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**Child Hunger: “Hunger prevents kids from reaching their full potential. It’s an epidemic that’s threatening America’s future.”**

No Kid Hungry explains that the child without enough to eat would not do as well in school, may get sick more often, is less likely to graduate from high school and go to college and may grow up to be unable to earn enough to feed her family.

<https://www.nokidhungry.org/>



**Summer Food Programs**

Each summer, many children from low-income homes receive free meals, primarily through the Summer Food Service Program of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Unfortunately, far more children need summer food than existing programs can provide.

A new issue paper from Metropolitan Social Services-Planning & Coordination/Social Data Analysis explains that the Summer Food Program serves meals to only a small percent of those who receive free or reduced meals during the school year. This difference exists locally as well as nationwide, with about ten times as many meals served each day of the school year than during days during the summer.

Various types of organizations may serve as program sponsors, and Davidson County’s program sponsors are the Metropolitan Action Commission and Second Harvest Food Bank, reimbursed by the Tennessee Department of Human Services and primarily funded by USDA.

[http://www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/SocialServices/docs/plann\\_coord/SummerFoodProgramJuly2014.pdf](http://www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/SocialServices/docs/plann_coord/SummerFoodProgramJuly2014.pdf)

### **Children with Incarcerated Parents**

The U. S. has the highest rate of incarceration of any nation, which continues to grow. Tennessee's state prisons have about 25,000 people incarcerated. For prisoners who have children, the effect on these families is often devastating. Children of incarcerated parents are at increased risk of unstable households, as well as the adverse childhood experiences of trauma and humiliation that may have lifelong consequences. Children are usually placed with relatives or in foster care, and this separation from incarcerated parents increases the likelihood of dropping out of school and being influenced by negative peer pressures. Learn more in the recent issue brief from Metropolitan Social Services-Planning & Coordination/Social Data Analysis.

[http://www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/SocialServices/docs/plann\\_coord/IncarceratedParentsJuly2014.pdf](http://www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/SocialServices/docs/plann_coord/IncarceratedParentsJuly2014.pdf)

### **Concentrated Poverty**

In June 2014, the U. S. Census Bureau reported that Tennessee (along with Arkansas, North Carolina and Oregon) had the largest increases for people living in poverty areas. Tennessee, along with most other states in the southeast and some in the southwest, had more than 30% of residents living in areas where 20% or more people have incomes below the poverty area. The most recent census data shows that 41.6% of Davidson County census tracts have poverty rates of 20% or more. More information is available in the recent issue paper from Metropolitan Social Services-Planning & Coordination/Social Data Analysis.

[http://www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/SocialServices/docs/plann\\_coord/ConcentratedPovertyJuly2014.pdf](http://www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/SocialServices/docs/plann_coord/ConcentratedPovertyJuly2014.pdf)

### **Federal Minimum Wage**

In recent years, there has been much discussion about increasing the federal minimum wage of \$7.25. In addition, many other states have established higher state minimum wage rates than the federal minimum wage. Tennessee is one of only five states with no state minimum wage. In addition, the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics has reported that Tennessee has the highest percentage of workers at the \$7.25 minimum wage level of all states. Read more about how an increase in the minimum wage would affect individuals and companies in the new issue paper from Metropolitan Social Services-Planning & Coordination/Social Data Analysis.

[http://www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/SocialServices/docs/plann\\_coord/MinimumWageJuly2014.pdf](http://www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/SocialServices/docs/plann_coord/MinimumWageJuly2014.pdf)

On July 30, 2014, the Center for American Progress featured *Working and Still Poor*, as part of its Faith in Values series. It discussed issues and concerns about people trying to live on the average \$77 minimum wage workers have after paying for housing and taxes. It included the vast disparity between lower income workers and CEOs

<http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/labor/news/2014/07/30/94680/working-and-still-poor/>

Can you live on the minimum wage? Full-time employment at minimum wage is \$290 per week. After housing costs (estimated \$176.48) and taxes (estimated \$35.06), that leaves about \$77 to spend on food and transportation. Take the LIVE THE WAGE Challenge.

<http://www.livethewage.com/>

A report from ABC News on *What Happened When 3 Politicians Tried a Minimum Wage Budget* explains what happened when two members of Congress and one Governor tried to live on a minimum wage budget.

