

KEY FINDINGS **ON LOCAL CHILD AND FAMILY NEEDS**

2004

Excerpted from:

“Understanding Service Needs in Charlottesville/ Albemarle”

prepared by

The Outcome Measurement work group of

The Charlottesville/Albemarle

Commission on Children and Families



The Charlottesville/Albemarle Commission on Children and Families' (CCF) Outcome Measurement Work Group began work on the **Focus Areas for Children and Families Project** in 2003. The project is intended to guide the funding of effective and efficient programs that are responsive to identified community needs. For Phase I of the project, data from over 45 reports was compiled about the service needs of children and families in the City of Charlottesville and Albemarle County, and was organized into focus areas requiring attention.

This booklet of key findings is excerpted from the full Phase I report, "Understanding Service Needs in Charlottesville/ Albemarle." Five year trends, selected from Stepping Stones, are included to measure child and family well-being in each focus area. The full report, including all research citations, is on the CCF website at www.ccfinfo.org.

Phase II of the project includes an analysis of the outcomes of programs funded through the City and County non-profit community agency process as they relate to the identified focus areas. Phase III will broaden the scope beyond non-profit child and family services for a more comprehensive assessment of human services needs and resources. The final product will be a document that identifies areas of high need and modest investment as funding priorities, and provides ongoing policy and program recommendations.

Note: This report is considered an evolving document: while the workgroup attempted to be comprehensive in data collection, there may be data projects currently underway that are not included here. CCF invites local programs, citizens, and researchers to submit data to the Commission that will promote understanding of the needs of local children and families.

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For more information call CCF at 434-970-3550 or visit www.ccfinfo.org.

THE CHARLOTTESVILLE/ALBEMARLE COMMISSION ON CHILDREN AND FAMILIES (CCF) IS COMPOSED OF 22 CITIZEN, COMMUNITY AGENCY, LOCAL GOVERNMENT, EDUCATION, AND UNIVERSITY LEADERS WORKING TO IMPROVE OUTCOMES FOR LOCAL CHILDREN AND FAMILIES. CCF SERVES AS AN ADVISOR TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT, A COORDINATOR OF SERVICES, AN INFORMATION SOURCE, AND A CATALYST FOR INITIATIVES THAT RESPOND TO THE IDENTIFIED NEEDS OF CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES.

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▶ ENSURE AFFORDABLE AND ACCESSIBLE HEALTH CARE FOR ADULTS AND CHILDREN

COMMUNITY NEED	FIVE YEAR TREND
<p>Affordable medical and dental care is one of the largest areas of documented unmet need in the community. Uninsured rates are higher in Central Virginia (17.2%) than in the State overall. Data show that health care costs are disproportionately a problem for the working poor, minorities, and those under the age of 45; focus groups suggest that the poorest residents may also be the most likely to put off obtaining health care until health problems are quite serious.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🕒 Prenatal care in 1st trimester ▶▶ Low birth weight babies ▶▶ Infant death rate

▶ ADDRESS FAMILY VIOLENCE, SPECIFICALLY CHILDREN EXPOSED TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND CHILD ABUSE

COMMUNITY NEED	FIVE YEAR TREND
<p>Locally, domestic violence and child abuse and neglect are prominent factors in the lives of the most troubled populations (e.g., children in need of extensive services, adjudicated youth, and Charlottesville’s homeless populations). The number of foster care placements in Charlottesville is increasing. Data indicate that domestic violence and child abuse are associated with a host of poor outcomes for children from medical and emotional/psychological, to academic and social problems.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🕒▶ Arrests for domestic assault ▶▶ Child abuse and neglect investigations/assessments ▲▶ Foster care rates

▶ REDUCE STRESSES OF SINGLE PARENTS/ WORKING POOR

COMMUNITY NEED

The majority of the poor populations in Charlottesville/Albemarle are working poor (and many are single parent households). Primary concerns and unmet needs in this population include support with worries and concerns about finances, stresses of raising a family, and emotional/social support. As detailed in other Focus areas, affordable medical care, housing, transportation, and childcare, as well as unstable family environments are also key issues for the working poor. Wealth is not distributed evenly among Charlottesville neighborhoods.

FIVE YEAR TREND

- ▶▶ Free/reduced Meal Program participation
- ▼▼ Women, Infants, Children (WIC) program participation
- ▼▼ Children receiving Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)
- 🕒▶ Subsidized housing units
- 🕒▶ Food stamp participation
- ▶▶ Day care spaces available
- ▶▶ Per capita income
- 🕒🕒 Children in Poverty

▶ REDUCE IMPEDIMENTS TO PARENTING, ESPECIALLY OF CHALLENGING CHILDREN

COMMUNITY NEED

Families from the most troubled populations (e.g., the working poor, children in need of extensive services, and adjudicated youth) have high levels of family turbulence and likely **have difficulty identifying and meeting the basic and/or psychological needs of their children.**

FIVE YEAR TREND

- 🕒🕒 Community mobility
- ▲▶ Foster care rates
- 🕒▶ Juvenile arrests for violent crime
- ▲▶ Comprehensive Services Act Cases

▶ ADDRESS ADULT SUBSTANCE ABUSE

COMMUNITY NEED

Help with substance abuse for adults was identified as the area with the most unmet need in Charlottesville/Albemarle, and a majority of Charlottesville residents expressed dissatisfaction with the reduction of illegal drug use among adults. Parental/adult substance abuse, a prominent factor in the lives of the most troubled populations (e.g., children in need of extensive services, adjudicated youth, and the homeless population), likely contributes to both high rates of crime/recidivism, and is often associated with poor physical health and family violence.

