



United Way of Ocean County

Interim Community Needs Assessment 2010

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- Jewish Family and Children's Services
- Literacy Volunteers of America, O.C., Inc.
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- NJ211
- Ocean County Department of Human Services
- Ocean County Employee Relations
- Ocean Housing Alliance Joan Valentine House
- Ocean County Health Department
- Ocean County Hunger Relief
- Ocean County Office of Senior Services
- Ocean County Planning Department
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- Ocean County Vocational Technical School (OCVTS)
- Ocean County Workforce Investment Board
- Ocean County YMCA
- Ocean's Harbor House
- Ocean Health Initiative, Inc.
- Ocean Mental Health
- O.C.E.A.N. Inc.
- Ocean-Monmouth County Legal Services
- Preferred Behavioral Health of NJ
- Providence House Domestic Violence Services of Catholic Charities
- Reindancer Therapeutic Riding Center
- Salvation Army
- Seashore Family Services of NJ
- St. Francis Center
- Team Randy, Inc.
- Twenty One Plus, Inc.
- United Way of Passaic County
- United Way of Gloucester
- Vetwork
- Your Grandmother's Cupboard

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Executive Summary

The dramatic changes that we have seen in the economy over the past few years have lead to an increase in Ocean County residents with unmet needs. This Community Needs Assessment attempts to examine and acknowledge the changes we have experienced as a county since our last Needs Assessment in 2007. We have seen a shift in the areas identified as greatest concerns for our community. We have prepared this report in order to ensure that our funds and services are being distributed and utilized correctly. It is our goal to support the services and organizations that directly relate to Ocean County residents. This can only be done after defining the most critical needs and challenges that our community faces.

In order to create the 2010 Interim Need Assessment, many resources were gathered and reviewed. A survey was mailed during November 2009 to both individuals and professional groups. They were asked to rate suggested needs of the county and identify whether or not they felt Ocean County had sufficient resources to support the volume of individuals facing those given needs. Also, county departments, organizations and local agencies were contacted to collect current information and data on their services, as well as report any changes they have seen since 2007. After compiling the information received, we were able to pin point the most important areas for United Way of Ocean County to focus on for this year's funding priorities. Please note that the information included in this report reflects the feedback that we received from the agencies to which we reached out.

The following is a compilation of the data and feedback that we have received. We have identified specific needs in each of the three categories of Income, Health and Education, the three umbrella areas of primary concern identified by the national office of United Way of America. Included in the report are lists of some of the programs and services that are available in Ocean County in relation to each need. Please note the lack of the most current information in some areas is due to the amount of time between the last U.S. Census and now.

The completed 2009-2010 United Way Needs Assessment for Ocean County will be used to direct funding to the programs that are working to minimize the most severe gaps in the highest need areas. It is our hope that we will be able to continue to work with great integrity to better Ocean County through the implementation of this report, as well as ongoing research.

United Way of Ocean County

Our Vision: All sectors of the Ocean County community will work together to meet the human service needs of every resident, so that all will have a good life.

Mission: To use Education, Income and Health metrics to determine and address the highest priority human service needs of our community.

Goal: To raise and use available resources most effectively in order to have the greatest possible impact in the highest needs areas as determined by our needs assessment.

Objectives: Identify new resources, and increase existing resources and partnerships that will facilitate programming in the areas of Education, Income and Health so that we may reach our goal.

Tasks:

- Produce needs assessment
- Raise resources, create partnerships
- Determine areas of unmet needs
- Apply resources
- Determine measurable results of allocation of funds

We have continued to support local organizations and agencies to help improve the quality of life of Ocean County for many years. However, this is only possible due to the focus that we have on determining the most critical needs and challenges for the individuals in our community.

Demographics

Overall:

In 2009, the population estimate for Ocean County was 573,678. This is an increase of 12.3% since April 2000. It is an extremely fast growing county when compared to others in the state. In 2008, there were 1,115 building permits for single family residential homes issued. This ranked Ocean County number 1 in the state for the most homes built.

Seniors:

Ocean County can be characterized by its high Senior Citizen population. In fact, the Ocean County Office of Senior Services reports that Ocean County has the highest percent of 60+, 65+, and 75 and 85+ gross age category in the state. Berkeley and Whiting lead the state in individuals over 85 years old. In 2009, over 20% of the county's population was over 65 years of age. Ocean County also has the highest percentage of households that receive Social Security (41.4%) and other retirement income (27.1%). There are 91 adult communities, 32 long term care facilities, 35 alternate living facilities and 26 low income/subsidized senior and disabled housing complexes. Ocean County's Office of Senior Services served 12,035 people in 2009 and had over 15,000 hits on their website.

Low Income:

In 2008, 8.6% of people in Ocean County were living below the poverty level. At that time, 16% of children in Ocean County were living in poverty. In 2009, there were over 1,800 children receiving welfare. A family of 4 must make less than \$22,050 in order to be considered living in poverty according to the 2009 Poverty Guidelines.