<http://abcnews.go.com/blogs/politics/2014/07/what-happened-when-3-politicians-tried-to-eat-on-minimum-wage-budget/>

### **Income Segregation**

In recent decades, those with higher incomes lived in residential clusters that have higher incomes. Households with lower incomes have also tended to cluster together. By living in a high poverty area, residents are likely to pay more for what they purchase, even if it is available within a reasonable distance. These lower income areas also experience other negative effects, from higher rates of crime to fewer employment opportunities. The new

issue paper from Metropolitan Social Services-Planning & Coordination describes how the higher poverty that remains from the recession is spreading from the central city areas to the suburbs. It also notes the importance of using more meaningful interventions to address the detrimental effects of poverty.

[http://www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/SocialServices/docs/plann\\_coord/Income%20SegregationJune2014.pdf](http://www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/SocialServices/docs/plann_coord/Income%20SegregationJune2014.pdf)

### **Disconnected Families**

Following the 1996 welfare reform changes, many poor mothers were no longer eligible for their only source of income. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits were eliminated for some who continued to face economic hardship. Following the recession, the circumstances became worse, particularly for single women with children. They were termed “disconnected” because they had neither employment nor TANF benefits, and a study from the Urban Institute explored the barriers to employment for these women. Additional information is available in the new issue paper from Metropolitan Social Services-Planning & Coordination/Social Data Analysis.

[http://www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/SocialServices/docs/plann\\_coord/DisconnectedFamiliesJuly2014.pdf](http://www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/SocialServices/docs/plann_coord/DisconnectedFamiliesJuly2014.pdf)

### **Americans With Disabilities Act**

July 25, 2014 was the 24<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Americans With Disabilities Act, created to ensure equality for people with disabilities. The U. S. has about 19% of the population with disabilities, while Davidson County is estimated to have about 75,000 people with disabilities, many aged 65 and over.

The ADA’s five titles cover employment, state and local government, public accommodations, telecommunications, and miscellaneous provisions. The ADA provided more opportunities for those with disabilities to enter the workforce because of accessible public transportation and buildings.

[http://www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/SocialServices/docs/plann\\_coord/ADAjuly2014.pdf](http://www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/SocialServices/docs/plann_coord/ADAjuly2014.pdf)

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### **Economic Development**

Governing (July 2014) includes an article, *Do Cities Really Want Economic Development?*, which describes how a poor economy can “actually benefit some people, giving powerful players less incentive to improve the status quo for the rest.” It explains that government is extremely complex, but expresses concern about “the persistent failure to change the trajectory of so many places despite the enormous time and energy -- not to mention vast sums of taxpayer money . . .” It suggests that there are sometimes solutions for specific problems, in terms of how to mobilize, allocate and deploy community resources and power.

The article suggests many of the components that led to Detroit’s bankruptcy exist in many other communities. It notes that many people in Detroit personally benefitted from the community’s decay. It suggests that the focus of economic development is too often limited to subsidized real estate development. It indicates that areas that have sustained lengthy decline, they need “some outside shock to the system to break the rackets that are producing civic stasis and dysfunction” to “find a more positive way to break free and embrace a path that leads to actual economic success.”

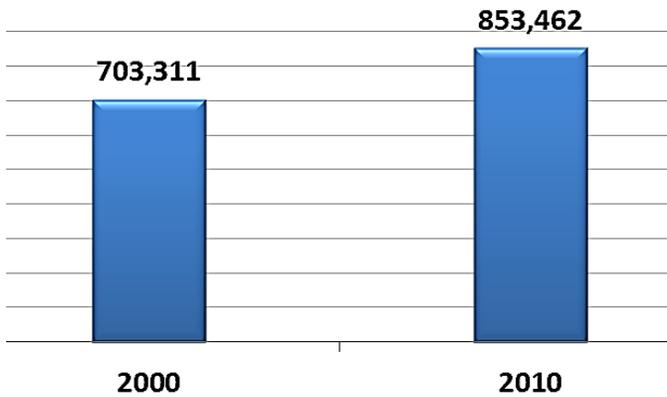
<http://www.governing.com/columns/eco-engines/gov-do-we-really-want-development.html>

