

Target Need Area:
Families

Overview

Census 2000 counted 281.4 million people in the U.S., with 273.6 million living in 105.5 million households. A slight majority of the households (52%) were maintained by married couples, while the second most common type of household (26%) consisted of people living alone. The overall number of households grew by 13 million (or 15%) between 1990 and 2000. Family households maintained by a female with no husband present numbered 12.9 million, almost three times the number maintained by males with no wife present (4.4 million). Four states contained 31 percent of all households in Census 2000: California (11.5 million), Texas (7.4 million), New York (7.1 million) and Florida (6.3 million).

Female family households with children under 18 years have increased both in number in proportion from 6.0 million in 1990 to 7.6 million in 2000. Nationally, there were more than three times as many married couple households with children as female family households. In 2000, there were 3.9 million multigenerational family households (more than two generations), making up 3.7 percent of all households.

The Annie E. Casey Foundation (<http://www.aecf.org/kidscount/>) released a report in 2003 that compared Texas with national statistics about families. The report noted:

- Despite comparatively higher rates of work participation by Texas families, a higher proportion of the state's children live in working poor families. In Texas, 20% of children live in working poor families.
- Texas' median income for families with children of \$40,700 ranks last among the five largest states and more than 15% below this measure for the nation as a whole (\$47,300).
- Recent trends in child poverty have been encouraging but raise questions about sustainability. In the last ten years, the proportion of Texas children and all children in the country in poverty declined, however the 22% of Texas children living in poverty exceeds the national rate of 19%.
- The number of Texas children in poverty grew from 1,261,894 to 1,298,486 over the course of the last decade.
- In 2002, the state performed better than the national average on two indicators of children well-being: low birth weights and infant mortality. The state performed less well on six indicators: child deaths, teen violent deaths, teen birth rate, dropout rate, teens not in school and not working, and child poverty.
- For two indicators, children in families without a full time working parent and single parent families, Texas exactly matched national figures. Ten years ago, however, the state was performing better than the nation.

Part I. Summary of the Results

Part I. Summary of the Results are presented in charts that show converging perspectives on key indicators used to explore the Target Need Area. Key indicators are presented in the chart along with a brief summary conclusion based on an analysis of patterns of convergence between different perspectives used in this study. Key indicators are pieces of information, facts, or statistics that provide insight into the condition of a Target Need Area in the community. The intent of this section is to summarize the analysis of the key indicators from all the different methods used in this project. Brief findings are found in the left column of the chart. More detailed findings are presented in **Part V. Findings and Conclusions**.

Specific indicators were selected based on previous research. A brief review of key indicators selected for inclusion in this chart follow:

- **Indicators of Financial Security**

Financial security is an important component of a quality life. Although poverty does not necessarily cause social ills, it is related to the risk factors for many issues addressed by other indicators. These issues include broken families, child abuse and neglect, substance abuse, crime teen pregnancy, and readiness to learn. The indicators of financial security of families in this report are:

- Rates of Families Living in Poverty in 12CR and in Texas.

- **Indicators of Quality of Childcare**

Quality of life issues for families with children, especially young children, often surround the care for children when both parents are working. For working families, daycare issues are a major concern. The affordability, availability and quality of childcare impacts the quality of life for many families. The indicators of quality of childcare in this report are:

- Licensed Childcare
- Subsidized Childcare options

- **Indicators of Social and Emotional Wellness of Families**

Social and emotional well-being sets the stage for life long satisfaction in adaptation to life goals and challenges. The indicators of social and emotional wellness of families concern the stability of the structure, which enable members to function for the collective good. The Indicators of social and emotional wellness of families selected for this report are:

- Prevalence of Domestic Violence

- **Indicators of Family Structure**

Two parent families have historically the proscriptive arrangement for the rearing of healthy children. Additionally have has been a great deal of focus and attention on the preservation of this model, even though this model is becoming increasingly less common. The increasing number of single parent households (mostly female headed) is associated with a worsening of several social, emotional and physical conditions for children's development. Children growing up in single family homes tend to live in more impoverished environments, are more likely to drop out of school, and are more likely to become heads of single families themselves.