Individuals with Disabilities:

The American Community Survey of 2008 indicated that 13.1% of Ocean County residents had a disability, not including the institutionalized and mentally ill. When those categories are added, the number increases to about 25%, or an estimated 162,000.

Veterans:

There are approximately 68,000 veterans in Ocean County.

Income

Income Category	Some Indicators for Ocean County, NJ	Trend
Employment	<p>The current unemployment rate remained at a high 9.8% as of June 2010. Wages in Ocean County are the second lowest in NJ.</p>	 worsening
Emergency Services	<p>Food pantries are reporting a 62% increase in numbers of people accessing meals.</p> <p>O.C.E.A.N., Inc. has seen a 30% increase in utility and weatherization applications over the last year.</p>	 worsening
Housing	<p>In 2009, foreclosure rates increased 230% since 2007. This is the 2nd largest increase in NJ.</p> <p>This years Point in Time Count of the homeless individuals found throughout the county on one given night increased 30% since 2007.</p>	 worsening
Transportation	<p>Ocean Ride has cut its routes back from 17 to 14. Almost all remaining routes have decreased service.</p>	 worsening
Legal Services	<p>In 2009, Ocean Monmouth Legal Services saw 4,042 cases for Ocean County. The Consumer Unit and Housing unit received most of the calls.</p>	 worsening

We reached out to many local agencies and county offices for income related information and statistics in Ocean County. State and County departments, as well as some of their various units, such as the Board of Social Services, Ocean County Planning Department, Children's Inter Agency Coordinating Council (CIACC), New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Ocean County Department of Human Services, OC Employee Relations and the Office for Individuals with Disabilities were contacted. Our partner agencies that were contacted in regards to income were Salvation Army, Ocean-Monmouth Legal Services, The Arc Ocean County Chapter, Ocean County Hunger Relief, Ocean Housing Alliance Joan Valentine House, Ocean's Harbor House, Providence House of Catholic Charities, St. Francis Center, Vetgroup, Inc., Your Grandmother's Cupboard, O.C.E.A.N., Inc., NJ 211, Family Promise of Ocean County, Caregiver Volunteers of Central Jersey, LADACIN Network, Housing for All and House of Hope.

Employment

As of January 2010, the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development reported that the unemployment rate for Ocean County was at 11.9% with an estimated 31,100 people unemployed. The Unemployment rate was 9.8% in June 2010. This number is substantially higher than in 2008 when it was about 6%. Ocean County's current rate is higher than that state rate. The hourly minimum wage for New Jersey is \$7.25. Wages in Ocean County are the second lowest in the state. The Workforce Investment Board Reports that Ocean County's annual average private sector wage was \$34,936 in 2008 compared to the state's which was \$54,932. The main reason for the county being significantly lower than the state is the large number of individuals employed in retail trade (21.5% of county), and leisure and hospitality (15% of county). Both of these areas of employment require low skills and are paid low wages. Many of these jobs were typically held by young workers, but due to lack of available jobs many older adults are occupying these positions.

The severity of the unemployment issue has resulted in an increase of people looking for financial help. As of December 31st 2009, the number of new Board of Social Services cases was up 41% since 2007. Those receiving General Assistance increased 84% to 2,299 individuals, while TANF (Temporary Aid to Needy Families) increased 44% to 2,833 individuals. In 2009, the One Stop Career Center saw about 27,000 people. This was an increase of about 12,000 due to the recession. The numbers continue to increase. Most customers are accessing career planning and job search but they have also seen an increase of about 30% in training services since 2008.

Ocean County Programs:

- Ocean County Vocational-Technical School: Career Counseling
- Displaced Homemakers Program of Ocean County
- Preferred Behavioral Health: Employment Services
- Lakewood Community Services Corp
- Ocean County Unemployment Office
- Ocean's Harbor House - Transitional Living Program
- One Stop Career Center
- Vetwork, A Program of Vetgroup, Inc.

The following are programs for Individuals with Disabilities only:

- Center for Vocational Rehabilitation
- Commission for the Blind & Visually Impaired
- New Jersey Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services/Ocean
- The Arc of NJ Project Hire
- Twenty-One Plus, Inc.

Although there are some programs that aid individuals in the job search, there continues to be a gap in services due the large influx in people becoming unemployed. Lack of a secure and realistically paying job may lead to loss of housing, increased need for emergency assistance, lack of transportation, legal issues, and inability to receive or pay for health coverage. The longer someone is without a job, the more services they will need to seek out. Through our survey, we found that this need was the highest rated gap in relation to income. There is an exceedingly high need for jobs. There is also a great need for assistance programs in order to help individuals find available jobs, change career paths and receive new trainings.