FIVE YEAR TREND

🟡🟡 Possession of drugs/ alcohol in public schools

▶ IMPROVE CONDITIONS AND RESOURCES RELATED TO HOUSING COSTS/ MAINTENANCE

COMMUNITY NEED

Residents of both Charlottesville and Albemarle expressed being dissatisfied with available housing options including ownership and rental costs, diversification, maintenance and upkeep, and landlord responsibility. The living wage needed to afford a 2 bedroom dwelling in 2001 was \$13.02 in Charlottesville/Albemarle, 30% of Albemarle residents pay at least 35% of their gross income in rent, and 23% of the homeless in Charlottesville have dependent children. While housing costs are generally rising, some of the poorest neighborhoods in Charlottesville are not enjoying similar increases in assessed housing value.

FIVE YEAR TREND

🟡▶ Subsidized housing units
 🟡🟡 Community mobility

▶ IMPROVE CONDITIONS AND RESOURCES RELATED TO JOB OPPORTUNITIES, TRAINING & ADULT EDUCATION

COMMUNITY NEED	FIVE YEAR TREND
<p>Nearly half of the residents of Charlottesville were dissatisfied with opportunities for higher paid employment, and many residents noted that literacy and vocational training was very much needed. 13% of the Albemarle population does not have a high school education, and 33% of individuals homeless in Charlottesville report that unemployment is a cause of their homelessness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶▶ Drop-out rate, grades 7-12 ▲▶ High school 4 year completion rate ⊖▶ Post-secondary education Per capita income

▶ IMPROVE CONDITIONS AND RESOURCES RELATED TO COMMUNITY SAFETY

COMMUNITY NEED	FIVE YEAR TREND
<p>Community safety is a high priority for both Charlottesville and Albemarle residents. Many neighborhoods in Charlottesville perceive crime, and/or policing/community involvement, as a key issue.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊖▼ Delinquency judgments ⊖▶ Juvenile arrests for violent crime per 1000 ⊖▶ Arrests for domestic assault ▶▶ Child abuse and neglect investigations/assessments ⊖ Poisoning calls

▶ IMPROVE CONDITIONS AND RESOURCES RELATED TO PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

COMMUNITY NEED	FIVE YEAR TREND
<p>Residents of Charlottesville and Albemarle noted the high cost and lack of reliable transportation as an area of concern. 26% of residents from Charlottesville and 41% of residents from Albemarle expressed dissatisfaction with public transportation. The per-capita rides on public transportation are up, but some neighborhoods in Charlottesville expressed more dissatisfaction with transportation than others.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶▶ JAUNT passengers ▲▲ Riders of CTS buses

▶ IMPROVE AND EXTEND AFFORDABLE RESOURCES FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

COMMUNITY NEED	FIVE YEAR TREND
<p>There are 96.5 childcare spaces per 100 children in Charlottesville, but only 8.0 spaces per 100 children in Albemarle; residents in both communities have consistently reported that improving and supporting affordable, quality childcare/preschool is very important. Data from focus groups suggests that lower income families may not consider placing their children in preschool programs due to the cost; further research is needed to identify additional barriers to obtaining childcare/preschool services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🕒▶ Head Start enrollment 🕒🕒 Kindergarten readiness ▶▶ Day care spaces available

▶ IMPROVE STUDENT PERFORMANCE

COMMUNITY NEED

Providing quality public education ranks first with both Charlottesville and Albemarle residents as a community goal. Nonetheless, in the Charlottesville neighborhoods of Fifeville, Jackson Via, Ridge Street, Starr Hill, and Tenth and Page more than 60% of public school students did not pass the Math SOL in 2002 (in general, more Charlottesville students do not pass the SOLs in schools with higher free lunch rates). In Albemarle, 11-22% of students did not pass English or Math SOLs in 2003. Overall, the number of children passing SOLs is increasing for 3rd and 5th graders. Poor academic performance and learning disabilities are prominent factors in the lives of the most troubled populations (e.g., children in need of extensive services, and adjudicated youth).

