



United Way of
Paducah-McCracken
County

IMPACT POVERTY STUDY



United Way of
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County

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the past two years, a group of highly motivated leaders from Paducah/McCracken County has worked to develop a plan to transform the opportunities available to those living in poverty in our community.

IMPACT POVERTY set out to address alarming growth in poverty rates in this community, poverty that strips away health and hope from our children, the elderly and the disadvantaged. Poverty not only affects those who live within its confines, but also robs communities via lost productivity, increased demand for social services, underperforming students and an ill-prepared workforce.

This plan includes specific short-, mid- and long-term actions that will set in motion a series of programs and activities that will reduce the growth in the number of people living in poverty and create a community-wide vision to begin breaking the stranglehold of generational poverty.

This plan was developed after a lengthy and intense study of the issues that contribute to poverty in Paducah/McCracken County. The Task Force sought input from experts in every field and first-person.

General Statistics: From 2000 to 2008, the number of families in poverty in the City of Paducah grew 5.5% while comparable state and national poverty rates increased less than one-half percent. In 2008, nearly half the mothers in McCracken County who were raising children alone lived in poverty and fully one-third of local African Americans were poor. Since its inception in July 2010, the Impact Poverty Task Force has studied reams of statistics that validate these numbers.

When the Impact Poverty Task Force was convened, there was no expectation that poverty in Paducah/McCracken County could be "fixed." Rather, there was a desire to begin a dialogue that would lead to steps, large and small, to begin providing alternatives and options for those living in poverty and a plan of action for a caring community that recognizes the high cost of poverty, in terms of mislaid hope, broken dreams and lost potential. This plan represents the first step in that process and we encourage our community to read the plan and be a willing participant in the solution. The Task Force members have been empowered by this experience and, as we move forward, there will be countless opportunities for citizens to serve and help implement meaningful solutions to poverty in our community.

We are deeply grateful to those who served on the Task Force and the many experts who met with us and shared critical facts and opinions that helped shape our plan.





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BACKGROUND & PROCESS INFORMATION

About two years ago, while researching an issue for the Chamber of Commerce, local business and community leader John Williams, Sr. came across some troubling statistics about our community. Specifically, he found that the rate of poverty in Paducah was growing faster than state and national averages. Seeking answers, he brought his findings to the attention of various groups, including the Paducah Area Chamber of Commerce and United Way of Paducah-McCracken County.

The United Way, committed to addressing the root causes of poverty, began focusing thought and energy on the issue of poverty in our community. No answers sprang off the page, so United Way set about bringing together a diverse group to study poverty in Paducah/McCracken County with the goal of creating a 10-year plan to reduce poverty. This is that plan.

An "Impact Poverty" Steering Committee was formed in March 2010, comprised of John Williams, Sr.; County and City School Superintendents Nan Waldrop and Randy Greene; Judge Cynthia Sanderson; Michael Byers - Paducah Area Chamber of Commerce; Rosa Scott - NAACP, Georgann Lookofsky - United Way of Paducah/McCracken Board; Ashley Wright, Executive Director of the United Way; and facilitator Kristin Williams - KRW Strategies.

Understanding the need for a grasp of the issues contributing to poverty and the challenges that face those struggling to move beyond it, the steering committee carefully considered the composition of a larger task force that would be responsible for researching the issues and establishing priorities for the plan. About 40 people were identified as potential task force members, including church leaders, educators, business people, mentors, and other community members.

The task force met from June 2010 – May 2011. The calendar included:

June 2010 ▪ Organization & Familiarization

July 2010 ▪ Data part I

August 2010 ▪ Bridges out of Poverty training

September 2010 ▪ Data part II and discussion

October 2010 ▪ Entitlement programs

November 2010 ▪ Healthcare

December 2010 ▪ Discussion of information to date

January 2011 ▪ Kids and Education

February 2011 ▪ Getting Ahead Groups launched

March 2011 ▪ Jobs

April 2011 ▪ Crime, mental health, and substance abuse

May 2011 ▪ Support services and organizations

May 2011 ▪ Survey of all participants

June 2011 ▪ Getting Ahead graduation

June 2011 ▪ Combined meeting of Getting Ahead graduates, survey results

July/August 2011 ▪ Six small groups met 2-3 times each for 2-4 hours per meeting to devise strategies related to the following subject areas: Kids, Substance Abuse, Jobs, Support Services, Perceptions of those in Poverty, and Critical Care/Community Wellness

August/September 2011 ▪ Development of DRAFT strategies based on all information

September 2011 ▪ Last full large group meeting to respond to DRAFT strategies

October-December 2011 ▪ Development of administrative functions to launch strategies

January 2012 ▪ Roll out of plan

Early on, the task force decided it was important to have a general definition of poverty -- something beyond the statistics and biases brought to the process. Other United Ways had found success with a program called "Bridges out of Poverty."

The task force read the book, "Bridges out of Poverty" by Ruby Payne, Phillip DeVol and Terie Druessi-Smith. At the invitation of the task force, Ms. Smith visited Paducah and conducted a workshop for task force members and other community leaders.