Emergency Services

Food

St. Francis Food Pantry, Ocean County Hunger Relief and Salvation Army have all noted a significant increase of people seeking assistance for food. In 2009, Ocean County Hunger Relief alone saw a 62% increase since 2007. They served 72,500 people in 2009. This was a shocking 22,500 more individuals than in 2008. Salvation Army's mobile service served 86 families in just one afternoon in March. St. Francis Food Pantry served 11,365 individuals, including 4,884 children. This was a 22% increase for their pantry. According to the Kids Count County Profile for Ocean County, during the 2008-2009 school year, 26% of children received both free or reduced price breakfast and lunch. The Board of Social Services reported a that the use of Food Stamps increased 54% since 2007. This included 15,429 children. Over all during 2009, approximately 68,000 families were served over 780,000 meals in Ocean County. Also in 2009, Nearly 3,000 seniors received meals that were either congregate or home delivered by various

organizations in the community. There were almost 318,000 meals for seniors during that year.

Ocean County Programs:

- American Red Cross Jersey Coast Chapter
- Barnegat Pantry
- Brighter Days Self-Help Mutual Aid Center
- Calvary Lighthouse
- Caregiver Volunteers of Central Jersey
- Christ United Methodist Church
- Church of God
- Church of Grace and Peace
- Community Outreach Food and Clothing Pantry
- Community Reformed Church
- East Dover Baptist Church Food Pantry
- Faith Lutheran Church
- Family and Community Health Sciences
- Good Shepherd R C Church Parish
- House of Hope
- Jackson Baptist Church
- Jesus is Lord Fellowship
- Lacey Food Bank
- Lacey United Methodist Church
- Lutheran Church of the Holy Spirit
- Macedonia Baptist Church
- Meals on Wheels Program of Community Services, Inc.
- Monsignor Donovan High School
- Ocean County Board of Social Services
- Ocean Christian Community Church
- Ocean County Hunger Relief, Inc.
- Ocean County Health Department: WIC Program
- Ocean's Harbor House Youth Shelter
- Osbornville Baptist Church
- Presbyterian Church of Toms River
- Redeemer Lutheran Church
- Salvation Army of Ocean County
- St. Andrews Methodist Church
- St. Anthony Claret Church
- St. Barnabas Catholic Church
- St. Dominic's Roman Catholic Church
- St. Francis Pantry
- St. Gregory's Pantry of St. Mary's by the Sea
- St. Joseph's Catholic Church
- St. Justin Church

- St. Martha's Church
- St. Mary of the Lake Church
- St. Mary's Church
- St. Paul's Lutheran Church
- St. Paul's Methodist Church
- St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
- St. Theresa's Catholic Church
- St. Thomas Lutheran Church
- St. Vincent DePaul Society at St. Anthony Claret Church
- Temple Beth Ann
- Tuckerton Food Pantry
- Under His Wing Program of All Saints Episcopal Church
- Vetwork, A Program of Vetgroup, Inc.
- Volunteer Services at Ocean Medical Center
- Your Grandmother's Cupboard

In January 2009, 130 older adults were waiting for home delivered meals. By end of September there were only 29 individuals left on the list. There has been an outpouring of assistance for emergency food services. However, there has also been a continuously growing demand. Even with increased community support, the sudden demand has become very difficult to meet. As families and individuals find themselves with less income, the need for food continues to be very real. This is the first time that pantries have seen an overwhelming number of middle class families seeking help due to sudden loss of income. The demographic of people in need is growing. Food is a necessity, therefore it is essential to ensure that families receive this assistance.

Utility Assistance

Another issue that has become a concern for many individuals and families is paying utility bills. For many working families, electricity, heat and water bills can become impossible to afford after paying high housing costs. Some programs have been created to ensure that these essentials are paid. O.C.E.A.N., Inc. has noticed a 30% increase in utility and weatherization applications over the last year. The St. Francis Human Concerns Department has also seen an increase of people requesting utility assistance. They report that many of their clients resisted asking for help at first because they had always been able to pay these bills before. More and more people are finding themselves needing help for the first time.

Ocean County Programs:

- Affordable Housing Alliance of NJ
- Berkeley Senior Center and Outreach
- Board of Public Utilities: Winter Termination Program
- Catholic Charities: Emergency and Community Services Housing Assistance Services (Home, Heat, and Hope)
- New Jersey Comfort Partners

- New Jersey Department of Community Affairs: Home Energy Assistance Program, Universal Service Fund (USF) Program
- New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Service: NJ Lifeline
- New Jersey Natural Gas: Gift of Warmth
- New Jersey Statewide Heating Assistance and Referral Energy Service, Inc. (NJSHARES)
- O.C.E.A.N., Inc.
- Ocean County Board of Social Services
- St. Francis Community Center: NJ EASE/ Human Concerns Department
- St. Vincent DePaul Society

Utility assistance programs have seen a rapidly growing demand due to lack of income for individuals and families. This becomes a serious concern especially during the winter months when heating bills become expensive. There are many guidelines to these programs. Many utility assistance programs are also only available when organizations have extra funding. Availability can often be unpredictable and sporadic.