**GOVERNING**  
THE STATES AND LOCALITIES

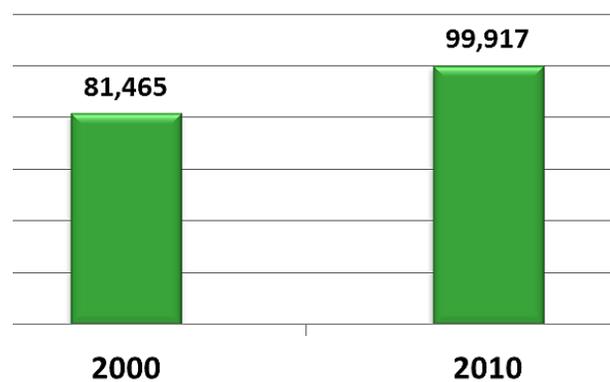
## 65+ in the U. S.

In June 2014, the U. S. Census Bureau released a special study, *65+ in the United States: 2010*, based on Current Population Reports. *65+ in the United States* reported that Tennessee was ranked Number 15 in the number of people over age 65 who resided in the state, with 853,462 (11 states had over 1 million). It described the continuing increase in Tennessee residents, for those aged 65 and over as well as those aged 85 and over. When percentages were compared, Tennessee ranked 29<sup>th</sup> with 13.4% of the population over age 65, an increase from 12.4% in 2000. The following two charts demonstrate the increase from 2000 to 2010.

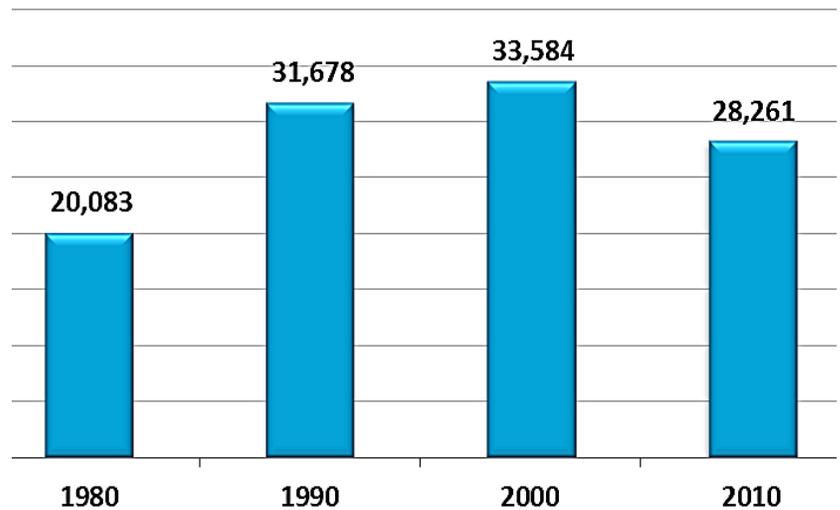
**Population Aged 65 and Over, Tennessee**



**Population Aged 85 and Over, Tennessee**



**Population Aged 65 and Over Residing in Nursing Home  
Tennessee**

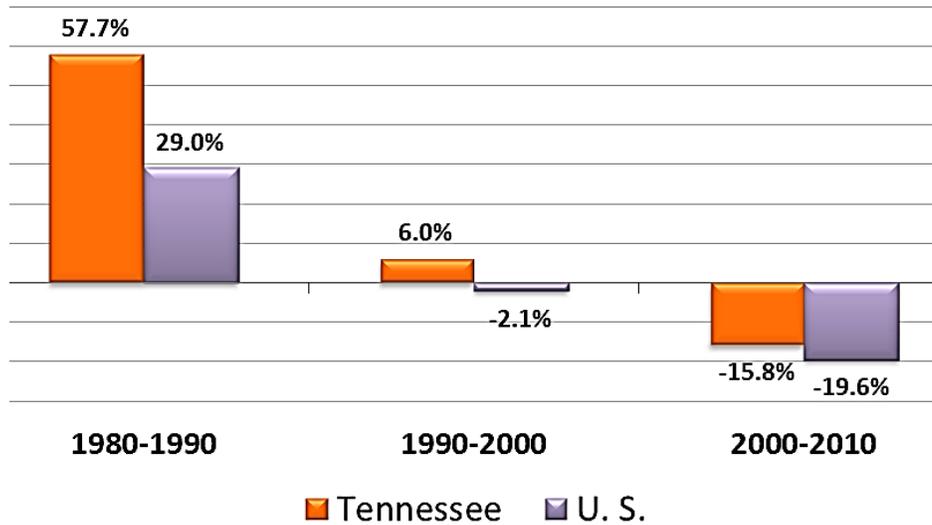


The Chart at right shows the number of people 65 and over in nursing homes at 10 year interval for the past four decades.