- The number of Single Parent Families
- The number of Two Parent Families
- Foster Parenting Rates

- The Divorce Rates
- Intergenerational Family Structures

Concern	Personal Perspectives		Archival Context	
<u>Families</u>	<u>Citizens¹</u>	<u>Informants</u>	<u>Archival</u>	<u>State/National</u>
<p>Family Structure <i>The percentage of families that are married couples in the region is similar to the percentage in the state.</i></p> <p><i>The rate of single parent households is 11.4% greater for the 12CR than the state average.</i></p> <p><i>The rate of foster care for children in the 12 CR is consistent with state rates. However, Brooks County has a foster parent rate that is more than three times the state average and the rate in Kleberg County is more than twice the state rate.</i></p>	<p>61.6% of respondents were married.</p> <p>Up to 39.5% of households had children 0-17 years of age.</p>	<p>13% of KI describe help with family issues as unavailable or difficult to access.</p> <p>90% of KI agree that families need more readily available help from social service agencies on parenting and childcare arrangements.</p>	<p>25% of the families in the 12CR are married couples.</p> <p>26.4% of families in the 12CR are headed by a single parent</p> <p>Foster parents are responsible for 4 out of 1000 of the children in the 12CR. The rate of foster care in Brooks and Kleberg is 14.6/1000 and 10.8/1000.</p>	<p>24% of the families in the state are married couples.</p> <p>23.7 of families are headed by a single parent.</p> <p>The state rate for foster parents is 4.1/1000.</p>
<p>Recent family Crisis: Divorce in the past 12 months. <i>The ratio of divorces to marriages in the region is similar to that of the state. The rate of 50% is clearly an issue for the state as a whole.</i></p>	<p>Up to 9.4% of respondents had experienced a divorce</p> <p>Up to 34.3% had difficulty getting an appointment when seeking help.</p>	<p>20% of KI describe help for recently divorced individuals as unavailable or difficult to access.</p>	<p>During 2001, 4,223 marriages took place in the 12CR while 2,375 divorces occurred at a ratio of divorces to marriages of 1 to 2.</p>	<p>During 2001, 191,801 marriages took place in the state while 83,473 divorces occurred at a ratio of divorces to marriages of 1 to 2.</p>

Concern	Personal Perspectives		Archival Context	
	<u>Families</u>	<u>Citizens</u>¹	<u>Informants</u>	<u>Archival</u>
<p>Family Support system: <i>Many families in 12CR take advantage of intergenerational living arrangements to support their child rearing efforts. A greater percentage of grandparents are responsible for care of children in 12CR than at the state level.</i></p>	<p>Up to 34% of the respondents rely on a relative to care for their children.</p> <p>Up to 19.5% of respondents were grandmothers who are the primary caretakers of their grandchildren</p>	<p>90% of KI report that families need more information on how best to raise healthy children.</p> <p>82% of KI report that families are often reluctant to seek outside help when it comes to raising children and arranging childcare opportunities.</p> <p>55% of KI report that children are receiving the support they need from their schools.</p>	<p>1.6% of grandparents are caring for their grandchildren in the 12CR.</p>	<p>1.23% of grandparents are taking care of grandchildren in the State.</p>
<p>Childcare <i>The state has licensed care facilities that accommodate care for 18% more of the children aged 0-13 than the capacity of facilities in the 12CR. The fact remains that less than 20% of the child population (0-13) can benefit from licensed quality care environments. These numbers illustrate the priority for increasing the number of licensed childcare providers statewide.</i></p>	<p>Up to 29% are dissatisfied with childcare arrangements and describe affordability of high quality childcare as a significant barrier.</p> <p>Up to 18.4% can't really afford after-school care.</p>	<p>71% of KI describe finding quality affordable childcare as the major challenge for families with children.</p>	<p>Childcare facilities in the 12CR have the capacity to care for 16% of the area children.</p> <p>4.9% of the families in the 12CR receive subsidized childcare in the 12CR.</p>	<p>Childcare facilities in the state have the capacity to care for 19% of the children in the state.</p> <p>5% of the families in Texas receive subsidized childcare in the 12CR.</p>
<p>Recent family crisis: <u>Death in the family</u> <i>Respondents indicated that families often rely on family members to help them through an emotional crisis such as the death of a family member. Key Informants' responses supported archival data that there are approximately 14.4% fewer professional</i></p>	<p>Up to 11.7% of respondents had dealt with a death in the family.</p> <p>Up to 47.7% didn't know where to go for help;</p> <p>Up to 24.8% couldn't get an appointment for help.</p>	<p>24% of KI recognize that individuals seek help primarily from family when dealing with family crises.</p>	<p>The ratio of personal counselors per 100,000 in the population for the 12CR is 16.6.</p>	<p>The ratio of personal counselors per 100,000 in the population of Texas is 19.</p>