Housing

Affordable Housing

New Jersey is one of the least affordable places to live in the nation. The Low Income Housing Coalition survey states that it is the number one least affordable state due to the difference between housing costs and actual wages. According to the Kids Count County Profile for Ocean County, three quarters of households in Ocean County spent more than 30% of their income on rent in 2008. No other county had this high of a percentage. O.C.E.A.N, Inc. reported that as of April 2009, the Fair Market Rent for a two bedroom apartment averaged \$1,263 per month. This requires an individual to have a wage of \$20.92 per hour. As mentioned previously, wages in Ocean County are the second lowest in the state. At the same time, living costs are among the highest. All of this lead to a foreclosure rate increase of 230% since 2007. There were a shocking 6,838 foreclosures in 2009. Since January of this year, over 2,500 new eviction cases have been filed at the Ocean County courthouse. One in every 138 housing units received default notices, scheduled auctions or faced bank repossessions.

An example of this can be related to the elderly community. According to the Department of Senior Services for Ocean County, elderly single adults who live alone need \$20,816-28,956 for basic annual living. The lower end of the range is for home owners without a mortgage, the middle range is for those who rent, and the high end is for those who own their home but still have a mortgage. Elderly couples need an estimated \$31,683-39,823. The 2008 social security benefit in Ocean County was \$13,985 for a single elderly adult and 22,749 for a couple.

Ocean County Programs:

- Arc housing solutions (Individuals with Disabilities only)
- Affordable Housing Alliance of NJ
- Catholic Charities: Housing Assistance Services- Home, Heat, and Hope, La Casa Hispania
- Habitat for Humanity
- Housing Authority of the Township of Lakewood
- New Jersey Department of Community Affairs Bureau of Housing and Community Resources
- New Jersey Housing & Mortgage and Finance Agency
- Ocean County Board of Social Services: Home Tenant Based Rental Assistance Program, Housing Opportunities Program, Supportive Services for Housing for Special Needs Population in Ocean County
- O.C.E.A.N., Inc. housing counseling
- Vetwork, A Program of Vetgroup, Inc.

The large discrepancy between the money needed for housing, and the actual money earned or received leaves many people without many options for safe and affordable housing. More than 80% of people who responded to the United Way survey do not believe that Ocean County has sufficient resources for affordable housing. The demand for affordable housing increases as time goes on and employment remains low. There has also been an increase in middle class families seeking affordable housing, especially with the high foreclosure rate. There are many stipulations and guidelines regarding employment status and annual income. This problem is now affecting people at many different income levels and all ages. There are so few options for affordable housing that many individuals and families find themselves at risk for becoming homeless very quickly.

Homelessness

In the yearly Point in Time Count (PITC) conducted by the Ocean County Department of Human Services Continuum of Care and its affiliates, 589 homeless individuals in Ocean County were identified and surveyed during one day in January. This number increased 42.7% since 2008. About half of the individuals reported to be between the ages of 30 and 49. 314 reported that they would spend that night in a hotel or motel paid for by an agency. Other various answers included staying with friends or family, some kind of a shelter, and even on the street. A total of 184 children were reported to be staying with the individuals that night. As for their income, 77.3% reported that they or someone in their family receive Food Stamps, 58.5% were on Medicaid and 54.3% received General Assistance, PA or Welfare. The most prevalent events that contributed to their homelessness were the loss of a job or inability to find work; housing costs that are unaffordable even for working families; relationship breakup or death; mental illness or emotional problems; and eviction. The PITC is a large scale concerted effort done yearly. It captures a picture of a majority of the homeless community in the county. It is important to note that this is a one day count of individuals who were identified as

homeless and completed surveys. Many people who are homeless are transient, moving from place to place, thus making them difficult to identify. It is believed that many single mothers avoid identifying with the word “homeless” out of fear that they may lose their children. Kids Count reports that in 2008, 16% of children in Ocean County were living in poverty.

As of August 5th, 2010, The United Way of Ocean County’s Homeless Prevention and Rapid Refocusing Program (HPRP) had served a total of 310 clients. This program provides services to working and currently homeless families including back rent, utility assistance, case management, housing search and placement. They have provided 190 clients with financial assistance and referred 120 clients to other programs when they did not meet the qualifications of our program. These numbers are expected to continue to increase as the weather cools down, and children need a permanent address to attend school.

Ocean County Programs:

Shelter Providers:

- Ocean County Board of Social Services
- Catholic Charities: Providence House Domestic Violence Services
- Home Sharing Program of Ocean County
- Interfaith Hospitality Network of Ocean County
- Ocean Housing Alliance: Joan Valentine House
- Ocean's Harbor House: Transitional Living Program, Youth Shelter
- Preferred Children's Services: Shore Youth Center
- St. Stephen's Men's Shelter
- Vetwork, A Program of Vetgroup, Inc.

