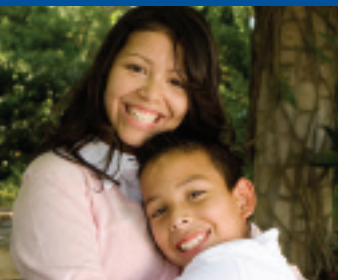


The State of the Community

Third Edition: December, 2008

Executive Summary



The State of the Community, Third Edition: Executive Summary

Since 2004, United Way of Greater Cincinnati has made available to the people of the Greater Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky region an important regional indicators report called *The State of the Community*. The third edition of that report was made available on December 10, 2008. It incorporates **36 high-quality, key indicators of the region's overall socio-economic health in the crucial areas of population, children and youth, educational attainment, health, the economy, and social relations**. Taken together, these indicators provide an overview of the socio-economic health of our region.

The region encompassed by the report has a population of more than 2.1 million people and includes Brown, Butler, Clermont, Hamilton, and Warren Counties in Ohio; Boone, Bracken, Campbell, Gallatin, Grant, Kenton, and Pendleton Counties in Kentucky; and Dearborn, Franklin and Ohio Counties in Indiana.

Since the first edition of *The State of the Community*, leaders from our community's civic, non-profit, business, and governmental sectors have come together to frame an **action agenda** for the four core counties of Southwest Ohio (Butler, Clermont, Hamilton, and Warren). Known as **Agenda 360**, the effort is led by the Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber. It's hoped that, by 2020, this initiative will transform Cincinnati USA into a leading metropolitan region for talent, jobs and economic opportunity for all who call the region home. As this agenda emerges, it is being aligned with **Vision 2015**, a similar initiative already well developed in Northern Kentucky. United Way is a partner in both these important community transformation efforts and we have added to the third edition of the report five new indicators with high relevance to both movements: **Old-Age Dependency Ratio, High-Tech Jobs, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Degrees, Water Quality, and Solid Waste**.

For the first time, we offer a well-developed indicator of **Intergroup Relations**. The third edition continues to carry three indicators as placeholders: **Early Childhood School Readiness, Grade-Level Assessment Tests (4th and 8th grade) and High School Graduation**. The United Way challenges our community and our states to develop data that will meet standards of validity and reliability and allow for regional comparability.

We believe the data in the report show that **our region as a whole continues to be generally strong and moving in the right direction**. Reviewing the 23 indicators for which there are trend lines and national comparisons, we see that we are at or above national averages in 13 (57 percent).

We are strong in seven areas:

- Per Capita Income (especially in Hamilton County)
- Percent of Population in Poverty
- Housing Affordability
- Commute Time
- Violent Crime
- Murder Rate
- Percent of Workforce 20-35

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Category & Indicator	How Our Region Compares With National Averages		Our Region's Trend	
	2006 Report	2008 Report	2006 Report	2008 Report
Population:				
• Percent Population Change	At national average	At national average	Slightly positive	Slightly positive
• Race	Slightly below average	Slightly below average	_____	_____
• Ethnicity (Hispanic)	Below average	Below average	_____	_____
• Old Age Dependency Ratio	Not in 2006 report	At national average	Not in 2006 report	No change
Children & Youth:				
• Infant Mortality Rate	Worse	Worse	No change	Negative
• Low Birth Weight	At national average	At national average	No change	No change
• Early Childhood School Readiness	No national data	No national data	Not in 2006 report	Insufficient data to show trend
• Grade-Level Assessment Tests (Ohio)	No national data	No national data	Not in 2006 report	Insufficient data to show trend
• Grade-Level Assessment Tests (Kentucky)	No national data	No national data	Not in 2006 report	Insufficient data to show trend
• Grade-Level Assessment Tests (Indiana)	No national data	No national data	Not in 2006 report	Insufficient data to show trend
• High School Graduation Rates	<i>Placeholder</i>	<i>Placeholder</i>	<i>Placeholder</i>	<i>Placeholder</i>
Educational Attainment:				
• Years of Education for Persons 25+	At national average	At national average	No change	Slightly positive
• STEM Degrees Awarded	Not in 2006 report	No national data	Not in 2006 report	Insufficient data to show trend
Health:				
• Health Status Index SF-12	At national average	At national average	No change	No new data
• Underage Substance Abuse	No national data	No national data	Positive	Positive
• Percent of Adults Smoking	Worse	Worse	Positive	No new data
• Air Quality	No national data	No national data	No change	Slightly negative
• Water Quality	Not in 2006 report	No national data	Not in 2006 report	Insufficient data to show trend
• Solid Waste	Not in 2006 report	No national data	Not in 2006 report	Slightly negative
• Overweight or Obese	Slightly worse	Slightly worse	Negative	No new data
• Percent Uninsured	Incomplete national data	Incomplete national data	Negative	No new data
• Lack of Access to a Regular Health Care Provider	Incomplete national data	Incomplete national data	Negative	No new data