Concern	Personal Perspectives		Archival Context	
	<u>Citizens¹</u>	<u>Informants</u>	<u>Archival</u>	<u>State/National</u>
<u>Families</u> <i>counselors per 100,000 in the 12CR than in the state's overall population. Professional counselors may be needed to assist individuals in coping with loss.</i>				
Domestic Violence <i>In three of the counties in the 12 CR, children are living in family violence shelters at a rate greater than the state rate of 2.8 per 1,000. [Nueces (4.4 per 1,000), Brooks (3.3 per 1,000) and Refugio (3.5 per 1,000)]</i>		13% of KI described help with family issues as largely unavailable or difficult to access	Family violence in 12CR varies greatly by county. Three counties in particular Nueces (4.4 per 1,000), Brooks (3.3 per 1,000) and Refugio (3.5 per 1,000) shelter children at a greater rate than the state average of 2.8/1000.	The state average for sheltered children is 2.8/1000.
Poverty <i>Poverty rates in 12CR exceed state levels by about 36%. Families living at or below poverty are faced with many challenges to their health and well-being.</i>	Up to 21.6% of respondents described difficulty keeping up with bills and affording groceries in the last 12 months.	64% of KI describe cost as the major barrier to families pursuing a satisfying lifestyle.	16.3% of families live below the poverty level in the 12 CR.	12% of families at the state are below the poverty level.

Part II. Archival Analysis

Part II. Archival Analysis is a synthesis and update of previous research concerning the Target Need Area. An extensive review has been conducted and pertinent findings are detailed in this section along with a brief narrative. The intent of this section is to provide a wider context for considering the issue. Primary data sources are provided here and also in the **Sources** section at the end of the report. Readers are encouraged to consult these primary sources for more details.

For families consisting of married couples with children, the region areas range from 61% to 82% of all families. Approximately 18% to 39% of families have single parents. Foster parenting occurs at a rate above the Texas average of 4.1 per 1,000 populations in five of the counties, with a rate of 14.6 per 1,000 in Brooks County and 10.8 per 1,000 in Kleberg County. The median rate of single parent households in the 12 CR is 26.4%, above the state rate of 23.7%. Conversely, the median rate for families with married parents is lower than the state average by three percent.

A great deal of research has documented the impact of different family structures on children's general welfare. Much of the research focuses on the negative consequences associated with growing up in a single parent headed household. Children growing up in single family homes tend to live in more impoverished environments, are more likely to drop out of school, and are more likely to become heads of single families themselves.

Families			
County	Single Parent	Married Couple	Foster Parent (Rate per 1,000)
<i>Aransas</i>	27.6%	72.4%	4.0
<i>Bee</i>	34.6%	65.4%	4.4
<i>Brooks</i>	39.4%	60.6%	14.6
<i>Duval</i>	28.2%	71.8%	4.0
<i>Jim Wells</i>	24.9%	75.1%	4.6
<i>Kenedy</i>	25.3%	74.7%	0.0
<i>Kleberg</i>	30.0%	70.0%	10.8
<i>Live Oak</i>	19.0%	81.0%	2.7
<i>McMullen</i>	18.3%	81.7%	0.0
<i>Nueces</i>	29.3%	70.7%	8.3
<i>Refugio</i>	22.7%	77.3%	0.5
<i>San Patricio</i>	23.5%	76.5%	3.6
<i>Texas</i>	23.7%	76.3%	4.1

Source: State of Texas Children 2003 (2000) Foster Parents (2002)

http://factbook.cppp.org/county_select.asp

In Nueces County, 2,063 babies were born to unmarried mothers. In the 12 county area, 3,506 babies were born to unmarried mothers.

