impact report

How Do We Measure Caring?

Index Quantifies Dane County's Efforts to Care for the Community

The United Way State of Caring Index measures the caring and compassion of Dane County by tracking how well we are doing at meeting the needs of all of our community members. Consisting of 35 social, economic and health indicators, the Index is an excellent source of information about vital quality of life issues.

The Index tracks indicators in 7 key areas:

- Education and Youth
- Safe and Strong Community
- Self-Reliance and Independence
- Financial Well-being
- Health
- Safety Net Services
- Civic and Volunteer Engagement

The areas and indicators were chosen based on advice from experts in the field as well as community input regarding what makes a community a great place to live. Each indicator tells us something about the well-being of our community.

Why should you care about the Index?

The Dane County State of Caring Index is a tool that helps us understand the issues facing Dane County and our community members. It shows where we are having our greatest successes and where more effort is needed. It is useful for planning by community organizations, neighborhood associations and service clubs.

If you are applying for funding from local or national sources, it gives you information regarding key physical and social health indicators. If you are looking for a way to track program success, you may want to consider identifying one or more of these indicators against which to track your participants.

To see the complete State of Caring Index and follow the progress of one or more of the 35 indicators of community well-being, please visit the United Way of Dane County website at www.uwdc.org and click on xxxxxxx.

Staff Contact: XXXXXX

2059 Atwood Avenue
Madison, WI 53704
(608) 246-4350
FAX (608) 246-4349
www.uwdc.org

United Way

United Way of Dane County

Reports of Elder Abuse and Neglect

Incidences per 1,000 senior residents
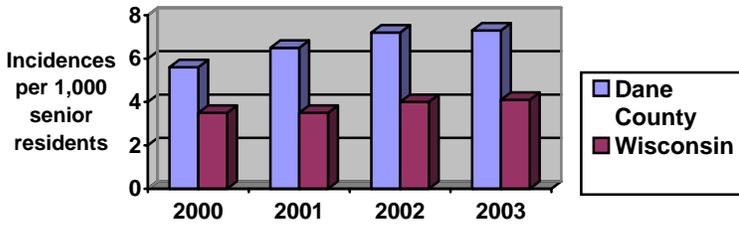
Source – WI Department of Health and Family Services

An Example –

Tracking indicators like the elder abuse and neglect rate can help United Way and our partners identify where we need to put our efforts. Not only is the rate of substantiated reports of abuse and neglect increasing in Dane County, it is higher than the state average and is increasing at a faster rate than statewide reports.
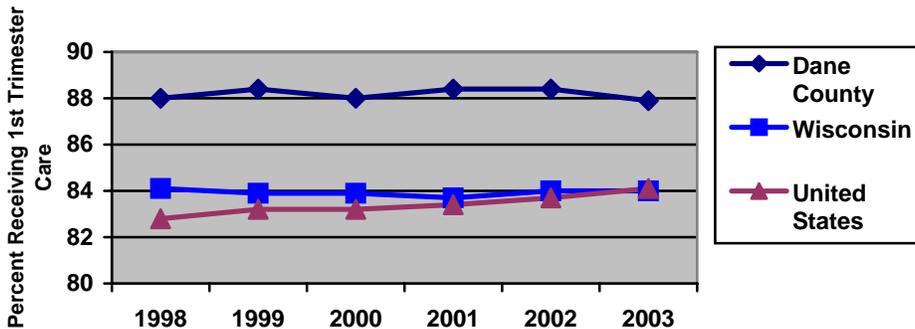
Does this indicator mean we have more of a problem than the rest of the state?
Maybe, and we need to examine it further. While it could mean that our seniors are facing more difficulties than in the rest of Wisconsin, it could also mean that social workers and law enforcement are doing a better job of identifying and reporting elder abuse and neglect.
Either way, this indicator tells us that we need to take a closer look. That closer look will tell United Way and its partners what steps we need to take to make sure fewer seniors in Dane county are victims of abuse and/or neglect.