A flaw with the process was discovered soon after the first organizational meeting. Although the task force was populated with several who had experienced poverty, none of the task force members were currently living in poverty. It became apparent that if strategies for those in poverty were developed without their input, the plan would have a higher chance of failure. Part of the Bridges out of Poverty mantra is understanding the "concrete experience of living in poverty in our community," and the task force realized that input from and involvement by those living in poverty was necessary to validate the Impact Poverty work. The solution to this issue involved early implementation of another program with a history of success in communities battling poverty.

Phil DeVol, a widely acclaimed trainer and consultant on poverty issues, created a program called "Getting Ahead in a Just Getting By World." Trained "Getting Ahead" facilitators take a group of 6-12 people who are living in poverty ("investigators") through a 15-week, 2-2.5 hour curriculum that starts out as an investigation and culminates in a personal plan to transition out of poverty.

Research shows that living in poverty makes it difficult for people to change. The "what it is like now" life experience traps people into living in the moment in a life that is, in many cases, chaotic. Because of this, it is important for those in poverty to understand the "big picture" of how poverty affects their lives and how they can implement strategies that lead to positive change. The Getting Ahead program is designed to help participants deal with these issues.

Following a recommendation from the Impact Poverty Steering Committee to implement the "Getting Ahead" program locally and use feedback from the initial

participants to validate the Impact Poverty strategies, United Way launched two Getting Ahead Groups each populated by 8 people. Five completed the required facilitator training led by Glenda Adkisson.

The Getting Ahead groups finished their curriculum at the same time the Impact Poverty Task Force completed its study. In June 2010, the groups were combined and were divided into small groups to share perspectives and devise strategies.

The following is a culmination of what the Impact Poverty Task Force members have learned, lived, and responded to during the course of the study as well as proposed strategies to reduce poverty in our community over the next ten years.

Throughout the document are recommendations for short-term, mid-term and long-term goals. The definitions are as follows:

Short-Term ▪ within the next 12 - 24 months

Mid-Term ▪ within the next 5 years

Long-Term ▪ within the next 10 years

2011 HHS Poverty Guidelines

Persons in Family	48 Contiguous States and D.C.	Alaska	Hawaii
1	\$10,890	\$13,600	\$12,540
2	\$14,710	\$18,380	\$16,930
3	\$18,530	\$23,160	\$21,320
4	\$22,350	\$27,940	\$25,710
5	\$26,170	\$32,720	\$30,100
6	\$29,990	\$37,500	\$34,490
7	\$33,810	\$42,280	\$38,880
8	\$37,630	\$47,060	\$43,270
<i>For each additional person, add:</i>			
	\$3,820	\$4,780	\$4,390

Source: Federal Register, Vol. 76, No. 13, January 20, 2011, pp. 3637-3638



GENERAL STATISTICS

FAMILIES IN POVERTY ■ From 2000 – 2008, the number of families in poverty in Paducah grew from 1,208 to 1,575, a jump of 5.5%. To contrast, during the same period, poverty in Kentucky grew 0.4% and the United States grew just 0.4% as well.

FEMALE HEAD HOUSEHOLD ■ In 2008, almost half the families with children living in a single female household in McCracken County – 43.5% – were poor. That number jumped to 49.2% in Paducah. About 12% of McCracken County families live in poverty and 23.5% of Paducah families.

RACIAL DISPARITIES ■ While African Americans in the County represent about 11% of the total population, a much higher percentage of African Americans than Caucasians reside in poverty in McCracken County, 32.3%. In the City of Paducah, African Americans comprise 24% of the population and fully 36% of those reside in poverty.

CRITICAL CARE & COMMUNITY WELLNESS

Uninsured in Kentucky* - State average: 19%, McCracken County: 19%, National average: 17.8%

In 2009, Lourdes Hospital spent \$11,128,077 in charity care and Western Baptist Hospital spent \$15,053,000 in 2010, to help cover the medical costs of their under/uninsured patients.*

In 2009 in McCracken County, 21% of our citizens were in "less than good health" and 16% of all adults did without medical care due to cost.**

In 2009 in McCracken County, 24% of the adult population were obese and 25% of the adult population smoked cigarettes.**

MISSION ■ Assess critical needs and challenges that are not being met with current programs -- help those "falling through the cracks"; plan for a comprehensive wellness program and how to help those in need; create a plan on how to become a healthier community.

*Source: www.countyhealthrankings.org

**Source: www.kentuckyhealthfacts.org

SHORT-TERM GOALS ■ By August 2012, the United Way will identify a chair for this Task Force, engage a broad array of stakeholders to serve, engage with the Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky for support, and launch the work of the Task Force to create a strategy for a Community Health Center in Paducah/McCracken County.

MID-TERM GOALS ■ Launch plan and secure funding by January 2014.

LONG-TERM GOALS ■ Establish a Community Health Center in Paducah/McCracken County that provides accessible primary and preventative health services regardless of ability to pay.

