Community-Level Data

March 2024 to February 2025

At United Way of Dane County, accurate data helps us make informed decisions about the state of our community — and keep track of change over time. Using the same data consistently across the organization helps us maintain a clear message about United Way of Dane County and our impact.

Dane County population *(individuals)*: 559,891[1]

59,287 people are experiencing poverty in Dane County (10.9% of total population).[2]

74% of Camp Randall could be filled with people experiencing poverty in Dane County.[3]

By Race and Ethnicity: White: 9.0%; Black or African American: 21.9%; American Indian and Alaska Native: 13.6%; Asian: 19.3%; Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander: 2.9%; Some Other Race: 18.6%; Two or More Races 16.2%; Hispanic or Latino: 16.1%

2,615 children under 5 (8.9%) are experiencing poverty in Dane County.[4]

Over 872 red wagons could be filled with children under 5 experiencing poverty in Dane County.[5]

By Race and Ethnicity: White: 3.5%; Black or African American: 35.1%; Asian: 10.3%; Some Other Race: 8.3%; Two or More Races 20.4%; Hispanic or Latino: 21.8%[6]

2.3%[7] of individuals 16 years or older are experiencing unemployment in Dane County.[8]

Overall unemployment has decreased by nearly 50% since 5 years ago; however, unemployment among Black people and American Indian and Alaska Native people in Dane County is over twice as high as the overall rate (at 4.6% and 9.7%, respectively).[9]

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624 individuals (including 60 families) were experiencing acute homelessness in 2023.[10]

Homelessness has decreased by 11% from last year but increased by 2% from 5 years ago.

Black or African American people make up over 40% of those experiencing homelessness in Dane County despite composing 5.0% of the population.

Only 94.6% of students graduate from high school in Dane County (5,176 of 5,473) (6 year cohort).[11]

By Race and Ethnicity: White: 97.4%; Black or African American: 81.5%; Asian: 96.1%; Hispanic or Latino: 89.6%; Two or More Races: 92.9%[12]

Only 42.6% of third grade students in Dane County are reading at grade level proficiency.[13]

46 school buses could be filled with third grade students who are reading at "basic" or "below basic" levels.[14]

By Race and Ethnicity: White: 54.5%; Black or African American: 8.8%; Asian: 56.4%; Hispanic or Latino: 16.9%; Two or More Races: 33.2%[15]

6.9% of babies were born at low birth weight in Dane County.[16]

This represents an 8% decrease from the past year.

By Race and Ethnicity: White: 5.9%; Black or African American: 14.1%; Hispanic or Latino: 7.3%; Laotian or Hmong: 7.5%; Other: 5.9%; Two or More Races: 8.2%

Nearly 1 in 25 people do not have health insurance in Dane County (3.7%, or 20,468 out of 555,855).[17]

By Race and Ethnicity: White: 2.8%; Black or African American: 6.8%; American Indian or Alaska Native: 10.5% Asian: 3.4%; Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander: 0.0%; Some Other Race: 22.4%; Two or More Races: 7.7%; Hispanic or Latino: 15.2%

Life expectancy is nearly 10 years shorter for Black or African American and American Indian or Alaska Native people than the overall average.[18]

Overall: 81.4 years. By Race and Ethnicity: American Indian or Alaska Native: 72.7 years; Asian: 88.6 years; Black or African American: 72.6 years; Hispanic or Latino: 85.4 years; White: 81.7 years

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Whenever we present data disaggregated by race and ethnicity internally or externally, it is essential that this data is properly contextualized. **When we see disparities by race and ethnicity in education, income and health outcomes, we are seeing the result of systemic racism** (happening at institutional, cultural and interpersonal scales), **not placing blame or assuming cultural or group-based deficits.**

United Way of Dane County

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The Power of Many. **Working for All.**

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Community-Level Data Footnotes

If you need more detailed data points than included in this document, please refer to the full Community-Level data document or reach out to Lindsey *(lindsey.gearin@uwdc.org)*.

1   2018-2022 US Census American Community Survey, 5 year estimates, Table S0101.

2   2018-2022 US Census American Community Survey, 5 year estimates, Table S1701.

3   Based on a seating capacity of 80,321.

4   2018-2022 US Census American Community Survey, 5 year estimates, Table S1701.

5   Assuming 3 children per wagon.

6   2018-2022 US Census American Community Survey, 5 year estimates, Table B17001A, B17001B, B17001C, B17001D, B17001E, B17001F, B17001G, B17001I.

7   Of 460,930 total individuals who are considered part of the civilian labor force in Dane County.

8   2018-2022 US Census American Community Survey, 5 year estimates, Table S2301.

9   2018-2022 US Census American Community Survey, 5 year estimates, Table S2301; comparison made using 5 year estimates from 2013-2017.

10 Data from Annual Point in Time Count conducted by the Homeless Services Consortium of Dane County; This year's count was conducted in January 2023. The Point in Time Count involves counting people in emergency shelter in Dane County alongside unsheltered people who are spending the night outside, in a car, or in another place unsuitable for human habitation. The point in time count is a snapshot of people who are homeless on a single night; consequently, it under-represents the number of people who experience homelessness in Dane County throughout a given year. Additionally, the point in time count does not include people who are living "doubled up" with friends or family or who are living in hotels or motels, as these people do not meet the HUD's criteria for being considered homelessness during a Point in Time count.

11 Data from 2021-2022 School Year, Department of Public Instruction WiseDash, HS Completion for 6 year (2020) cohort, calculated by UWDC, *https://wisedash.dpi.wi.gov/Dashboard/dashboard/17880*; Dataset excludes Online Only Schools within Dane County school districts. Percentage calculated by taking the number of graduates as a subset of the total cohort of students.

12 WiseDash suppresses small data points for privacy reasons, meaning that students of marginalized groups are often hidden from smaller or less diverse districts. Consequently, the count of racial and ethnic groups is not fully representative of students in Dane County, and marginalized students are much more likely to be underrepresented numerically. The redaction of small data points accounts for 3.2% (174 out of 5,473) of students in this cohort. The HS completion rate of the redacted group is 93.7%.

13 2022-2023 School Year, Department of Public Instruction WiseDash, Forward Test (English Language Arts), calculated by UWDC, *https://wisedash.dpi.wi.gov/Dashboard/dashboard/19948*.

14 Based on an average capacity of 70 students.

15 WiseDash suppresses small data points for privacy reasons, meaning that students of marginalized groups are often hidden from smaller or less diverse districts. Consequently, the count of racial and ethnic groups is not fully representative of students in Dane County, and marginalized students are much more likely to be underrepresented numerically. The redaction of small data points accounts for 8.0% (427 out of 5308) of students in this cohort. The proficiency rate of the redacted group is 31.6%.

16 Wish Query: Low Birthweight Module, Wisconsin Department of Health Services, data from 2021: *https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/wish/lbw/form.htm*; Low birth weight is defined as less than 2,500 grams.

17 2018-2022 US Census American Community Survey, 5 year estimates, Table S2701; all percentages are a percentage of the total "civilian non-institutionalized population."

18 Data from HealthyDane, "Life Expectancy," source data from Conduent Healthy Communities Institute 2018-2020, last updated by HealthyDane in June 2022.