Assistance and Prevention:

- Catholic Charities: Emergency and Community Services
- Ocean County Board of Social Services
- Ocean Mental Health Services: SHARE/PATH Offices
- Preferred Behavioral Health: Homeless Program
- Salvation Army of Ocean County
- United Way of Ocean County: HPRP
- Your Grandmother's Cupboard

Ocean County has a few services that provide assistance such as clothing donations and outreach. Also, there are some homelessness prevention services where individuals and families can turn to in hopes of avoiding homelessness. However, there are many people who are now at risk of becoming homeless in Ocean County. Many may not become traditionally homeless right away (i.e. living on the street), but are at risk of becoming that way at any given time. There are very few shelters in the county. Of the small number of shelters that are here, most have very few beds as well as many requirements and restrictions to access. Individuals face the issue of not getting into a shelter, or having very limited time to stay once admitted. Many people who are able to get into a shelter

are unable to find an affordable place to live once their time is up, therefore remaining in a state of chronic homelessness. As the amount of at risk individuals increases, so does the need for accessible shelters and assistance.

Transportation

Many individuals who are struggling financially may find themselves unable to afford their own vehicle. In 2007, only 9.2% of workers carpoled. Only 2.4% of employed individuals used public transportation to get to work. Ocean County's large size makes accessing transportation services challenging. Many communities are located far outside most bus routes. O.C.E.A.N. Inc. reports that many individuals receiving TANF most likely have access to public transportation, however only 8% use it because of barriers like child care, cost and times. Ocean Ride reports that they have cut their routes back from 17 to 14 because of three consecutive years of funding cuts. Almost all remaining routes have decreased service. They have experienced a 10% workforce reduction due to attrition in the past two years. Fares are also being increased due to the lack of funding.

Ocean County Programs:

- Caregivers of Central Ocean County, Inc.
- Fair Hearings
- Friendship Corner
- General Assistance Transportation
- Ocean Ride: Reserve-A-Ride
- Persons with Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome Transportation
- Retired and Senior Volunteer Program
- Safe Housing and Transportation Program
- Title 4A Emergency Assistance
- Title XIX Medical Transportation
- Transportation Assistance Program
- Vetwork, A Program of Vetgroup, Inc.
- Wecommute program

Lack of transportation is a primary barrier that relates to income. It may lead to loss of employment and eventually loss of housing. It may prevent individuals from receiving the health care they need. It may even be a barrier to their education, or the education of their young children. In 2009, seniors in the community received 101,300 rides. Most of the programs that are available are for seniors, or for individuals in need of medical care. This leaves many people without any kind of assistance for transportation not only to their jobs, but to grocery stores, pharmacies and other essential locations.

Legal Services






Many individuals and families face legal issues everyday. When a lack of financial stability is involved, legal costs can become overwhelming and unmanageable. In 2009, Ocean Monmouth Legal Services saw 4,042 cases for Ocean County. The Consumer Unit and Housing unit received most of the calls.

Ocean County Programs:

- Community Health Law Project
- NJ Legal Aid
- Ocean County Board of Social Services
- Ocean-Monmouth Legal Services
- Office of Tenant and Landlord Information
- Public Defender's Office

There were 870 cases rejected in 2009. This was due to lack of funding. Issues between tenants and landlords are common, especially when financial strains create added stress. Therefore, more available assistance is needed in the county.

Health

Health Category	Indicators for Ocean County, NJ	Trend
Affordable Health Care Coverage/ Insurance	As of February 2009 Family Care covered 39,000 Ocean County children and 16,000 adult care givers. In just one year that number increased to 45,597 children and 19,639 adults as of February 2010. (More people needing to use this as a last resort.)	 Worsening
Access to Healthcare	In 2007, Ocean Health Initiatives saw 12,763 patients. By 2009, the number increased to 18,866. (More accessible to those in need.)	 improving
Substance Abuse	Ocean County is the 4 th highest county in the state for substance abuse admissions. There were over 1,000 more admissions in 2009 than in 2007.	 worsening
Domestic violence	Overall, Ocean County was second in the state for the highest amount of domestic violence offences. In 2009, Providence House Domestic Violence Services (PHDVS) had an 11% increase of individuals seeking services compared to 2007.	 worsening
Mental Health	St. Francis Counseling Center reports increased number of waiting lists and few available appointments for Mental Health services in the county.	 worsening

County offices that were contacted include the Health Department, Board of Social Services, Mental Health Board, Department of Human Services, and Office of Senior Services and the Ocean County Office for Individuals with Disabilities. The agencies that we reached out to were Arc of Ocean County, Contact of Ocean & Monmouth Counties, Inc., Interfaith Health & Support Services of Ocean County, Jewish Family & Children's Services, Ocean Health Initiatives, Ocean Mental Health Services, Inc., Ocean's Harbor House, Providence House of Catholic Charities, Reindancer Therapeutic Riding Center, St. Francis Center, Your Grandmother's Cupboard, Seashore Family Services and Preferred Behavioral Health, Caregiver Volunteers of Central Jersey, Family Planning Center of Ocean County, Inc., LADACIN Network.

