

Contents	Page
Save the Date – April 28, 2015 The Extent and Shape of Nashville’s Poverty	1
When Parents Go to Prison, Children Pay the Price	2
A VOICE for the Reduction of Poverty	2
Volunteering and Civic Engagement Improves Youth Opportunities	2
What Income Inequality Means to the Middle Class	3
Changes in Distribution of Household Wealth	3
Transportation Access Helps Low-Income Families	4



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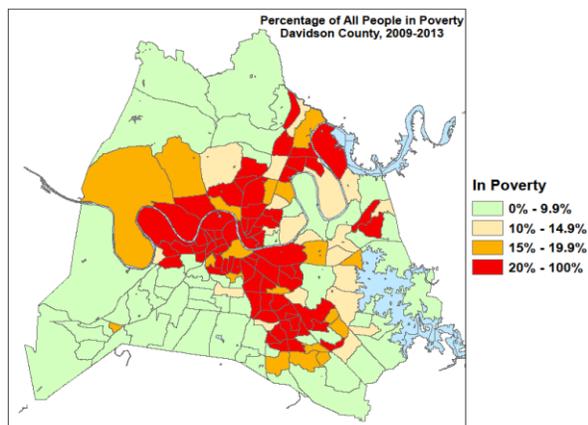
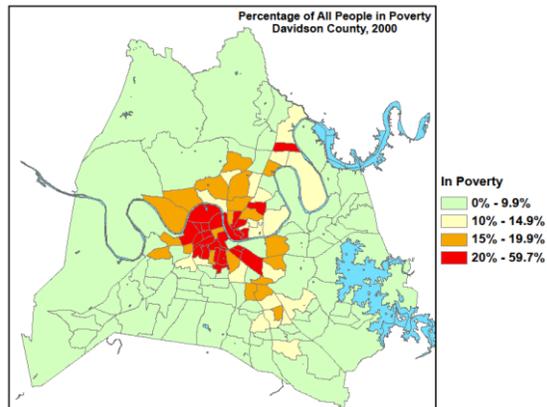
COMING SOON – 2014 Community Needs Evaluation

SAVE THE DATE – Tuesday, April 28, 2015

THE EXTENT AND SHAPE OF NASHVILLE’S POVERTY

The 2014 Community Needs Evaluation will be released by Metropolitan Social Services-Planning & Coordination/Social Data Analysis on Tuesday, April 28. *The Extent and Shape of Nashville’s Poverty* will give a brief overview of the demographic, social and socioeconomic data, as well as information about Davidson County’s social/human service needs. Event details will be released soon.

Included in the 2014 Community Needs Evaluation are the two maps below that compare Davidson County’s poverty in 2000 (upper map) with Davidson County’s poverty during the 2009-2013 period (lower map), according to the U. S. Census Bureau. The areas in **red** have poverty rates **20% or above**.



See more maps at - <https://www.nashville.gov/Social-Services/Planning-And-Coordination/Maps.aspx>

When Parents Go to Prison, Children Pay the Price

A new Issue Paper by Metropolitan Social Services-Planning & Coordination/Social Data Analysis describes the effects on children when their parents are incarcerated. Not only does the incarceration serve as a barrier to employment when the incarcerated person is released, it also can have serious consequences on the children they left behind.

With approximately 2 million incarcerated parents of minor children, the detrimental effects to the children can include undermining a sense of stability and safety, threatened economic security, risk of getting involved with drugs to earn money, social stigma and shame, trust issues, etc. This issue brief also describes the racial/ethnic disparity reflected in incarceration, with incarcerated parents for 1 in 9 African American children, 1 in 28 Hispanic children and 1 in 57 white children.

http://www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/SocialServices/docs/plann_coord/ChildrenPayPriceParentsPrisonJan2015.pdf

A VOICE for the Reduction of Poverty

Created in 2013, A VOICE is a grassroots organization of Nashvillians whose mission is to “create a well-educated and clearly articulated communal voice that speaks loudly to the need for a dramatic reduction in poverty.” It is a voluntary alliance of individuals and organizations interested in advocacy for poverty reduction and alleviation.

<http://www.nashvillevoice.net/>

The January 19, 2015, *Tennessean* published an article about A VOICE and its interest in more affordable housing for Nashville. It pointed that there are various ways to increase the inventory of housing that is affordable to those with lower incomes. A VOICE supports other types of poverty reduction and alleviation in addition to affordable housing.

<http://www.tennessean.com/story/news/politics/2015/01/19/nashvillians-seek-action-affordable-housing/22028061/>

Volunteering and Civic Engagement Improves Youth Opportunities

Connecting Youth and Strengthening Communities – The Data Behind Civic Engagement and Economic Opportunity (September 2014) was a joint project of the Measure of America of the Social Science Research Council, Opportunity Nation and Citi Foundation. This report describes new data and research that suggest that civic engagement can help build social capital and valuable skills to promote upward mobility for young Americans, while better preparing workers for jobs and strengthening economic resilience.

Although opportunities have expanded, some groups have not experienced the benefits of these opportunities, particularly those ages 16-24 who are neither working nor in school. These “disconnected” youth are less likely to experience higher levels of opportunity, which can not only affect individual lives but also the overall productivity and prosperity in the U. S. The research focused on five forms of civic involvement that are often identified with building social capital. Findings indicate:

- Volunteering – Youth who volunteer are less likely to be disconnected from work and school.
- Civic engagement – volunteering and participating in a civic or service organization is a predictor of economic opportunity across states.
- Income inequality – In areas with high volunteerism, there is usually less income inequality.

