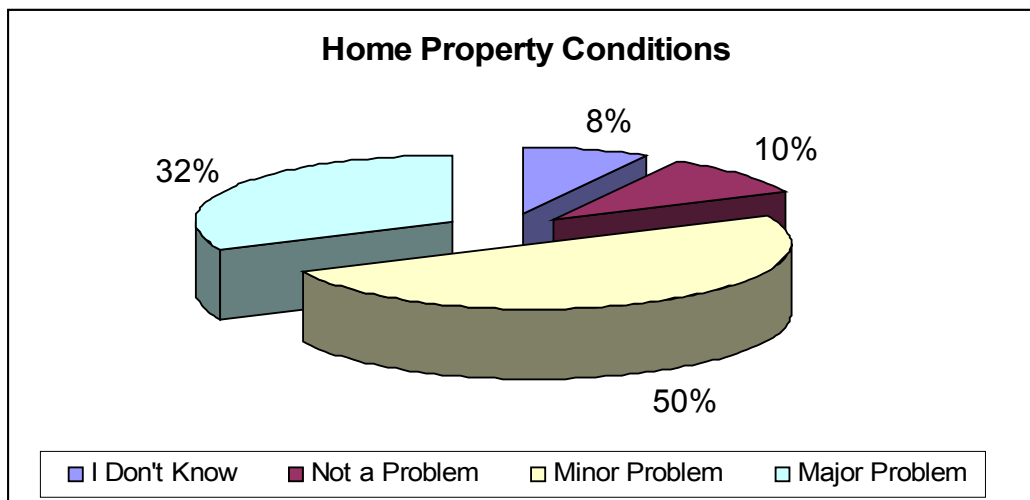


Other problem areas included theft and vandalism, the number of empty buildings, sidewalk and street repairs, property conditions, and stray or neglected animals.

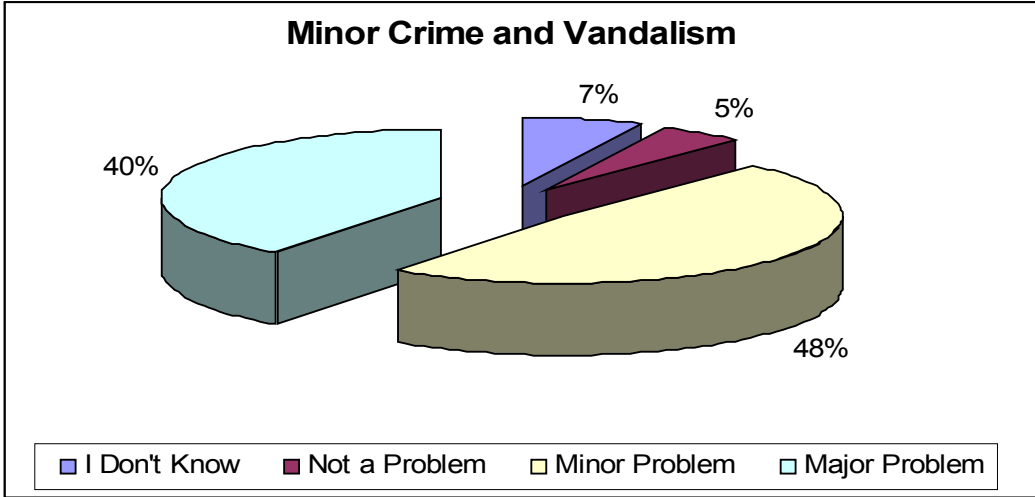
The number of empty buildings is considered a major problem by 54 percent of survey respondents, and another 31 percent of survey participants considered empty buildings to be a minor problem.



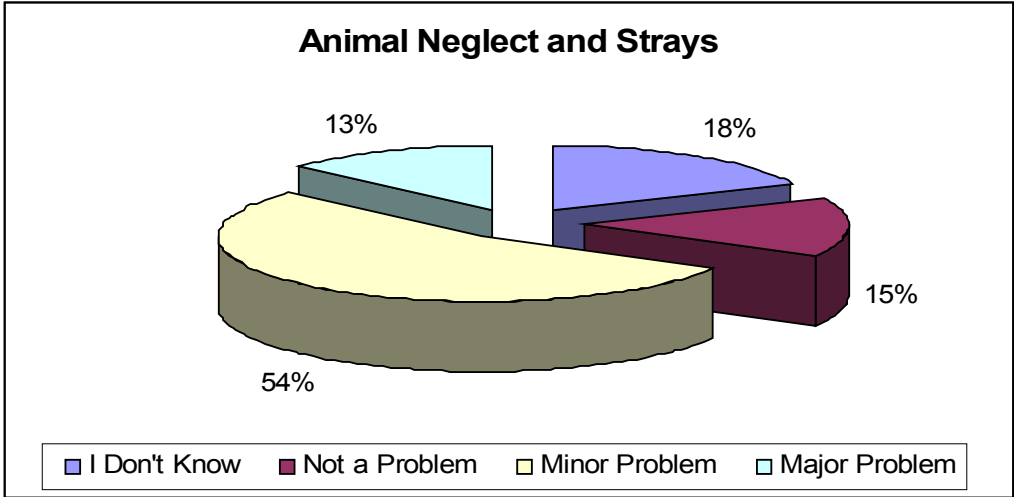
Home and property conditions were considered a major problem for 32 percent of respondents and a minor problem for another 50 percent of the survey's participants. The community commentary pointed specifically to the low standards of property condition for the number of rental units, and a lack of enforcement related to outside maintenance including lawn maintenance, trash and storage.



On a daily basis the local papers carry reports of auto and home vandalism and theft. This community concern was reinforced with 40 percent of respondents rating minor crime and vandalism as a major problem and another 48 percent rating this minor problem.



An emerging area for community concern is the numbers of stray and neglected animals. Although only 13 percent of the survey respondents considered this to be a major problem, more than half (54 percent) considered stray animals as a minor problem, perhaps evidence that the population of neglected animals is on the rise.



APPENDIX

- a. Project Proposal**
- b. Project Presentation**
- c. Survey Tool**
- d. Asset Inventory**
- e. Community Commentary**
- f. Data Analysis Tables**