Nativity Rate	
County	Unmarried Mothers
<i>Aransas</i>	84
<i>Bee</i>	191
<i>Brooks</i>	81
<i>Duval</i>	80
<i>Jim Wells</i>	278
<i>Kenedy</i>	4
<i>Kleberg</i>	193
<i>Live Oak</i>	53
<i>McMullen</i>	2
<i>Nueces</i>	2,063
<i>Refugio</i>	55
<i>San Patricio</i>	422
<i>Area</i>	3,506
<i>Texas</i>	110,940

Source: Texas Department of Health (2000)

<http://www.tdh.state.tx.us/dpa/CSHDPA00.HTM>

Six of the counties predict a decrease in the number of women of childbearing age in the future. Four of the counties predict an increase of the number of women of childbearing age. The average increase in the childbearing population is 1.4%. The average estimated decrease in the childbearing population is 0.3%. It is predicted that women of childbearing age for the state of Texas will decrease -.02% into 2007.

Women of Childbearing Age			
County	Age 15-44		
	2002	2007	Growth
<i>Aransas</i>	5,298	5,312	0.3%
<i>Bee</i>	10,933	11,232	2.7%
<i>Brooks</i>	12,408	12,636	1.8%
<i>Duval</i>	15,069	15,162	0.6%
<i>Jim Wells</i>	23,803	23,788	- 0.1%
<i>Kenedy</i>	26,392	26,384	0.0%
<i>Kleberg</i>	33,547	33,478	- 0.2%
<i>Live Oak</i>	35,679	35,682	0.0%
<i>McMullen</i>	N/A	N/A	N/A
<i>Nueces</i>	105,089	104,441	- 0.6%
<i>Refugio</i>	106,561	105,840	- 0.6%
<i>San Patricio</i>	121,667	121,290	- 0.3%
<i>Texas</i>	1,079,648	1,077,379	- 0.2%

N/A: Not available Source: 2003 Community Needs Assessment, CHRISTUS Spohn Health System

During 2001, 4,223 marriages took place in the 12 county area while 2,375 divorces occurred. In most cases, divorce was roughly half the rate of marriages in the 12 county area. For 2001, the median rate of divorces against the rate of marriages was 48.5% compared to the state rate of 43%.

Marriages and Divorces			
County	Marriages	Divorces	(Percent)
<i>Aransas</i>	251	107	.043
<i>Bee</i>	223	110	.49
<i>Brooks</i>	40	4	.10
<i>Duval</i>	71	44	.62
<i>Jim Wells</i>	279	63	.13
<i>Kenedy</i>	0	0	0
<i>Kleberg</i>	248	143	.58
<i>Live Oak</i>	74	36	.48
<i>McMullen</i>	5	3	.60
<i>Nueces</i>	2,643	1,541	.52
<i>Refugio</i>	51	17	.33
<i>San Patricio</i>	338	307	.90
<i>Texas</i>	191,801	83,473	.43

Source: Texas Department of Health (2001) http://www.tdh.state.tx.us/bvs/stats01/ANNR_HTM/01t39.HTM

The Census 2000 indicated that a substantial number of individuals in the area are widowed, divorced or separated. Widowed persons are mostly female. The persons who reported being married, but separated, is also significant for all counties.

Marital Status							
County	Never Married	Now Married, except separated	Separated	Widowed		Divorced	
				Total	Female	Total	Female
<i>Aransas</i>	3,133	10,892	450	1,589	1,228	2,186	974
<i>Bee</i>	4,627	15,580	1,371	2,196	1,255	2,422	1,115
<i>Brooks</i>	1,482	3,147	174	566	444	547	335
<i>Duval</i>	2,360	5,487	244	943	714	940	442
<i>Jim Wells</i>	6,825	17,120	819	1,935	1,533	2,467	1,436
<i>Kenedy</i>	86	167	11	26	16	24	10
<i>Kleberg</i>	7,422	12,654	560	1,662	1,297	2,063	1,145
<i>Live Oak</i>	1,479	6,666	241	776	539	926	448
<i>McMullen</i>	112	455	13	70	44	48	18
<i>Nueces</i>	63,906	126,000	7,216	15,148	12,250	27,454	15,624
<i>Refugio</i>	1,362	3,687	137	522	420	540	264
<i>San Patricio</i>	11,851	29,040	1,116	3,238	2,614	4,691	2,318
<i>Area</i>	103,283	230,895	12,352	28,671	22,354	44,308	24,129
<i>Texas</i>	4,076,697	9,006,327	392,957	902,613	738,953	1,559,049	895,265

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000) <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/>

The 2000 census determined that in the 12 county area, 18,973 grandparents live in the household with at least one of their grandchildren. A total of 9,820 grandparents are primarily responsible for the care and welfare of their grandchildren.