Three indicators are weighted equally to determine the final index value, with scores calculated for all 50 states, the District of Columbia and more than 3,100 counties, using data from a variety of sources. *Connecting Youth and Strengthening Communities* acknowledges the importance of education but also points out that “other avenues to upward mobility – namely volunteering and participation in civic and service groups – may also be critical.” It encourages that if youth, particularly low-income youth, experience increased volunteering and civic engagement, more young adults would have a “fair shot at the American Dream.”

<http://www.measureofamerica.org/connecting-youth-and-strengthening-communities/>

What Income Inequality Means to the Middle Class

As *Income Inequality Rises, America's Middle Class Shrinks* from the Center for American Progress (December 18, 2014) reports that the share of economic gains to the middle class has fallen to near-record lows. It notes that at the same time, there have been increasing costs for middle-class essentials, such as child care, higher education, housing and health care.

Although middle-class households were a clear majority in 1979, they now make up less than half the households and it is likely that the trend may continue.

The report explains that income inequality has steadily increased in the U. S., with the result being that the “actual size of America’s middle class has shrunk.” It explains that this trend is of concern because of the importance of a vibrant and prosperous middle class to drive economic growth. It noted that the U. S. has become less of a middle-class nation as those in the middle have increasingly struggled to get by.

<http://app.mx3.americanprogressaction.org/e/es.aspx?s=785&e=743590&elq=8f650136f6cce49e09abf0cddf4374c67>

Changes in Distribution of Household Wealth

Between 2000 and 2011, the median household net worth decreased by 6.8% (\$5,046), as described in *Distribution of Household Wealth in the U.S.: 2000 to 2011*, from the U. S. Census Bureau.

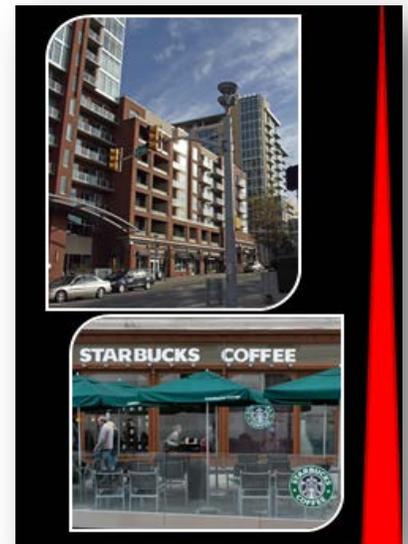
The report described the “significant variability in the direction and magnitude of changes in median net worth experienced by households of different socio-economic characteristics.”

While the bottom 3/5 of households decreased, the top 2/5 increased (between 9.8% and 10.8%). Various factors appear to be connected with the amount of decreases. Those in age categories above age 65 were more likely to experience increased median household net worth than younger age categories.

The table at right compares the median household net worth by age categories. It shows that the most significant increases occurred for those 65-69 and 70-74 from 2000 to 2011. The most significant decreases were for those 35-44 and 45-64.

Distribution of Household Wealth provides additional data that compares race, ethnicity and educational attainment.

<http://www.census.gov/people/wealth/files/Wealth%20distribution%202000%20to%202011.pdf>



Characteristic	2000	2011
Total	73,874	68,828
Less than 35 years	9,765	6,676
35 to 44 years	59,689	35,000
45 to 54 years	111,867	84,542
55 to 64 years	150,866	143,964
65 years and over	146,205	170,516
65 to 69 years	154,226	194,226
70 to 74 years	161,027	181,078
75 and over	134,535	155,714

Transportation Access Helps Low-Income Families

Urban Institute's *Driving to Opportunity: Understanding the Links among Transportation Access, Residential Outcomes, and Economic Opportunity for Housing Voucher Residents* discusses the barriers that housing voucher participants face when they seek housing in neighborhoods with greater opportunity. A new Issue Paper from Metropolitan Social Services-Planning & Coordination-Social Data Analysis, *Transportation Access Helps Low-Income Families*, summarizes the findings of the Urban Institute.

The Urban Institute reported that families with access to cars were more likely to live in neighborhoods with better social and environmental qualities than those without cars. It noted that voucher recipients were less likely to move back to high-poverty neighborhoods. It found that there was greater neighborhood satisfaction for those with access to vehicles and that getting and keeping a vehicle is positively linked to employment. In addition, voucher recipients experienced a far more positive effect with vehicles than with public transportation.

http://www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/SocialServices/docs/plann_coord/TransportationHelpsLowIncomeJan2015.pdf

Need help?

Metro Social Services assists Davidson County residents who are in crisis and experience economic hardship. Available services include counseling, case management, information/referral, homeless services, senior nutrition, indigent burial services and social data analysis. Please call 615-862-6458, visit the Metro Social Services offices at 800 2nd Avenue North, or check online at <http://www.nashville.gov/Social-Services.aspx>

Metropolitan Social Services – Planning & Coordination/Social Data Analysis

800 Second Avenue North, Nashville, Tennessee 37201

www.nashville.gov/sservices

Planning & Coordination-Social Data Analysis Staff

Dinah Gregory – 615-862-6494

Abdelghani Barre – 615-862-6459

Lee Stewart – 615-862-6975

Julius Witherspoon – 651-880-2532

Joyce Hillman – 615-862-6439

Direct Services: **615-862-6458**

Planning & Coordination: **615-862-6494**

Email Planning & Coordination:

MSSPC@nashville.gov