Affordable Health Care Coverage and Insurance

As of February 2009 Family Care covered 39,000 Ocean County children and 16,000 adult care givers. In just one year, that number increased to 45,597 children and 19,639 adults by February 2010. As of December 2009, the Board of Social Services had set up adult Medicaid for 6,103 individuals for that year. This was the top priority found under health in our United Way survey. OCEAN Inc. states that their top priorities for health also relate to coverage including dental care for low income families, mental health for disadvantaged children, and an overall improved access to care. Also, the number of Ocean County unemployment insurance claims rose by 884 or 17.7% from 2007-2008. The Board of Social Services states that there is insufficient coverage in Ocean County, especially for healthy single adults ages 18-62.

Ocean County Programs:

- New Jersey Kid Care/ New Jersey Family Care
- Medicaid

There is a clear gap in services when it comes to affordable health coverage in Ocean County. 69% of people surveyed do not believe that Ocean County has sufficient resources for this need. There are some programs available through the Board of Social Services for those with Medicaid, but many doctors don't accept Medicaid. Waiting lists for services have increased. In 2006, about 14% of individuals under 65 were uninsured. We were unable to get the most recent figure for the number of uninsured, but due to the increase of unemployed individuals, and the increasing price of health coverage, we speculate that this number has risen substantially. Many individuals fall through the cracks because they can not qualify for coverage, nor can they afford to pay for it on their own.

Eligibility and Access to Services

Ocean Health Initiatives has seen an increase in individuals coming to them for services. In 2007, they saw 12,763 patients. By 2009, the number increased to 18,866. 8,467 of the clients whose income level was identified were at, or over 100% of poverty level. They

also delivered over 1,000 babies and vaccinated 13,000 people for H1N1. For 2010, they are experiencing a 19% growth in patient population. The Ocean County WIC Program is available to low income women, infants and children who are at a nutritional risk. They provide food, information and referrals to about 145,450 people per year. Individuals with limited or no coverage often resort to the nearest hospital's Emergency Room as their only source of health care. The Ocean County Hospital Data Overview identified the top 10 Emergency Room primary diagnosis as things like colds, stomach pains, sore throat, sprains, cuts, fevers, toothaches, earaches, urinary tract infections, and bronchitis.

Ocean County Programs:

- CHEMED
- Ocean County WIC Program
- Ocean County Board of Social Services: Persons with Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome Case Management Program, Breast and Cervical Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment, Family Planning Services, Medically Needy Program, New Jersey Care for the Aged, Blind and Disabled, New Jersey Workability Program
- Ocean Health Initiatives

There are a very limited number of places that will see patients with little to no coverage or an inability to pay. This leaves people with very few places to turn to, and has led to emergency rooms being used for non-emergencies. Increased co pays, and ever growing waiting lists for services have also played a part in Ocean County's difficulty to have sufficient accessible health care services. Many people put off visits completely to avoid this issue.

Treatment/ Safety

Drug and Alcohol Use

Ocean County is rated the 4th county in the state for highest substance abuse admissions, with 8% of New Jersey admissions being Ocean County residents. There were 5,588 total treatment admissions in 2009 compared to about 4,300 in 2007. There are more admissions related to heroin and opiates than alcohol. 54% of residents in need get treated within the county. Brick, Toms River, Jackson, Lakewood, and Lacey have the top 5 admissions by municipality. Preferred Behavioral Health has seen an increase in the need for services which has forced them to create waiting lists. The same was reported from Ocean Mental Health Services. The Ocean County Health Department sees between 12,000 and 14,000 people per year at their Intoxicated Driver Resource Center. Also, their Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Unit provides funding for treatment of some low income residents.

The D.A.R.E. (Drugs Alcohol Resistance Education) Officer for Berkeley Township schools spoke about the changes he has seen to their program in the past few years. When

funding was cut for the program, he became the only officer for the whole district. He is able to work with lower grades, but due to lack of funding, the high school does not receive any preventative drug or alcohol education through a D.A.R.E. program. He has seen a shift to prescription pills being a drug of choice for kids as well. He reports that Berkeley is one of the only districts with a full time D.A.R.E. officer, and that other districts have very limited or no drug and alcohol prevention programs.

Ocean County Programs:

- ADACO Counseling Center, Strengthening Families Program
- AGAPE Counseling Services
- Alcoholics Anonymous
- America's Keswick: Higher Ground Women's Support Group
- Brighter Days Self-Help Mutual Aid Center
- Carrier Center for Counseling & Outpatient Service
- Catholic Charities: Project FREE, Providence House Domestic Violence Services
- Center for Healthy Living: Women for Sobriety Support Group
- Community Against Substance Abuse, Inc.
- Crossroads Partial Care Program
- D.A.R.E. Program- Berkeley Township School District
- Healy Counseling Associates
- Lawyers Concerned For Lawyers Support Group
- Lighthouse at Ocean County
- Medical Center of Ocean County Intervention Counseling Center
- Mental Health Association in NJ: Journey to Wellness/ Double Trouble
- Narcotics Anonymous
- Ocean County Board of Health: Intoxicated Driver Resource Center, Ocean County Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Service Unit
- Ocean's Harbor House: Outreach Program
- Ocean, Inc.: Counseling and Referral Services
- Ocean Medical Services, Inc.
- Ocean Mental Health Services: Compass Program
- Overcomers in Christ Men's/Woman's Group
- Parent Support Group of NJ, Inc.
- Preferred Behavioral Health of NJ: Child Protection Substance Abuse Initiative, Co-Occurring Partial Care, Directions Program, Riptide Program, South Jersey Initiative Program, WARN Women Achieving Recovery Now, Alcohol and Drug Prevention/Education, Child Protection Substance Abuse Initiative (CPSAI)
- Preferred Children's Services: Shore Youth Center, Healthy Families
- Reformers Unanimous Addictions Support Group
- Saint Barnabas Behavioral Health Center: Parenting an Athlete, Project GROW, Project MORE, St. Barnabas Institute for Prevention, Strengthening Families, Tobacco Intervention and Prevention in Schools
- Seashore Family Services
- St. Francis Counseling Service
- The Center at Advanced Behavioral Health Care Services LLC