Grandparents as Caregivers		
County	Grandparents in Household With grandchildren	Grandparents responsible for grandchildren
<i>Aransas</i>	502	271
<i>Bee</i>	755	440
<i>Brooks</i>	262	178
<i>Duval</i>	604	346
<i>Jim Wells</i>	1,608	687
<i>Kenedy</i>	19	16
<i>Kleberg</i>	883	470
<i>Live Oak</i>	357	191
<i>McMullen</i>	19	2
<i>Nueces</i>	11,621	6,031
<i>Refugio</i>	266	154
<i>San Patricio</i>	2,077	1,034
<i>Texas</i>	551,047	257,074

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000)

<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/>

The Texas Department of Family and Protective services estimates that in 1998, over 123,000 children under the age of 13 lived in the 12 county area. They also estimated that licensed childcare facilities had the capacity for a total of 19,490 children. These facilities provided childcare for only 16% of the children in the area. In most cases, the population of children far outweighs the licensed day care capacity, however this appears to be a problem state wide and not limited to this area.

Licensed Child Care							
County	Child Population 0-13	Licensed Day Care Facilities	Licensed Day Care Capacity	Registered Family Home	Registered Family Home Capacity	Licensed 24-hour Care Facilities	Licensed 24-hour Care Capacity
<i>Aransas</i>	3,428	7	416	3	18	3	11
<i>Bee</i>	6,296	14	1,227	9	54	3	140
<i>Brooks</i>	2,191	6	165	0	0	0	0
<i>Duval</i>	3,295	5	154	1	6	0	0
<i>Jim Wells</i>	9,374	27	887	10	60	3	51
<i>Kenedy</i>	101	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Kleberg</i>	7,535	11	639	10	60	5	13
<i>Live Oak</i>	1,884	5	110	7	42	1	2
<i>McMullen</i>	170	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Nueces</i>	71,772	187	12,268	105	630	40	330
<i>Refugio</i>	1,585	4	103	0	0	2	10
<i>San Patricio</i>	15,683	36	1,886	30	180	3	28
<i>Area</i>	123,214	302	17,855	175	1050	60	585
<i>Texas</i>	4,330,548	*9,958	715,842	10,543	63,258	**3,089	22,101

Source: Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services

(1998)http://www.tdprs.state.tx.us/About_PRS/PRS_Data_Books_and_Annual_Reports/1998data/table8.asp#tables

*Does not include 1,163 listed homes. ** Does not include 191 child placing agencies

In 1998, the number of family violence incidents reported in the Coastal Bend area was 6,223 with Nueces County accounting for 4,444 of all reports. Child abuse investigations for the area totaled 1,069 with Nueces County accounting for 751 investigations.

Family Environment		
County	Family Violence Incidence	Investigation of Child Abuse/Neglect
<i>Aransas</i>	201	47
<i>Bee</i>	251	36
<i>Brooks</i>	14	14
<i>Duval</i>	27	9
<i>Jim Wells</i>	576	40
<i>Kenedy</i>	0	0
<i>Kleberg</i>	265	49
<i>Live Oak</i>	21	20
<i>McMullen</i>	0	0
<i>Nueces</i>	4,444	751
<i>Refugio</i>	10	9
<i>San Patricio</i>	414	94

Source: Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse (1998)

<http://www.tcada.state.tx.us/research/statistics/>

A measure of children’s security include the incidences of documented abuse and the number of children living in shelters provided in cases of family violence. The median rate for confirmed cases of abuse for the 12 county area is 11.2 per 1,000 above the state rate of 7.9 per 1,000. Nine of the counties have victims of abuse confirmed at a rate above the state rate of 7.9 per 1,000, with Brooks County experiencing a rate of 21per 1,000 and Kleberg having a rate of 19.8 per 1,000. Children living in family violence shelters at a rate greater than the state rate of 2.8 per 1,000 include 3 of the area counties, Nueces (4.4 per 1,000), Brooks (3.3 per 1,000) and Refugio (3.5 per 1,000) Counties.