STRATEGIES

Community Health Center

Formalize a task force and continue the discussions that have started among stakeholders regarding the creation of a "Community Health Center" in Paducah/McCracken County. This center would provide access to high quality primary and preventive health services, regardless of ability to pay. Examples of similar centers include: www.fhclouisville.org

- **Task force will be coordinated by the United Way**
 - Invitations to join the task force will be personal and specific; made by either Impact Poverty Steering Committee member and/or United Way Board Executive Committee members.
- **Engage with assistance offered from The Foundation for Healthy Kentucky.**
- **Goals of the task force:**
 - Get the right people to the table
 - Understand what has been done in the past
 - Make the case for cost savings for potential investors

- Previously Paducah/McCracken Co. did not qualify as a Federal Qualified Health Center, but we do now. Is there federal money? Funds are being reduced, but are not depleted. The expectation should not be set that federal funding will be a solid source of funding, but be primed to take advantage and understand the collaborations needed to leverage federal funds.
- Develop timeline, budget, and strategy to present back to United Way Board and other stakeholder organizations

Other Recommendations

In the course of the Impact Poverty Study it was apparent to the task force that some unintended consequences were occurring with the increased number of families in poverty receiving SSI/Disability Income from children classified as ADHD or other mental impairment. One Social Security administrator shared that once diagnosed, there is little if any further intervention on behalf of the child, and families become dependent upon the income generated from the child. The recommendation is to tie these funds specifically to care for the disabled child. Perhaps implement a debit card system with proscribed allowable expenses rather than the current carte blanche system. A detailed analysis of this situation can be found in the 12/12/10 Boston Globe article "A Legacy of Unintended Side Effects."

WISH LIST ■ Continued promotion and support for preventative health; support of the completion of the greenway trail; support the Paducah Recreation Center; and Building, and look at additional underutilized space in the community.



KIDS & EDUCATION

In 2008, 13.5 million U.S. children were poor – 18.5%.

In McCracken County 20% of our children were in poverty and as of 2010 the number grew to 24.6%.

In 2008, 36.4% of Paducah children were living in poverty.

Children living in a single female-headed household are over four times more likely to be poor than children living in a married couple family.

Middle and high school teachers witnessed a common theme among children in poverty – one of a lack of hope when reaching junior and senior years and no realistic plans for what to do next. Many of these students have been told college is not an option, so education beyond high school has not been part of their future-thinking. For many, the only modeling of “successful” careers are doctors, athletes or entertainers. The aspirations of some of these young people are non-existent or unrealistic.

Elementary school teachers reported exhausted, hungry children showing up to school.

LITERACY AMONG CHILDREN

Poor academic skills often are rooted in family environments where adults do not talk with children, or provide them with books and other reading materials.* As a child grows, reading becomes increasingly important for understanding the world, achieving academic success and succeeding in the workforce. The foundation for reading reaches a critical juncture between kindergarten and third grade. That’s when children begin to acquire the skills that enable them to find meaning in written text.**

*Source: Reading Tutoring for Students at Academic and Behavioral Risk; Effects on Time-on-Task in the Classroom

**Source: National Institute for Literacy (NIFL)

MENTORING

Children and youth need more than academic support to make it through high school successfully. They need caring adults in their lives to support and guide them through the early years. Parents are a foundational resource to their children, but other adults can provide support by becoming mentors. Adult mentors can provide emotional support, guidance that enhances self-esteem and fosters self-control, and advice that many teens may be uncomfortable seeking from their parents. Building these kinds of relationships is particularly important for at-risk youth from struggling homes or low-income neighborhoods that frequently offer few role models or positive outlets for young people.*

MISSION ■ Break the cycle of generational poverty by impacting children through education, mentoring, and exposure to opportunities outside their current circles.

SHORT-TERM GOALS ■ By August 2012, the United Way will develop and launch "Mentoring USA" for Paducah and McCracken County.

By June 2012, the United Way will identify a Task Force Chair and engage the appropriate stakeholders to complete a comprehensive review of recreation and after-school facilities for children in Paducah/McCracken County, and to identify unmet needs and under-utilized space.

MID-TERM GOALS ■ By June 2014, develop and/or enhance a recreation/after school space that is attractive to and used by a broad cross section of Paducah/McCracken County

LONG-TERM GOALS ■ See an increase in children in poverty pursuing higher education following high school graduation.

*Source: Child Trends: Mentoring: A Promising Strategy for Youth Development (<http://www.doneldinkins.com/f/ChildsTrendsMentoring-Brief2002.pdf>)

STRATEGIES

Mentoring USA

The United Way should take the lead role in the community to create an unparalleled culture of mentoring of disadvantaged youth. Strategies should include but not be limited to:

- **Strong engagement of the business community**
 - Provide "best practices" for employers to allow employees to mentor
 - Reach out to retirees as potential mentors
 - Provide training and support for a company coordinator; similar to campaign coordinator for United Way Campaign
 - Allow for businesses, churches, civic clubs, and others to "adopt a classroom" for efficiency and connectedness
 - Provide annual awards from the Chamber of Commerce and United Way for companies and individuals who achieve mentoring success
 - Incorporate pledges for mentoring time along with financial pledges – tracked by the United Way
 - Provide a log-in page on the United Way's website to share best practices, success stories, mentoring opportunities and time logged.
- **Create friendly rivalry between civic clubs and organizations for mentoring hours**
- **Create friendly rivalry between churches and Sunday School classes for mentoring hours**
- **Provide adequate training, weekly scripts or topics of conversations, excellent coordination and matching, and background checks of mentors via the United Way**
- **Bring mentors and mentees to businesses to speak during annual campaign time**
- **Engage Leadership Paducah and the Chamber's Business Education Partnership group**