In Dane County, We Care about Results

Mothers Receiving Prenatal Care in the 1st Trimester

Source - WI Department of Health and Family Services
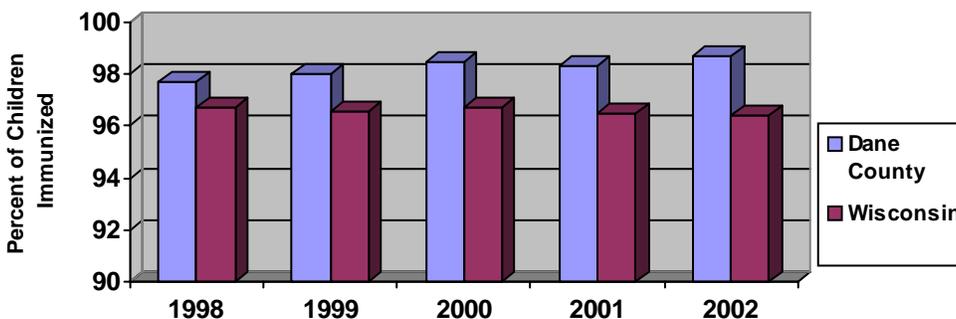
Children with Age Appropriate Immunizations

Source - WI Department of Health and Family Services

Preventative care, both prenatal and in early childhood, impacts the health of our children. Two of the best indicators that identify effective preventative measures are early prenatal care and appropriate childhood immunizations.

The earlier an expectant mother gets pre-natal care, the more likely she will deliver a healthy baby. And children who are properly immunized are much less at-risk for serious childhood illnesses that could cause them to miss school or develop serious complications. These indicators track important building blocks for healthy children and a healthy community.
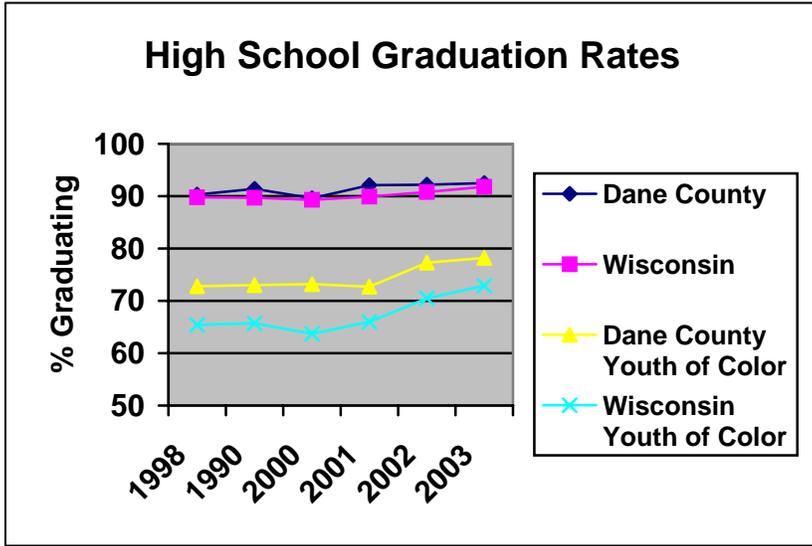
community matters

Getting the Whole Picture

High School Graduation Rates

% Graduating (y-axis: 50, 60, 70, 80, 90, 100)

x-axis: 1998, 1990, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003

Legend:
- Dane County
- Wisconsin
- Dane County Youth of Color
- Wisconsin Youth of Color

Source - Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

The State of Caring Index shows us different stories for different segments of our community. Dane County boasts high school graduation rates that are consistently at or above 90%. It's an accomplishment of which we should be proud.

However, within that indicator lies a significant number of our children who are not succeeding. Children of color in Dane County are graduating at a rate 15-20 points lower than their white counterparts. Indicators for the State of Caring Index were chosen to make sure we are examining the big picture as well as caring about the different segments of the community that make up Dane County.

Hourly Wage Needed to Rent a 2-Bedroom Apartment

Required Wage in $ (y-axis: 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16)