Children’s Security		
County	Confirmed Victims of Abuse (rate per 1,000)	Children in Family Violence Shelters (rate per 1,000)
<i>Aransas</i>	11.7	0.8
<i>Bee</i>	10.9	1.9
<i>Brooks</i>	21.0	3.3
<i>Duval</i>	13.4	1.3
<i>Jim Wells</i>	10.1	0.6
<i>Kenedy</i>	0	0
<i>Kleberg</i>	19.8	0.7
<i>Live Oak</i>	7.3	0
<i>McMullen</i>	10.4	0
<i>Nueces</i>	13.6	4.4
<i>Refugio</i>	7.9	3.5
<i>San Patricio</i>	12.0	2.6
<i>Texas</i>	7.9	2.8

Source: State of Texas Children 2003 (2001) Abuse (2002)
http://factbook.cppp.org/county_select.asp

Part III. Citizens’ Perspectives

Part III. Citizens’ Perspectives contains some of the results of the 1000+ random telephone surveys, the 18 Community Listening sessions, and the 18 Community Response sessions. The highlights of these components of the study are detailed in the next section. For more detailed information about the survey results or the community sessions, the reader should consult the appendices of this report.

Randomly selected citizens commented about divorce or separation in their household:

Of those who experienced divorce or separation, a substantial number, almost forty percent, sought help with the myriad of issues confronting them at the time. Such issues include economic, emotional and social concerns. Most often, individuals relied upon help from family members (21%), social service agencies, church and professionals (each 14%).

- **7% experienced divorce or separation**

- **37% sought help**

Where they sought help?

Family member	21%
Friend	7%
Social Service Agency	14%
Independent Professional	14%
Church Organization	14%
Other	11%

Still an even greater number of individuals experienced barriers to obtaining help in dealing with issues surrounding divorce and separation. Not being able to get an appointment was reported as the most common barrier (30%) while the cost and inability to determine where to get help also were reported as significant barriers (22% and 19%, respectively). Not having services provided by insurance and being too nervous or afraid to ask for help were also reported as obstacles each (7%). Additional reported impediments were transportation problems, waiting too long, past negative experiences and the stigma or shame surrounding asking for help (4% each).

What kept them from receiving help?

Couldn't get an appt.	30%
Don't know a place to go for help	19%
Help costs too much	22%
Could not get time off work	0
No one to take care of children	0
The wait is too long	4%
Transportation problems	4%
Couldn't find anyone to accept insurance	0
No professionals speak my language	0
Not covered by insurance	7%
Managed care hassles	0
Too nervous or afraid to ask for help	7%
Sought help before but not satisfied	4%
Stigma or shame with asking for help	4%

Randomly selected citizens commented about experiencing death in the immediate family:

Nine percent of the citizens surveyed had experienced a death in the immediate family. A significant portion, 37% sought some sort of help in dealing with the issues surrounding that death.

- **9% experienced death in the immediate family**
- **37% sought help for this problem**

Most of the individuals relied upon a family member for help in dealing with a death in the immediate family (40%). Many sought professional help (23%) and many turned to faith-based organizations (18%). Unlike the responses for those dealing with divorce or separation in a marriage, those dealing with a death in the family

were twice as likely to seek help from friends (13%). Only 5% reported seeking help from social service agencies when confronted with a death in the immediate family.

The following table illustrates where they sought help

Family Member	40%
Friend	13%
Social Service Agency	5%
Independent Professional	23%
Church Organization	18%

A substantial portion of the respondents, 63%, reported encountering barriers to obtaining help for a death in the immediate family. Most significantly, 43% did not know of appropriate places to seek such help. Inability to get an appointment was reported as an obstacle by 21% of those experiencing such an impediment. The expensive costs, lack of childcare and insurance coverage were also reported as barriers to receiving assistance (7% each).

The following table illustrates barriers to receiving assistance

Could not get appointment	21%
Do not know place to go	43%
Help cost too much	7%
No one to care for children	7%
Could not find anyone to accept insurance	7%

Citizens were asked extensively about their arrangements and concerns regarding childcare. Most of the participants reported that they use friends or relatives to care for their children (30%). Hiring a babysitter in their own home (16%), licensed day care (16%) and preschool (15%) were also identified as care options. To a lesser extent, babysitters outside their homes (12%), day care from someone’s home (8%) and Head Start (6%) were listed

For those who did not list one of the above answers, the majority had a stay at home parent as a fulltime caregiver.

Randomly selected citizens who had one or more children reported:

Do you use any of the following to care for your child?