While the population has continued to increase, the number of Tennesseans over age 65 who reside in nursing homes decreased from a high of 33,584 in 2000 to 28,261 in 2010.

This may be due to Tennessee's funding shift to allow more in-home care, as well as the development assisted living, which provides a lower level of care for those who may not need the additional services available at nursing homes.

**Population Aged 65 and Over Residing in Nursing Home**  
Percent Change - Tennessee, U.S.



The chart at left shows that the percentage of residents 65 and over decreased by 15.8% during the period from 2000 to 2010 in Tennessee.

The U. S. experienced an even greater decrease of 19.6%.

Highlights from *65+ in the United States* include the following.

- The percentage of the population aged 65 and over increased from 4.1% in 1990 to 13.0% in 2010, projected to reach 20.9% by 2050.
- After 2010, the older dependency ratio will decrease sharply as Baby Boomers age. By 2030, the older dependency ratio will be around 37, with fewer than three people of working age to support every older person. Other countries are experiencing similar circumstances.
- Alzheimer’s disease was the 7<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death among older people in 2000 that increased to 5<sup>th</sup> in 2010. Many other causes of mortality decreased, although the death rate increased more than 50% from 1999 to 2007.
- In 2010, 38% of those aged 65 and over had one or more disabilities, most often having difficulties with walking, climbing stairs and doing errands alone.
- In 2005, 14.5% of the population aged 54 and above were employed, compared to 16.2% in 2010.

<http://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2014/demo/p23-212.pdf>

### After Planning, Time to Take Action

In *Enough Planning Already – Time to Take Action*, American City & County explains that long-term planning and strategy have benefits, but that organizations can get bogged down in the process. Using the procurement as an example, it notes that organizations may “huddle their senior leadership teams to discuss key initiatives for the upcoming year, but if you roll the clock back a year you’ll discover they were talking about the same thing a year ago, with no real progress made to date.”

It notes that planning and implementation are different and provides suggestions on how to improve the effectiveness of planning and increase the likelihood of successful implementation.

1. Make Sure Your Strategy is Clear and Describes What You Do (translate high-level goals into concrete tasks and actions for which specific people are responsible)
2. Drive Resource Allocation Top-Down (staff should not drive resource decisions but they must be driven from the top, while making assignments clear)
3. Manage the Reality of Daily Distractions (break the busy cycle and do different things; 20% of things produce 80% of results; leaders should provide teams with the tools they need for their workload and help them deal with constant distractions that put their work off course; people have to learn to manage the daily crises while continuing the long-term endeavor)
4. Engage Teams Regularly (to execute strategy managers and people who do the work must be involved or they will not know the importance of the initiative or what they are supposed to do; recurring follow-up and progress monitoring are important; meetings should focus on concrete outcomes and action to accomplish them)
5. Hold Teams Accountable (used constructively can have positive results; set standards and be clear on expectations; when specific actions are determined, a system must hold teams or individuals accountable; help people move on and stay focused, not take things personally or become disengaged)

<http://americacityandcounty.com/procurement-professional/enough-planning-already-time-take-action>

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### **Tennessee's 2014 *KIDS Count* Shows Overall Improvement in the Well-Being of Children**

Tennessee has improved in overall child well-being of the state's children according to the *KIDS Count 2014* report from the Annie E. Casey Foundation (AECF). The state has shown improvements in 2014 and is ranked 36<sup>th</sup> in the nation, an improvement from the 2013 ranking of 39<sup>th</sup>. The rankings are based on combined data from all U.S. states in four major domains (categories) of economic well-being, education, health, and the family and community.

*KIDS COUNT 2014* is the 25th edition from AECF that is annually published. It assesses how America's children are doing (their well-being) nationally and across the 50 states, including the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. The Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth (TCCY) has been a state-based partner in the national network of child advocacy and research organizations that are part of the AECF's KIDS COUNT Network.