FIVE YEAR TREND

- ⊖⊖ Percentage of resident children in public schools
- ▲▲ 3rd Grade English SOL scores ▲▲ 3rd Grade Math SOL scores
- ▲▲ 3rd Grade History SOL scores
- ▲▲ 3rd Grade Science SOL scores
- ▲▲ 5th Grade English SOL scores
- ▲▲ 5th Grade Math SOL scores
- ▲▲ 5th Grade History SOL scores
- ▲▲ 5th Grade Science SOL scores
- ⊖▲ 8th Grade English SOL scores
- ⊖▲ 8th Grade Math SOL scores
- ⊖▲ 8th Grade History SOL scores
- ⊖▲ 8th Grade Science SOL scores
- ⊖▶ 4th Grade Stanford 9 scores
- ▲▶ 6th Grade Stanford 9 scores
- ▶▶ 9th Grade Stanford 9 scores
- ▶▶ School Attendance rates
- ▲⊖ High School Graduation rate
- ▶▶ Dropout Rate, Grades 7-12
- ▲▲ Instructional Personnel Positions
- ⊖⊖ Community Mobility
- ▶▶ Special Education Enrollment
- ⊖▶ Post-Secondary Education
- ▲▲ Limited English Proficient Population

▶ EXTEND OPPORTUNITIES FOR/ACCESS TO PRODUCTIVE ACTIVITIES, ESPECIALLY FOR LOWER-INCOME YOUTH

COMMUNITY NEED	FIVE YEAR TREND
<p>Children from lower income families are as much as ½ as likely to participate in sports/recreation, arts or music class, or volunteering as children from higher income families. Residents of the poorest neighborhoods in Charlottesville cited work, after school, and/or recreation opportunities for youth as key issues. Public school students in Albemarle are enrolled in activities at a lower rate than Charlottesville students. There appears to be a lack of before school and late evening programming in general. National research shows that involvement in productive out-of-school activities is a protective factor for youth.</p>	<p>▶▶ After School Program participation ⓪⓪ Enrollment in Fine Arts Classes ⓪⓪ Extracurricular and Sports Program Enrollment ▲⓪ Participation in Parks and Recreation Programs ▶▶ Children's Books checked out of Public Libraries</p>

▶ ENHANCE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTIONS FOR YOUTH SUBSTANCE ABUSE

COMMUNITY NEED	FIVE YEAR TREND
<p>Help with substance abuse for children was the second most often identified unmet need in Charlottesville/Albemarle, and Charlottesville residents were most dissatisfaction with the reduction of illegal drug use among youths. High school students in Albemarle reported using alcohol & marijuana at higher rates than the national average. Substance use is a prominent factor in the lives of the most troubled populations.</p>	<p>⓪⓪ Possession of drugs/alcohol in public schools ⓪⓪ Alcohol arrests Under Age 21</p>

▶ ENHANCE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTIONS FOR BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS/DELINQUENCY

COMMUNITY NEED	FIVE YEAR TREND
<p>Charlottesville residents rated keeping children away from crime as the most needed community resource. The largest numbers of juveniles arrested in Charlottesville/Albemarle in 2000 were aged 17, 16, and 15. Youth were most often arrested or detained for larceny or court-related violations. High school students in Albemarle report higher rates of carrying weapons to school and being threatened than the national average (similar data gathered from Charlottesville students indicates that levels of violence are commensurate with national averages).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▼⊗ Weapons possession in public schools ▲⊗ Public school suspensions ⊗▶ School reports of physical violence ⊗▶ Juvenile Arrests for Violent Crime, ages 12-17 ▲▶ Comprehensive Services Act Cases ⊗▶ Children in Need of Extensive Services/Supervision ⊗⊗ Pregnancies to teens under 18 ▼▼ Births to teens under 18 Sexually transmitted diseases, aged 10-19 ▼▼ Delinquency judgements

▶ ENHANCE EFFECTIVE INTERVENTIONS FOR SERIOUS MENTAL ILLNESS/EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCE/MULTIPLE DIAGNOSES

COMMUNITY NEED	FIVE YEAR TREND
<p>Mental health problems (including behavior problems) are primary concerns for the most troubled youth populations. The number of youth receiving services under the Comprehensive Services Act is up in Charlottesville. Albemarle students reported making more serious suicide attempts than the national average, while students in Charlottesville reported suicidal thoughts commensurate with national averages. In general, mental illness is a significant risk factor for delinquency.</p>	<p>▲▶ Comprehensive Services Act Cases ◎▶ Children in Need of Extensive Services/Supervision</p>

▶ INCREASE AVAILABILITY OF LOCAL FOSTER CARE HOMES AND COMMUNITY BASED CRISIS/STABILIZATION/ASSESSMENT FACILITIES

COMMUNITY NEED	FIVE YEAR TREND
<p>Families from the most troubled populations (e.g., the working poor, children in need of extensive services, and adjudicated youth) have high levels of family turbulence and likely have difficulty identifying and meeting the basic and/or psychological needs of their children. A much larger proportion of children are placed in foster care in Charlottesville than Albemarle. CCF workgroups have identified a local shortage of a cost-effective, secure facility to provide a continuum of emergency, short-term, and long-term crisis care, as well as a shortage of quality foster homes and adequate in-home and wrap-around services.</p>	<p>▲▶ Children in Foster Care ◎◎ Divorces processed in circuit court ▶ Students living with both parents ◎◎ Number of families</p>



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