	Yes	No	NR/DK
Licensed Daycare Center	16%	83%	1%
Day care run from someone’s home	8%	91%	1%
Head Start program	6%	93%	1%
Preschool	15%	84%	1%
Friend or relative	30%	68%	2%

Babysitter in your home	16%	83%	1%
Babysitter outside your home	12%	85%	3%

If no to the above what person or organization provides care?

Parent is full-time caregiver	79%
Other	9%
No Response	12%

Participants to the survey identified some problems with childcare. Almost a third, 27%, reported finding affordable childcare as either a minor problem or a major problem. Similarly, many (26%) identified finding childcare for children with special needs as a problem. Finding childcare convenient to their home or work was a problem for 23 % of the participants, while finding quality childcare was a minor or major problem for 10%. Transportation to and from the childcare facility was identified as a problem by 17% of the participants.

In thinking about your childcare how do you rate the following as problems?

	No Problem	Minor Problem	Major Problem
Finding quality child care facilities	80%	11%	9%
Finding child care for children with special needs	74%	12%	14%
Finding affordable child care facilities	73%	11%	16%
Finding child care convenient to your home/work	75%	11%	14%
Transportation to and from the child care facility	83%	10%	7%

Many parents without adequate options are forced to leave young children at home without adult supervision. Parents in the survey were asked if during the last month, if they left their child alone or with a sibling under the age of 13. Eight percent reported leaving their child alone while seven percent reported leaving their child with a sibling under the age of 13.

During the last month did child take care of self or stay home alone with sibling who is under 13 years old on a regular basis even for a small amount of time?

Yes, alone	8%
Yes, with brother/sister	7%
Yes, both	0
No	85%

Childcare is very expensive and parents often must seek assistance in paying for it. Many individuals surveyed reported that they received financial assistance from their employer (26%). Other forms of assistance in paying for childcare were family or friends (16%), public assistance (14%), and other forms of assistance (14%).

Do you get any assistance in paying for childcare from public service agencies, employers, family or friends?

Public service agency (including government)	14%
Employer	26%
Family or friends	16%
Other	14%
Don't Know/No Response	30%

Citizens' Perspectives: Qualitative Data

Citizens in the Community Listening Sessions felt that parents needed more information on how to raise children effectively. Parent involvement in children's schooling was also cited as a need. In some counties, participants felt that more family-oriented activities were needed overall, and specifically suggested that more parks should be developed. Finally, poverty brought on by lack of jobs or low wages was cited as an area of need for families.

Part IV. Key Informants' Perspectives

Part IV. Key Informant Perspectives contains some of the findings from the survey of Key Informants and also the nine focus groups with some of these people. Key Informants are community leaders who can draw on their experiences in the community. For more detailed information about the responses from Key Informants, the reader should consult survey results and qualitative data contained in the appendices of this report.

Key Informants were asked about the issues and concerns of families in their communities and also about the adequacy of resources for those families. Of the issues confronting families, most reported that finding childcare for children with special needs and affordable childcare facilities for all children is an issue challenging families today (83% each). Finding quality childcare was reported as a problem by 71% of Key Informants. Transportation to and from childcare (75%) and temporary shelter for families (74%) was also reported as major challenges. Finding supervised after school programs (71%), summer programs (67%) and affordable extracurricular activities (63%) were reported as major problems as well. Finding affordable medical assistance for children was reported as a major problem by 61% of those surveyed.

With regard to the adequacy of resources for families, almost all of the Key Informants indicated that families need more information on how to best raise health children (95%). Ninety percent of the Key Informants indicated that families need more help from social service agencies on parenting and childcare arrangements. Participants also identified that families were not using available resources because of barriers and that families were reluctant or felt it unnecessary to seek assistance (82%) each.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
Find quality child care facilities is a major challenge	24%	47%	16%	5%	8%
Finding child care for children with special needs is a major challenge	51%	32%	7%	2%	8%
Finding affordable child care facilities is a major challenge	39%	44%	9%	2%	7%
Finding supervised after-school activities is a major challenge	31%	40%	20%	2%	7%
Finding summer programs for children is a major challenge	25%	42%	24%	2%	7%
Finding adequate transportation to/from childcare facility is a major challenge	27%	48%	13%	1%	10%
Finding affordable extracurricular activities for children is a major challenge	23%	40%	27%	5%	6%
Finding affordable medical assistance for children is a major challenge	22%	39%	30%	4%	5%
Finding temporary shelter for families with children is a major challenge	34%	40%	14%	1%	11%
Families need more information on how to best raise healthy children	55%	40%	3%	1%	2%
Families need more readily available help from the social services agencies on parenting, and childcare arrangements	53%	37%	7%	1%	2%
Families can't seem to get the services that are available to them because of a variety of barriers	38%	44%	13%	0	0
Families are reluctant or feel it unnecessary to seek outside help when it comes to raising their children and arranging childcare opportunities	39%	43%	10%	2%	5%