In the category of economic well-being, Tennessee had only a slight improvement moving from 37<sup>th</sup> in 2013 to 36<sup>th</sup> in 2014. Also in the state, 26% of children live in poverty, based on the 2014 KIDS COUNT. There were 33% of Tennessee's children whose parents did not have secure or stable employment in 2014, a slight improvement from 2013 when 34% were without stable employment. The high cost for housing also affected the state's children in 2014 with 34% living in cost burden housing, which was only 1% less than in 2013.

Education in Tennessee showed significant improvements moving up to 37<sup>th</sup> in 2014, with improvements in 4th graders reading more proficiently, and 8th graders showing some improvements in math. In 2013 Tennessee ranked 42<sup>nd</sup> in the nation for education, improving by 5% in 2014. The state ranked higher at 20% for high school students graduating on time than the national average at 29%. While the achievement gap between black and white students has narrowed over the past 4 decades, there is still a gap according to income levels that has increased, based on the KIDS Count 2014.

Tennessee also improved from 61% in 2013 to 60% in 2014 for children who did not attend preschool. There are public initiatives working toward increase of public funding for preschool education. Research has proven that high-quality prekindergarten programs for children who are 3 and 4 years old are effective to improve school readiness, and for children in poverty it has proven to be successful throughout their lifetimes.

In the category of health, Tennessee moved up to 31<sup>st</sup> showing improvements in the areas of low birth weight babies, children without health insurance, child and teen deaths (per 100,000), and teens who abuse alcohol or drugs. Although the state has a lower percentage of children without health insurance when compared to the nation, there are still 85,000 children in Tennessee who are uninsured.

The state remained unchanged in the ranking for family and community, having been ranked at 37<sup>th</sup> in the nation in both 2014 and 2013. The state continues to address the issues of children in single parent households and children living in high poverty areas.

<http://www.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/aecf-2014kidscountdatabook-2014.pdf>

[http://www.aecf.org/m/databook/2014KC\\_profile\\_TN.pdf](http://www.aecf.org/m/databook/2014KC_profile_TN.pdf)

[http://datacenter.kidscount.org/~media/73/2013KC\\_state\\_profile\\_TN.pdf](http://datacenter.kidscount.org/~media/73/2013KC_state_profile_TN.pdf)

<http://datacenter.kidscount.org/files/2013kidscountdatabook.pdf>

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### **Critical Imperatives Facing Cities**

The National League of Cities has identified the 10 critical imperatives that cities should consider in creating their futures. *The 10 Critical Imperatives Facing Cities in 2014* notes that 80% of U. S. residents live in cities and common challenges are faced by cities of all sizes. Most cities face at least some of these circumstances:

- Fragile Fiscal Health
- Deteriorating Transportation Infrastructure
- The Shrinking Middle Class
- Inadequate Access to Higher Education
- The Need for Affordable Housing
- A Less-Than-Welcoming Return for Veterans
- Gang Violence
- A Broken Immigration System
- Climate Change and Extreme Weather
- Lack of Public Trust



The National League of Cities report points out that cities can provide solutions, and that partnerships with the federal government (or other entities) can improve the likelihood of success. It emphasizes the important role of city leaders in helping residents face the crises they face, especially in the wake of the recent recession. *The 10 Critical Imperatives* also discusses positive approaches to dealing with these issues.

<http://www.nlc.org/find-city-solutions/city-solutions-and-applied-research/governance-and-civic-engagement/10-critical-imperatives-in-2014>

## 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>

The Planning & Coordination/Social Data Analysis of Metropolitan Social Services staff is shown with Yu-Chia Wu, summer intern with MSS, who is pursuing her International Education Policy and Management at Peabody-Vanderbilt. Yu-Chia assisted with data analysis and special projects, and she wrote the issue papers on the *Federal Minimum Wage* and the *Americans With Disabilities Act*.



Clockwise from top left: Julius Witherspoon, Abdelghani Barre, Lee Stewart, Yu-Chia Wu, Dinah Gregory and Joyce Hillman.

Previous newsletters are available online:

<http://www.nashville.gov/Social-Services/Newsletters-and-Videos.aspx>

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*For additional information on poverty*



[Nashville Poverty and Community Needs Facebook Page](#)