- **Nurture relationships by:**
 - Host annual "Lunch or Reading PALS" reunions for mentors and mentees. Encourage communication beyond the year of the "program"
 - Encourage KEYS reunions with churches; encourage ways to keep the relationships ongoing
 - Encourage new mentors to stay with their mentees past the time it's "cool" to show up at their school; e-mail, mail, phone conversations, mentor/mentee events
- **Make the conversations intentional; provide support with examples**
 - Children in poverty need to hear about higher education at a very young age
 - Children in poverty need to understand potential career paths and jobs that provide self sufficiency
 - Implement field trips to WKCTC, Murray State University, and other higher education institutions starting in kindergarten and continuing through high school
- **Publish statistics annually and share with mentors regarding the demographic and economic realities of children in Paducah/McCracken County**
- **Do not lose track of the kids once they reach middle school. Promote "Adopt a Classroom" and mentoring/shadowing with middle and high school students**
 - Future Farmers of America, Junior Achievement, Future Teachers, and other school clubs and organizations
 - Encourage the Chamber of Commerce and BEP to strengthen ties to the business community

Kids Council Task Force

- **Following a thorough analysis, this group does not recommend another "bricks and mortar" location for after-school activities at this time (YMCA Model). However, it is very important that kids have places to go after school that offer homework assistance, interaction with children from all socioeconomic backgrounds, and appealing activities and staff.**
- **Opportunities exist with the under-utilized Salvation Army Center and other facilities in our community. The United Way has leverage with Community Investment funding to encourage more**

collaboration between agencies providing services to children and youth.

- **It is recommended that the United Way convene a Kids Council Task Force with the goal of identifying physical spaces and programming for after school activities in Paducah/McCracken County.**
 - Start off the school year by bringing together all after school programs
 - Recognize outstanding programs. Urge local media to consider a series spotlighting successful after school programs and the value they bring to the community
- **Goals**
 - Catalog after-school programs in city and county
 - Analyze physical space for programs and ease of access for locations
 - Make recommendations for improvements, use of under-utilized facilities and expansion of opportunities
 - Report back to United Way Board and other stakeholders with budget, timeline, feasibility and logistics

Other Recommendations

Provide support to Office of Child Support for activities related to non-payment of support. Support creative endeavors to highlight "deadbeat" moms and dads through advertising, promotions on pizza boxes, ads in newspapers, etc.

Implement Getting Ahead groups for high school-aged children and teen mothers.

Provide advocacy to change state/federal law that allows 16-18 year olds on K-TAP to be enrolled in high school if without a diploma or GED thus creating truant and behavior issues in the public schools; encourage the change to require children of parents on K-TAP to be enrolled in Head Start.



SUBSTANCE ABUSE

According to city and county law enforcement officers, 75-80% of the crime in our community is drug-related.

Kentucky has the nation's fastest growing incarceration rate at a cost of \$19,000 a year per inmate. The state spends more on incarceration than on elementary and secondary education combined.

City and County law enforcement officials report dealing with multigenerational criminals in families.

One of the primary problems facing employers in our region is finding people who can pass a drug test. Marijuana, in particular, is not viewed as "a drug" in many parts of our society, yet its usage prevents many from getting decent jobs.

McCRACKEN COUNTY

In 2012 the Kentucky State Police ranked McCracken County as one of the highest counties per capita for DUI convictions with a total of 507 convictions. Additionally, McCracken County also was ranked as one of the highest counties per capita for drug arrests with 1,450 arrests in 2010.*

METHAMPHETAMINE

Methamphetamine (meth) production has become a significant issue in Kentucky. Meth usage among teenagers is significantly higher in Kentucky (12.7%) than the national average (9.1%). As with other drugs, meth is sold in bars, nightclubs, restaurants, and on the street.**

While the problem exists in every state in the country, Kentucky led the nation in the use of prescription drugs for non-medical purposes during 2010.

In 2010, prescription drug overdoses accounted for at least 485 deaths in Kentucky. Examiners' records indicate the drugs most commonly found in those death cases were methadone, oxycodone and hydrocodone, alprazolam (Xanax), morphine, diazepam (Valium) and fentanyl.***

MISSION ■ Focus community attention and resources on the drug problem plaguing our community and adversely impacting employability, the future of children/young adults, and families in poverty.

SHORT-TERM GOALS ■ By May 2012, share the findings and discussions about the prevalence of drug use and abuse in Paducah/McCracken County as discovered in this study. Start intentional conversations with community and business leaders about the impact drug use and abuse is having on our economy and citizens.

By January 2013, support the court system in implementing Reclaiming Futures – a program aimed at improving the quality of substance abuse treatment to youth in our community with intensive support and direction – particularly young first offenders.