Key Informants were asked about the availability and accessibility of services to help individuals cope with personal crises. Key Informants said that assistance with severe financial crisis was unavailable or difficult to access (41%), or only somewhat available or accessible (38%). Similarly, many reported that help with dealing with a disabling injury was only somewhat available and accessible (51%) or altogether unavailable and difficult to access (27%). Key Informants found that dealing with a death in the family and serious physical illness also presented availability and accessibility problems for many (70% and 76% respectively) being only somewhat or not at all available. Sixty-nine percent found that assistance with divorce or separation was only somewhat or not at all available. Help with other temporary crisis was reported as only somewhat available by 40% and unavailable and inaccessible by 28%.

Rating the availability and accessibility of services in your community for people experiencing the following conditions:

Life Experiences	Highly Available & Accessible	Somewhat Available & Somewhat Accessible	Unavailable & Difficult to Access	Don't Know or No Opinion
Divorce or separation	8%	49%	20%	23%
Serious physical illness	11%	51%	25%	12%
Death in the family	11%	50%	20%	19%
Disabling injury	7%	51%	27%	16%
Severe financial crisis	5%	38%	41%	17%
Other temporary crisis	3%	40%	28%	29%

Key Informant Perspectives: Qualitative Data

Participants in the Key Informants' Sessions felt that more information needed to be available to parents, particularly younger parents, to help them in raising children. In several counties, key Informants expressed concern over the impact on families resulting from by domestic abuse, substance abuse, and poverty resulting from the lack of good paying jobs.

Part V. Findings and Conclusions

- **Indicators of Financial Security**

- Families in Poverty

Poverty rates in 12CR exceed state levels by about 36%. Families living at or below poverty are faced with many challenges to their health and well-being.

- **Indicators of Quality of Childcare**

- Licensed Childcare

The state has licensed care facilities that accommodate care for 18% more of the children aged 0-13 than the capacity of facilities in the 12CR. The fact remains that less than 20% of the child population (0-13) can benefit from licensed quality care environments. These numbers illustrate the priority for increasing the number of licensed childcare providers statewide.

- Subsidized Childcare

Up to 29% of citizens described affordability of childcare as a significant barrier. Almost 5% (4.9%) of the families in the 12CR receive subsidized childcare in the 12CR.

- **Indicators of Social and Emotional Wellness of Families**

- Domestic Violence

In three of the counties in the 12 CR, children are living in family violence shelters at a rate greater than the state rate of 2.8 per 1,000. [Nueces (4.4 per 1,000), Brooks (3.3 per 1,000) and Refugio (3.5 per 1,000)].

- Emotional Crises: Death in the Family

Respondents indicated that families often rely on family members to help them through an emotional crisis such as the death of a family member. Key Informants' responses supported archival data that there are approximately 14.4% fewer professional counselors for families to visit per 100,000 in the 12CR than in the state's overall population. Professional counselors may be needed to assist individuals in coping with loss.

- **Indicators of Family Structure**

- Single Parent Families

The rate of single parent households is 11.4% greater for the 12CR than the state average.

- Two Parent Families

The percentage of families that are married couples in the region is similar to the percentage in the state.

- Foster Care

The rate of foster care for children in the 12 CR is consistent with state rates. However, Brooks County has a foster parent rate that is more than three times the state average and the rate in Kleberg County is more than twice the state rate.

- The Divorce Rates

The ratio of divorces to marriages in the region is similar to that of the state. The rate of 50% is clearly an issue for the state as a whole.

- Intergenerational Family Support Structures: Grandparents raising children.

Many families in 12CR take advantage of intergenerational living arrangements to support their child rearing efforts. A greater percentage of grandparents are responsible for care of children in 12CR than at the state level.