Category & Indicator	How Our Region Compares With National Averages		Our Region's Trend	
	2006 Report	2008 Report	2006 Report	2008 Report
Economy:				
• Business Starts	No national data	No national data	No change	Positive
• High-Tech Jobs	Not in 2006 report	Slightly worse	Not in 2006 report	No change
• Percent of Job Gain or Loss	Slightly worse	Slightly worse	Positive	Negative
• Percent of Workforce 20-35 Years Old	Slightly worse	Slightly better	Slightly negative	Slightly positive
• Per Capita Income	Better	At national average	Positive	Positive
• Unemployment Rate	Slightly worse	Slightly worse	No change	No change
• Percent of Population in Poverty	Slightly better	Slightly better	Slightly negative	Slightly negative
• Housing Affordability Ratio	Better	Better	No new data	No new data
Social Relations:				
• Average Commute Time	Better	Better	No change	No change
• Residential Segregation	Worse	Worse	No new data	No new data
• Intergroup Relations	Placeholder in 2006 report	Better	Placeholder in 2006 report	Insufficient data to show trend
• Violent Crime	Better	Better	Slightly positive	No new data
• Non-violent Crime	Slightly worse	Slightly worse	No change	No new data
• Murder Rate	Better	Better	Slightly positive	No new data
• Juvenile Crime	No national data	No national data	Negative	Positive
• Voting	Better	Better	Positive	No new data

The State of the Community, Third Edition: Executive Summary *continued*

In 2008, the region's trend is positive for 11 of the 27 indicators (41 percent) for which trendable local data are available and for which there is an agreed-upon desired trend direction – with seven indicators showing no change. Three measures are newly constructed and lack year-over-year data sufficient to determine a trend direction. Summarizing the measures in table form provides a useful overview.

While Greater Cincinnati shows strength as a region in some areas, we have much work to do as a community. We are worse than the national average on eight of 23 indicators (35 percent) for which there are comparable local and national data and a generally agreed-upon desired trend direction:

- Infant Mortality Rate
- Percent of Adults Smoking
- Obesity/Overweight – *slightly worse*
- High-Tech Jobs – *slightly worse*
- Percent of Change in Number of Jobs – *slightly worse*
- Unemployment Rate – *slightly worse*
- Residential Segregation
- Non-violent Crime – *slightly worse*

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The trend line is going in the wrong direction on nine indicators:

- Overweight or Obese
- Infant Mortality
- Percent of Job Gain or Loss
- Percent Uninsured
- Lack of Access to Regular Health Care Provider
- Percent of Population in Poverty
- Housing Affordability
- Solid Waste
- Air Quality

And, as in many metropolitan areas, our region's urban core lags behind the rest of the region in many indicators for which City of Cincinnati data are available.

There are three key premises that underlie *The State of the Community* report:

1. That our region is a place with outstanding social, economic and environmental assets and has the potential to be one of the premiere regions in the country;
2. That we can realize our region's full potential if we join together to solve its problems and build on its assets; and
3. That, to solve those problems, we must be willing and able to track critical measures of our social and economic health over time – as a way to assess the effectiveness of our community improvement strategies.

United Way offers *The State of the Community* as a significant contribution to this work. We are pleased to have been able to reshape the report to serve as the principal data resource of Agenda 360 and Vision 2015. We will continue to give those two efforts our full support as they mobilize residents to work together to make our metropolitan region one of the best in the country, with a high quality of life for all who call it home.

We are deeply indebted to the United Way Research Council and its chair, Dr. James Votruba, president of Northern Kentucky University, for their hard work in conceptualizing and creating this report. The names and organizational affiliations of the talented members of the Council appear on page 6 of the full report. Likewise, we are grateful for the support given by the Community Research Collaborative – a research partnership of United Way and University of Cincinnati's Institute for Policy Research – to this and many other United Way research projects. Dr. Eric Rademacher, Dr. Kimberly Downing, Mark Carrozza, and their colleagues at the Community Research Collaborative have assembled most of the data supporting the indicators and have helped the Research Council in its work of interpretation. We are grateful for the ongoing staff support for the United Way Research Council and *The State of the Community* report effort provided by Terry Grundy, director, community impact. Additional valuable help in creating and publishing the report is provided by United Way of Greater Cincinnati's Marketing Team.

We appreciate your support of United Way and your interest in *The State of the Community* and look forward to working with you to make the quality of life in our region as high as it can be for all of our fellow citizens. **To access *The State of the Community* report – the full report and additional indicators – online, go to <http://www.crc.uc.edu>.** For a print version of the report, please contact Deby Davis at United Way of Greater Cincinnati: (513) 762-7225 or deby.davis@uwgc.org.

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