*Source: www.kentuckystatepolice.org 2010 Crime in Kentucky Report

**Source: <http://nationalsubstanceabuseindex.org/kentucky/>

***Source: Kentucky Office of Drug Control Policy

By January 2013, determine if a Community Wide Substance Abuse Committee, as seen in other communities, is a viable solution in the effort to combat substance abuse in Paducah and McCracken County.

By January 2013, determine if SAFEPOLICY is appropriate for our community and what steps would need to be done to implement.

RECLAIMING FUTURES

- The Reclaiming Futures model unites juvenile courts, probation, adolescent substance abuse treatment centers, and the community to reclaim youth. Together, these groups work to improve drug and alcohol treatment and connect teens to positive activities and caring adults. (www.reclaimingfutures.org)
- This program has been successful across the country; specifically in eastern Kentucky's Whitley County.
- The McCracken County District Judges have met to discuss how the judicial system in McCracken County could help support an initiative like Reclaiming Futures. They are in support of this effort and coordination of key players and stakeholders is underway.

SAFEPOLICY

- If deemed appropriate, adapt and implement SAFEPOLICY
- SAFEPOLICY has been operating in Kokomo, Ind. for approximately 13 years and officially started when the presiding juvenile judge entered an order allowing information sharing among various agencies, courts and schools to identify at risk youth and provide services to those youth prior to entering the court system. The concept involves community cooperation- working together to share information and resources.
- Community players included police and sheriff departments, child protective services, school officials, juvenile probation officers and the courts.
- Building upon the philosophy of prevention and early intervention, the SAFEPOLICY program focuses specifically on youth who have been identified

as "at risk" by inter-agency information sharing and data collection. Criteria was developed for identifying "at risk" children and youth. Through information sharing with the various agencies when a child is identified with at least one "at risk" criteria from three or more agencies, the child would be considered "at risk" and may be screened for services. An Early Intervention Team screens and designs a plan to develop or improve services to the youth and family to prevent involvement with the Court system. The case plan is enacted by an agency with the most frequent contact or leverage to engage the plan and the case plan is reviewed for progress.

- To summarize, the community is sharing information about children's issues and when a child gets on the radar then the screening process begins and a plan for services can be implemented.

Other Recommendations

Track and respond to the Kentucky Incentives for Prevention (KIP) data - a biannual survey of children and teens regarding the prevalence and use of cigarettes, alcohol and drugs. Monitor results of Calloway County, Kentucky's awareness and prevention program.

Intentional conversations: work with law enforcement to share the message about the impact of illegal drug use and abuse on our workforce and people in poverty. Have conversations at the Board level of the Chamber of Commerce, GPEDC, Rotary Club presentations, etc.

Review other successful models to combat substance abuse and use. Models similar to the Perry County, Ind. Substance Abuse Committee, whose mission is to address health and social issues in the community resulting from substance abuse will be studied. This will be accomplished by coordinating with existing community resources to heighten public awareness and to develop programs to prevent, reduce, and treat substance abuse.*

Provide advocacy on the issue of Kentucky drug-testing K-Tap applicants/recipients

*Source: www.perrycountysubstanceabuse.org



JOBS

The unemployment rate as of September 2011 for McCracken County was 9.6%, compared to the national average of 8.8%. The recession has hit McCracken County wage earners hard; the county unemployment rate was 9.1 % in 2010 and 5.5% in 2006.*

Many complain that kids these days "just don't know how to work." However, this is not always because they don't want to work. Adults now fill jobs that in the past were filled by high school and college students. Many federal programs that offered children in poverty exposure to work in summer programs have been discontinued.

Through their analysis, Getting Ahead Investigators estimated it would take a job paying \$15 per hour, with benefits, to transition their families out of poverty.

*Source: Workforce Kentucky website (www.workforcekentucky.ky.gov)

In our area "living wage jobs" with good availability are in nursing, welding or the marine industry.

In McCracken County, to pay fair market rate for a rental unit would require \$11.29 an hour, full-time employment.*

Only 47% of McCracken County renters are able to afford fair market rent.**

MISSION ■ Create opportunities for those in poverty to obtain living wage employment through networking, barrier removal and coaching.

SHORT-TERM GOALS ■ By April 2012, launch a job placement team (with coaching from human resource professionals) to work with Getting Ahead graduates

By April 2012, identify a "zealot" to get the Cincinnati Works Model adapted to Paducah/McCracken County/Western Kentucky

MID-TERM GOALS ■ By January 2014, launch Paducah/McCracken Works (adapting the concepts from Cincinnati Works that make sense for our community)

WORK-READINESS & JOB PLACEMENT

Work with the Paducah Chamber's Business Education Partnership, the Society for Human Resource Managers, McCracken County Community Career Endowment, Business & Professional Women's Club and other professional organizations to create an "Hours Bank" for job placement coaching for Getting Ahead Graduates and others in poverty.

Work closely with our current group of Getting Ahead Investigators and those on the Impact Poverty Task Force to see if those relationships can help bridge gaps and gain entrance into new or better employment opportunities.