Although there are options for people to turn to when they are in need of substance abuse treatment, Ocean County is still rated 4th in the state for substance abuse admissions. This issue is one of the top three highest rated health related issues from our first survey. 84% of those surveyed do not think that Ocean County has sufficient resources. The Ocean County Community Health Improvement Plan states that fewer county residents who seek treatment are doing so in within the county due to lack of available resources.

Domestic Violence

Overall, Ocean County was second in the state for the highest amount of domestic violence offences when compared with all counties in 2007 and 2008. In 2009, Providence House Domestic Violence Services (PHDVS) had an 11 percent increase of individuals seeking services compared to 2007. PHDVS serves over 2,000 people yearly. So far this year they have already sheltered 15% more people in the first 6 months of 2010 than the first 6 months of 2009. They believe that the increase they have seen since the drop in the economy is due largely to the added economic pressure on families that are already at risk. Compared to the number of clients served in 2007, 28 percent more victims were assisted by the Outreach Counseling Program in 2008. In 2009, the Outreach Counseling Program, although the numbers were not quite as high as 2008, there were 18 percent more clients than in 2007 when the economic crisis started impacting individuals. This may be due to the amount of individuals that are now too financially dependent on their abuser to seek help and separate.

In the 2008 Uniform Crime Report, there were 5,156 reported incidences of domestic abuse. However, about 75% of domestic violence incidents tend to go unreported. Therefore, it is hard to tell how many victims of domestic violence are not receiving any help. In the court year of July 1, 2008, through June 30, 2009, there were 2,432 temporary restraining order cases. 907 of the cases were withdrawn, which Providence house believes is due to the reliance on the person for financial reasons.

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) reports that as of June 30, 2009, Ocean County had 489 Children in out of home placement. DCF's Division of Prevention and Community Partnerships oversees PALS (Peace: A Learned Solution) programs which provides counseling and creative arts therapy for children who have witnessed domestic violence. Ocean County is one of eleven counties that participate in this statewide program. PALS, served nearly 1,200 children in 2009.

Ocean County Programs:

- Center for Kids and Family in Lacey and Toms River
- Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS)
- Dottie's House
- Family Division of the Superior Court of Ocean County
- Legal Services of New Jersey: WIN Project
- New Jersey Department of Children and Families: PALS

- Ocean-Monmouth Legal Services: Women in Need Project
- Preferred Behavioral Health: Children's Mobile Response and Stabilization Service
- Providence House Domestic Violence Services of Catholic Charities

Ocean County continues to be second in the state for domestic violence offences. PHDVS reports that victims who leave their abuser are at a high risk of being attacked or even killed. Therefore, there is a high need for safe places for victims and their children to go to receive support.

Mental Health




Access to Mental Health services has become an increasing problem in Ocean County. The CONTACT hotline reports that 59% of the calls that they receive are in relation to depression, grief, and anxiety. Some organizations in the county are working to provide counseling to individuals in need who may lack the coverage needed to receive services, but funding is limited. St. Francis Counseling Service provided 1,447 sessions to low income individuals in 2009. However, they faced many funding cuts in 2010 which forced them to decrease services. Preferred Behavioral Health reported that they had to create a waitlist for intakes for outpatient services.

Ocean County Programs:

- Carrier Center for Counseling & Outpatient Service
- Catholic Charities: Behavioral Health Care Services, Services for the Elderly
- Children's Home Society: Clinical Services to Children and Families
- Contact of Ocean County
- Dover Township Youth Services
- Elder Life Management, Inc.
- Jewish Family and Children's Service
- Kimball Medical Center - PESS
- Medical Center of Ocean County Intervention Counseling Center
- Ocean Mental Health Services
- Preferred Behavioral Health
- Saint Barnabas Behavioral Health Center, Inc.
- Seashore family services
- St. Francis Counseling Service

67% of people surveyed believe that Ocean County does not have sufficient resources for mental health. There are few providers for some insurance companies and limited help for individuals with no coverage. People are facing long waiting lists and little availability of appointments. Due to the many financial struggles that many individuals and families are facing, other concerns often have to take precedence over mental health regardless of the severity of the issue.