x-axis: 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004

Legend:
- Dane County
- Wisconsin
- United States
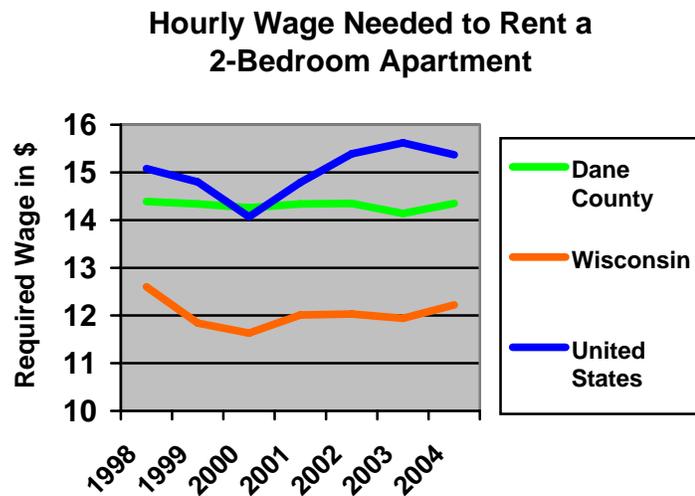
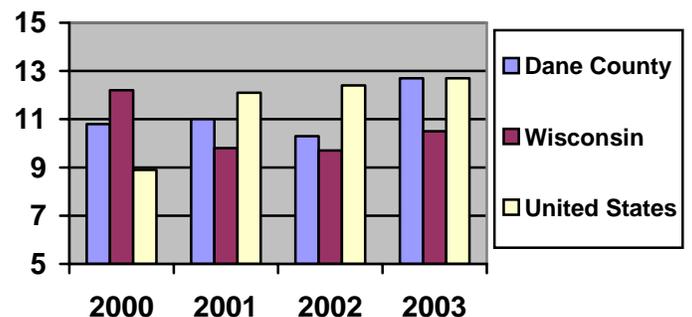Source - National Low-income Housing Coalition

United Way and its partners are committed to reducing homelessness. Instead of just examining the number of people in homeless shelters to determine progress, United Way realizes that progress in reducing homelessness can best be understood by examining several factors that can lead to homelessness. Indicators such as income to rent ratio, poverty level and fair market rental rates are all important indicators in identifying whether or not local housing is affordable for our community members.

United Way of Dane County and the Housing in Action Leadership Team are focused on serving families and developing strategies to improve their financial stability.

% of Renters Paying More than 30% of Income for Rent

(y-axis: 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55)

x-axis: 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003

Legend:
- Dane County
- Wisconsin
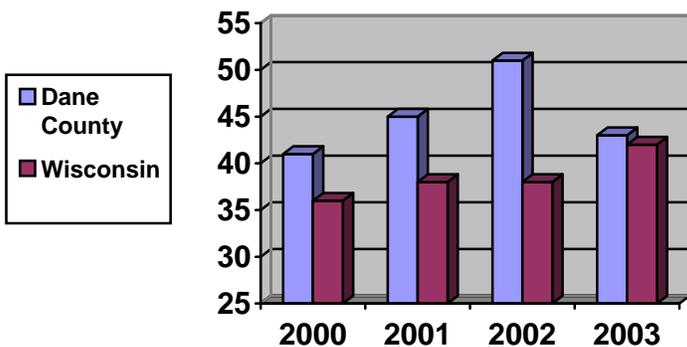
Source - US Census Bureau - American Community Survey

% of Population Below Poverty Level

(y-axis: 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15)

x-axis: 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003

Legend:
- Dane County
- Wisconsin
- United States

Source - US Census Bureau - American Community Survey

Dane County is Always Changing

United Way and our partners examine what is changing in Dane County. Indicators may move up or down from year to year, but we look for trends that show conditions are improving or worsening.

The following indicators are all showing improvement:
- Percentage of youth graduating from high school
- Percentage of youth of color graduating from high school
- Percentage of youth scoring at a proficient or higher level on the state 3rd grade reading test
- Percentage of 8th grade students scoring at or above proficient on state math test
- Number of students per licensed staff person in schools
- Rate of violent crimes
- Property crime rate
- Juvenile violent crime rate
- Juvenile property crime rate
- Adult drug arrests
- Juvenile drug arrests
- Domestic violence
- Child abuse and neglect rate
- Driving under the influence arrest rate
- Percentage of children in grades K-12 with appropriate immunizations
- Seniors and people with disabilities living at nursing facilities
- Percentage of eligible people who are on the waiting list to receive the Community Options and Medical Assistance waiver programs
- Voter participation
- Percentage of residents owning their home

Some indicators are staying relatively static – not getting better or worse:
- Percentage of adults who have no health insurance
- Expectant mothers receiving prenatal care in the first trimester
- Teen birth rate
- Percentage of residents who exercise
- Percentage of residents who smoke
- Percentage of residents who are obese
- Percentage of people in Dane County who are homeless
- Percent of median income needed to buy a median priced home

Unfortunately, there is a lot of work that still needs to be done. The following indicators are worsening:
- Hourly wage needed to rent a 2-bedroom apartment
- Percentage of renters paying more than 30% of their income for rent
- Individuals turned away from homeless shelters without shelter
- Percentage of population living below poverty level
- Number of households utilizing food pantries
- Unemployment rate
- Elder abuse and neglect rate
- Percentage of income given to charity