*Source: Kentucky Youth Advocates-<http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/bystate/Rankings.aspx?state=KY&tind=5683>

**Source: Kentucky Youth Advocates-<http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/bystate/Rankings.aspx?state=KY&tind=5684>

CINCINNATI WORKS MODEL IN PADUCAH/McCRACKEN COUNTY

Cincinnati Works is a program that provides intensive support for the working poor. Participants are provided job readiness classes during which barriers are identified that impede job retention. The support is called barrier removal and is extremely proactive. The goal is to keep participants in a job for 12-18 months to teach work ethic and start on a path to self-sufficiency. Cincinnati Works job candidates are sent to employers who provide health benefits and with whom the agency has a relationship.

Progress for Starting *(takes about two years to get going)*

1. Identify a zealot to lead the charge.
Recommendation: Bring Dave Phillips to Paducah to share his vision of the program. Host a VIP/Potential Zealot event to see if the passion arises for someone to lead the charge.
2. Read "Why Don't They Get a Job?"
3. Visit Cincinnati Works
4. Creator of Cincinnati Works visits our community
5. If both sides agree, enter into agreement
6. Create an advisory board
7. Conduct the needed research
8. Create the business case
9. Raise the needed funds – for at least three years of operation
10. Hire and train staff
11. Incorporate with 9-12 board members

JOBS FOR SINGLE MOTHERS

Acknowledging that the availability of living wage jobs for single working mothers is limited in our region. Work with EntrePaducah, Paducah Economic Development, Workforce Investment Board, and other economic development organizations to target employers and ideas to alleviate this issue. Models include but are not limited to:

- Rural Jobs, LLC
- Operation Jumpstart



SUPPORT SYSTEMS

The vast majority of the K-TAP (Kentucky Transition Assistance Program) recipients in Paducah/McCracken are under the age of 25. K-TAP is the acronym for what many think of as a “traditional” welfare check. In 2009, 166 adults received this benefit in McCracken County – 10 male and the rest female. There is a 60-month lifetime limit for benefits through this program. The fact that K-TAP appears to be a routine next step after high school for some young people in our community points to the issue of generational poverty and the difficulty of breaking the cycle.

One of the most disturbing trends the task force was made aware of was the relationship between SSI (Supplemental Security Income for a Disability) and children in poverty. According to the 2010 Kentucky Kids Count Databook, the number of children in Kentucky receiving SSI benefits increased 31% between 2000 and 2008 with half of the children declared disabled due to “other mental disorders.” In 2008, 436 children were receiving SSI in McCracken County. Unfortunately, once a child becomes an income-generator for some families, there is little incentive to seek to become “unclassified.” The ramifications are far-reaching – it takes a doctor to provide the medical case file for a family to receive this benefit; schools treat kids labeled ADHD differently, etc.

Among all poor children, the percent on SSI has quadrupled over the past 30 years. Much of the growth has come from kids with ADHD, or what is referred to as "other mental disorders," who now make up more than half of recipients. (www.kaiserhealthnews.org)*

One of the hardest issues to tackle is how to assist people bridging the gap between being on public assistance and becoming self-sufficient. Throughout the study cases, stories were shared of the working poor turning down raises because they could not "afford" it. A raise of .25 cents an hour can knock out a crucial benefit like food stamps, eligibility for a free clinic or child care and not come close to making up the difference and keep their families afloat.

8.2% of all the rental units in Paducah/McCracken County are subsidized.**

In 2011, 53% of all children in McCracken County were eligible for free or reduced meals.***

MISSION ■ The Impact Poverty Task Force and Getting Ahead Investigators have concluded that the vast majority of social service organizations working with those in poverty in Paducah/McCracken County are not successful in helping clients out of poverty. In fact, one of the unintended consequences of assistance is that it aids in keeping people in poverty.

PROACTIVE RELATIONSHIPS

"Intense Case Management" is the motto that became the mantra for many groups. For those receiving entitlements, there is not a stop along the way where an agency takes ownership of the individual's personal issues and delves into the root causes of poverty. With this in mind, it is a long-term goal for the United Way to work towards the implementation of community case managers who are available to work with many agencies.

SHORT-TERM GOALS ■ By April 2012, the United Way will provide training and support for partner agencies and others to use Charity Tracker as a tool for accountability and support.

By August 2012, enhanced coordination and communication between social service organizations

MID/LONG-TERM GOALS ■ Community Case Managers to bridge the gap between social services and provide assistance to individuals to develop and implement personal plans to move out of poverty.

COMMUNITY CASE MANAGERS

Murray State University professor Jeff Wiley recently published in this area and has offered assistance and a partnership with the United Way. When meeting with the small group, Wiley spoke about relationships being at the core of success. As learned through the "Bridges" philosophy, social capital, networking, and positive relationships can have a great impact. Currently there is no agency that tracks clients when they leave the care of one organization.