Education

Category	Indicators for Ocean County, NJ	Trend
Drop outs	13 Districts in Ocean County saw drop out rates decreased on average from 1.98% in 2007 to 1.52% in 2009.	 improving
Affordable day care/ non school care	Children's Home Society program called New Jersey Cares for Kids (NJCK) went from a monthly average of 1,081 children in 2007, to 1,164 in 2010.	 worsening
Early Childhood Education	In 2009, Head Start centers were able to offer 30% more pre-K for 3 year olds than in 2007.	 improving

During our search for education related information, a survey was sent out to every school district in the county. We reached out to the Ocean County Superintendent of Schools as well. In our effort we also contacted many local agencies asking for education information including Children's Home Society, Arc/Ocean County Chapter, Inc., Big Brothers Big Sisters of Ocean County, Girl Scouts of the Jersey Shore, Literacy Volunteers of America, O.C., Inc., Ocean County YMCA, Twenty One Plus, Inc., NJ 211, Huntington Learning Center, Ocean County Vocational Technical School, O.C.E.A.N. Inc., Team Randy, Caregiver Volunteers of Central Jersey and Chariot Riders, Inc. Many of these agencies only had data on their own programs and how they support children outside of a school setting.

Drop Outs

During the 2008-2009 school year, there were approximately 423 drop outs in the county. In the fall of 2009, the New Jersey Department of Education reported that public school enrollment for the county was at 75,759 students. Drop out rates for 13 Districts in Ocean County decreased on average from 1.98% in 2007 to 1.52% in 2009. Mobility of students remained the same or decreased, with the exception of Lakewood which had a 21% increase over 2 years (NJ Department of Education). Preferred Behavioral Health offers School Based Programs in Lakewood and Brick that promote healthy youth development. They offer services from counseling to job readiness training. Big Brothers Big Sisters of Ocean County offers mentoring to at-risk youth. 80% of mentored students improved their grades and were able to trust their teachers more.

Ocean County Programs:

- Preferred Behavioral Health: School Based Programs
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Ocean County

Central Regional School District rated student drop out low severity. A lack of readily available current information makes it difficult to create a detailed county wide picture of this issue's status.

Affordable Childcare/ Recreation/ Summer Programs

One of the most important issues that we found in our survey was the inability for families to find affordable childcare. There are very few resources for parents in Ocean County for childcare assistance. It is difficult to stay within the very tight budget that many families have. Children's Home Society offers a program called New Jersey Cares for Kids (NJCK) that is a statewide subsidy for families who work or attend school 30 or more hours per week. This program provides assistance for childcare from a licensed child care center, a registered provider, or an approved home. They have gone from a monthly average of 1,081 children in 2007, to 1,164 in 2010. However, families have to

meet income guidelines that within a maximum of 200% of federal poverty level (this is \$36,200 for a family of 4), and even eligible parents are often put on a waiting list. Families that are on welfare can receive funding through Workforce New Jersey (WFNJ) for childcare as well for up to 24 months before a co-pay is required. The numbers for this program have increased since 2007 as well, growing from 544 each month to 604. The Children's Home Society reports that the number of Ocean County child care centers has increased from 138 to 154 since 2007. However, the number of centers that are accredited has decreased from 17 to 7. This is due to the high cost involved. The number of registered family child care homes has decreased from 134 to 122 since 2007.

Many families struggle to pay for child care, camps or recreational programs during the summer months when their children are not in school. Many summer programs offered by municipalities are being cut due to lack of funding. The lack of options for affordable activities also leads to a concern in stagnation of academics by fall.

Ocean County Programs:

- Children's Home Society
- Preferred Behavioral Health
- St. Francis Children's Services
- The Arc of Ocean County
- Team Randy, Inc.

One of the big changes we have seen in Ocean County is the need for childcare assistance not only for families in poverty, but also for low and moderate income families who do not qualify for these programs. Many children are now facing a lack of supervision due to their parents need to work, and their family's lack of financial ability to pay for childcare.

Early Childhood Education

O.C.E.A.N. Inc.'s Head Start program offers free comprehensive pre-school programs throughout the county. "The program provides a developmentally appropriate curriculum, child health screenings, family services, accepts special needs children, provides meals and snacks, and transportation-half day only". Head Start supports 681 children throughout the county yearly. In 2009, Head Start centers were able to offer 30% more pre-K for 3 year olds than in 2007. However, family income must fall into 100-125% of the federal poverty level in order to qualify.

Due to limited responses from many individual school districts, we gathered information on pre-kindergarten programs through a website called Public Schools Reports. Through this site, 12 out of 105 public schools listed in Ocean County had pre-kindergarten students. However, no information was provided on the qualifications of these programs.

Ocean County Programs:

- O.C.E.A.N. Inc.- Head Start
- Jane Adams Day Care Center (income based)
- St. Francis Children's Services

There are many private Early Childhood Education programs throughout the county, however many are not affordable even for working families. The gap in services relates more to affordable or public Early Childhood Education programs.

Sources

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