CHARITY TRACKER

- **United Way will take the lead in making Charity Tracker usable, accessible and functional for all agencies and churches providing support in our community**
 - Explore provisional funding of a number of licenses each year
 - Provide access and expectations that United Way Partner Agencies use Charity Tracker
 - Share best practices among users
 - Provide training for Charity Tracker software
- **Using the Family Services model, UW will work with partners to help identify and create classes, Getting Ahead Groups, and other opportunities for organizations to direct people to who regularly are identified through Charity Tracker. This is not a punitive measure, but an attempt to help address some root causes of poverty.**
 - Provide training for entire family

*Source: SSI Annual Statistical Report 2010

**Source: Kentucky Housing Corporation Housing Study (2000 Census Data)

***Source: Kids Count <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/bystate/Rankings.aspx?state=KY&tind=3805>

BETTER COMMUNICATION & COORDINATION BETWEEN SERVICE PROVIDERS

- There are at least two existing meetings of social service providers. One is long-standing; the second is brand new. The long-standing meeting convenes quarterly and the newer meeting is focused on providing information, resources, and professional development to local non-profit agencies.
- United Way has been asked by many local non-profit agencies to coordinate a large-scale, regular meeting schedule that will allow the service providers to strategically address client needs, communicate issues and opportunities, and provide professional development resources. There is a need for the United Way or another organization, perhaps the one currently organizing the newer service providers meeting, to create a forum to address this current void.

Other Recommendations

For those on K-TAP, raise the expectation for community service, internships, etc. by partnering with the business community. Instead of saying, "Go find a volunteer opportunity," provide an address and a time when volunteers should report. This task could be made simpler with increased use of Charity Tracker or the implementation of 2-1-1.

Provide training and classes on topics such as budgeting, nutrition, etc. for the entire family as it is not unusual for older children to assist with parenting.

In an effort to ensure that all people can get up-to-date information on services and resources with one phone call - continue United Way investigation of 2-1-1 and a West Kentucky model for the program.

Make recommendations about the quality and quantity of public housing in Paducah & McCracken County; deal with the private Section 8 complexes that are not in compliance.

- Dudley Court
- Research and publicize data with peer counties related to public housing and poverty. There is a need for benchmark comparisons. Differentiate between senior citizen and family support.
- Currently there is no limitation on the years of rental in public housing or Section 8. Should there be an incentive to transition to a permanent solution?
- The Family Self-Sufficiency Program administered by the Section 8 Office in Paducah is proving successful in helping motivated individuals living in Section 8 housing to increase their income without being penalized. This program is one of the few that the Impact Poverty Task Force was made aware of that provides an incentive for the participants to move out of poverty. Is it possible to expand this type of program or use it as a model for other programs?

Make recommendations and propose legislative changes that would make Kentucky comparable to neighboring states regarding residency and other requirements for public assistance.



PERCEPTIONS

To be successful, a plan to decrease poverty in our community cannot focus on “fixing” those in poverty. Poverty is a community issue and the community needs to be better equipped to make changes.

Through the Bridges out of Poverty philosophy, one gains an appreciation for the struggle of those living in poverty, the creativity and resourcefulness required to handle day-to-day stresses, and the importance of relationships to accomplish tasks.

By sharing this philosophy with the community, and gaining an understanding of things like “hidden rules” and the way we speak to each other, more effective change can occur.

MISSION ■ Create a comprehensive community-wide program to change perceptions of the community and those in poverty. Adopt the Bridges out of Poverty philosophy and implement the Getting Ahead Groups – make them go viral; reach a critical mass.

IMMEDIATE ■ continue monthly meetings of Getting Ahead Graduates to provide support and resources as they work towards their goal of moving out of poverty.

SHORT-TERM GOALS ■ By August 2012, develop a schedule and community partners to deliver Bridges out of Poverty Training to a wide variety of entities in our community.

By January 2012, develop a training curriculum for additional facilitators, partner with other community entities and launch an aggressive schedule of Getting Ahead groups.

MID-TERM GOALS ■ By January 2015, launch a pilot “Bridges to Circles” program

BRIDGES OUT OF POVERTY

Adopt the Bridges out of Poverty Philosophy and move forward on a comprehensive training schedule

- Create a marketing/communications plan
- Training could be coordinated through and sponsored by
 - Hospitals
 - Large employers
 - Faith communities
 - Service providers
 - Chamber of Commerce
 - Elected officials
 - Community-at-large



*Source: Kentucky Housing Corporation Housing Study (2000 Census Data)

**Source: Kids Count <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/bystate/Rankings.aspx?state=KY&tind=3805>

GETTING AHEAD

Create and implement a schedule for continuation of Getting Ahead Groups.

- Identify and train facilitators
- Identify methods to attract participants
 - Do not have groups of all the same gender; diversity is welcomed
 - Use feedback from current class of Investigators
- Empower, train and otherwise encourage a broad spectrum of stakeholders to sponsor and facilitate groups
 - Public Housing
 - Section 8 Housing
 - Family Self-Sufficiency participants
 - Large employers
 - Faith communities
 - Service providers
 - Civic clubs and professional organizations
- Stay engaged with Investigators once completed
 - Host a monthly meeting of all Getting Ahead Facilitators and Investigators
 - Provide social setting
 - Provide speakers/trainers on topics of importance to the group
 - Provide access to HR Hours Bank for job readiness
 - Have activities for Investigators' children at monthly meetings
 - Provide support with staffing – enhanced hours of a Facilitator available to help Investigators achieve goals through their personal plans
 - Match Investigators as "Accountability Partners" to help each other achieve goals through personal plans

BRIDGES TO CIRCLES

Bridges to Circles matches highly motivated people living in poverty with allies who provide emotional support and assist with life issues. Bridges to Circles is a safe way for people to build friendships across socio-economic and race lines.

Create a PILOT program for the Bridges to Circles Initiative

- Identify a financial sponsor
- Identify a coordinator
- Identify Investigators and Allies willing to embark
- Could work in concert with Monthly Getting Ahead Reunion meeting

WORKING TOGETHER

Task Force Members

Gary Adkisson, Paducah Sun
Glenda Adkisson, Sustainable Operating Solutions
Sherry Anderson, WKCTC
James Berry, Paducah Police
Brenda Brown, Community Volunteer
Jim Brown, UBS Financial
Olivia Burr, Paducah Public Schools
Michael Byers, Crouse Corporation*
Anitha Davis, Cabinet for Health and Family Services
Bill Evans, WPSD Local 6
Danny Fugate, Section 8 Housing
Randy Greene, Paducah Public Schools*
Doug Harnice, McCracken County Fiscal Court
Jon Hayden, McCracken County Sheriff
Tina Hayes, McCracken County Schools
Lisa Heine, United Way
Deanna Henschel, McCracken County Attorney's Office of Child Support
Georgann Lookofsky, USEC*
Cheryl Meadows, City of Paducah
Maurie McGarvey, Paducah Bank & Trust
Chris McNeill, Department of Public Advocacy

Patty Mills, Four Rivers Behavioral Health
Bill Mogan, Harper Industries
Gerry Montgomery, Community Volunteer
Melanie Nunn, Community Volunteer
John Operle, Ingram Barge
Terri Osucha, United Way
Marianne Potina, Lourdes Hospital
Cal Ross, Housing Authority of Paducah
Charlie Ross, Purchase District Health Department
Mark Rowe, Ninth Street Church of Christ
Cynthia Sanderson, Family Court Judge*
Rosa Scott, Care Bear's Day Care*
Cintia Sutton, Paducah Public Schools
Nancy Waldrop, McCracken County Schools*
Gerald Watkins, WKCTS & City of Paducah
John Williams, Sr, Community Volunteer*
Kristin Williams, KRW Strategies*
Ashley Wright, United Way*

** indicates Steering Committee Member*

Getting Ahead Investigators

Tamala Brown
Tammy Conner
Amy Cox
Sheila Cruse
Jacquelyn Gaines
Tiffany Gartley
Marquita Griffin

Johnna Lewis
DeChenea Lovett
Trina Porter-Bartlett
Barbara Riley
Mindy Jo Thompson
LaCosta Townsley
Lauren Venable

Trained Getting Ahead Facilitators

Glenda Adkisson
Brandi Harless
Holly Maddingly
Melanie Nunn

Ann Ponder-Simpson
Rosa Scott
Kristin Williams
Ashley Wright

Meeting Presenters

Ashley Adkins, Paducah Tilghman High School
Hannah Allen, First Source
John Anderson, Temps Plus
Sherry Anderson, West Kentucky Community and Technical College
Mattie Baulckim, McNabb Elementary
David Belt, Foundation for Healthy Kentucky
Jodi Belt, Reidland Middle School
James Berry, Paducah Police
Matt Carter, Sheriff's Department
Terrie Druessie-Smith, Bridges out of Poverty Trainer
Sergeant Gilbert, Paducah Police
Vonnie Hayes-Adams, Merryman House Domestic Crisis Center
Deanna Henschel, County Attorney for Child Support
Angela Houser, Cabinet for Health and Family Services
Patty Hughes, Four Rivers Behavioral Health
Linda Hunt, Reidland Elementary

Candy Lawrence, First Source
MaryAnne Medlock, Purchase Area Development District
Chris McNeill, Drug Court and Department for Public Advocacy
Sally Michelson, Community Kitchen
Charlie Ross, Purchase District Health Department
David Sorrells, Workforce Development
Francis Smith, Head Start
Teresa Span, Paducah Middle School
Heidi Surheinrich, Paducah Cooperative Ministries
Darrin Thomas, Center Point Treatment Center
Karen Thompson, Social Security Administration
Bridgett Thompson, Reidland High School
Pam Truitt, Family Service Society
Anita Wyatt, St. Nicholas Family Free Clinic
Jeffery Wylie, Murray State University

Meeting Hosts

Broadway United Methodist Church
Computer Services, Inc (CSI)
Crouse Corporation
Lourdes Hospital
McCracken County School Board
Paducah Housing Authority

Paducah- McCracken County Convention & Expo Center
Paducah Public School Board
United Way of Paducah-McCracken County
West Kentucky Community and Technical College

Financial Support for Impact Poverty

Crouse Corporation
Ingram Barge
James Marine, Inc
KRW Strategies
John and Kristin Williams

John and Vivian Williams
United States Enrichment Corporation (USEC)
United Way of Paducah-McCracken County



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