



**2009**

**Community Assessment  
of the Needs of**

**Low Income Families  
and their Children,  
Youth, Adults & Seniors**

**in Hoboken**

**&**

**Neighboring Communities  
in Hudson County**

**for**

**HOPES Community**

**Action Partnership, Inc**

**December, 2009**



## Executive Summary

HOPES Community Action Partnership, Inc. (HOPES CAP, Inc.) is a 45 year old community action agency headquartered in Hoboken, New Jersey that serves the needs of the lowest income children, youth, families, adults, and seniors in Hoboken and neighboring communities in Hudson County. In response to these groups needs, HOPES CAP Inc. provides a broad range of services that are organized under several programs - an Early Childhood Program, Senior Services, Adult Services, Youth Services, and Community Assistance Services.

Every year HOPES CAP Inc. is required to assess the needs of the low income communities it serves by carrying out a community assessment, with a more in-depth community assessment carried out every third year. The purpose of this document is to share the results of the 2009 in-depth community assessment which identifies the current needs of low income residents, gaps in services, areas of greatest need as well as offers recommendations.

While many clients receiving HOPES services reside in Hoboken, there are a number of clients who reside in neighboring communities in Hudson County, specifically Jersey City, Union City, Weehawken, North Bergen, and West New York. This report would not be an accurate assessment of the needs of all clients HOPES serves without including information about Hudson County as well as Hoboken. Therefore, while this report focuses on the low income residents of Hoboken, it also strives to be inclusive of the needs of low income residents that HOPES serves in neighboring Hudson County communities.

Document content was developed based on data gathered and interpreted using a multi-faceted approach including in-depth focus groups, surveys, and interviews with over 300 HOPES clients, community residents, and community partners, and data gathered from HOPES archives and a range of third party sources including such sources as the Hoboken Board of Education, NJ Kids Count, Hudson County Clerk's Office, Census 2000 and 2005-2007 updates, the New Jersey Departments of Health and Human Services, Labor, Public Health, Education, the Office of Aging, Division of Youth and Family Services, and a wide range of community-focused reports from community services organizations working at local, regional, and state levels.

### **Major findings include the following:**

1. HOPES' clients and community partners view each of HOPES current programs as consistently providing high quality, in-depth services.
2. Low income families with children prioritized the following needs: infant and toddler care, extended child care, access to local medical and dental services, finding a job, job training, safety, food, affordable housing, and improved health care.
3. Low income adults prioritized the following needs: rental assistance, food, affordable housing, utilities assistance, more community service locations, job training, help dealing with government agencies, money management, career information and employment support services, and housing counseling.

4. Low income seniors prioritized the following needs: expanded senior transportation service, increased senior housing, assistance dealing with government and other agencies, access to nearby physicians and dentists who take NJ Family Care, rent money assistance, better medical insurance coverage, low cost food or food bank, utilities assistance, shopping assistance, and social visits in their homes.
5. After review of many documents and reports from both HOPES and 3<sup>rd</sup> party sources, and interviews, focus groups, and surveys of many clients, residents, community partners, resources and independent agents, the reasons for HOPES success can be summarized as follows. HOPES managers and staff: (1) have a consistent vision and mission; (2) define relevant, achievable goals; (3) employ clear, measurable, and well aligned objectives and activities; (4) follow through on analysis and evaluation protocols; (5) reflect a strong organizational structure, systems, and communication; (6) are skilled, capable, and dedicated; (7) have a strong work ethic and sense of purpose; (8) reflect consistent organizational messaging at every level; (9) are collaborative, flexible, responsible and open to new challenges with a “can do” attitude.

**Recommendations include the following:**

**Early Childhood Program**

1. Develop an infant/toddler care program.
2. Purchase needed medical equipment for childrens’ screenings.
3. Expand child care hours.
4. Offer sliding scale child care fees to families who don’t meet federal poverty standards.
5. Expand the Parenting Workshop Initiative.

**Senior Services**

1. Develop a senior homeless prevention initiative.
2. Develop an advocate position to support seniors.
3. Provide more transportation services to seniors..
4. Expand home visiting services.

**Adult Services**

1. Development of employment support services.
2. Increase the number of higher skill computer and business classes.

**Youth Services**

1. Collaborate on creation of a pre-teen/teens/youth career development initiative.

### **Community Assistance Services**

1. Explore providing medical transportation for families and non-senior adults.
2. Recruit, reward, and maintain a cooperating group of medical and dental professionals.
3. Offer innovative food preparation workshops to low income families.
4. Collaborate with local business people on creation of a business incubation initiative.
5. Establish more community services throughout the community.
6. Explore creation of a non-profit real estate development model for HOPES to manage for clients.

### **General Recommendations**

1. Expand efforts to develop a broad array of funding streams.
2. Enhance HOPES community communication process.
3. Develop new community partners based on their expertise, experience, and structure.
4. Increase the involvement of talented, invested volunteers

**\* Note.** A substantial effort was made to access the latest data whenever possible. Some data incorporated into this report was only available through 2008, such as from the US Census. Other data was available into 2009, such as from the US Department of Labor, real estate development companies, and Hudson County and Hoboken agencies. The full and up-to-date impact of the recession on low income people is not fully reflected in this report because of the understandable time delay many information sources require to gather, interpret and publish up-to-date, accurate data.

It is important to note that the current economic recession continues to devastate the lives of low income people and others in Hoboken and Hudson County. This recession, officially recognized as starting in December, 2007, has now lasted exactly 2 years and is considered the second worst in history. It should be kept in mind that even when the economy recovers, the results of the recession will be felt for years to come, and, as always, will most heavily affect low income people with the greatest needs. They will need more services and support from HOPES CAP Inc. in the coming years. HOPES' programs demonstrate that much can be achieved with and for low income people to help them significantly improve their lives despite challenging barriers.

## Acknowledgements

There were many individuals who contributed to the development of this report, and we thank them all. There are three main groups who made this report possible.

First, HOPES management, staff, and board provided excellent guidance, support, and contributions in a collaborative spirit. Working with the HOPES management team for several months enabled us to learn to see just how extensive their commitment is to deliver knowledgeable, caring services to their clients and communities. Their drive to continually self-improve their performance, knowledge base, and delivery of services is impressive.

We'd like to thank the following HOPES managers: **Ora Welch**, CEO and President; **Marisa Musachio**, Director of Program Operations; **Simona Ovanezian**, Director of Finance and Human Resources; **Joselyn Estevez-Vargas**, Director of Family and Children's Services; **Jessica Melendez**, Administrative and Human Resources Supervisor; **Barbara Panas**, Education Manager; **Evelyn Mercado**, Community Assistance Services Manager; **Lori Renshaw**, Family and Community Partnerships Manager; **Vivian Forgy**, Health and Nutrition Manager; **Yvette Ypelaar**, Mental Health and Disabilities Manager; **Ana Maresca**, Senior Programs Manager; **Ismael Acosta**, Information Systems Manager; **Robert Maisano**, Facilities Manager.

HOPES board members who contributed to this report include: **Florence Amato**; **Mike Cohen**; **Linda Erbe**; **Elizabeth Falco**; **Hovie Forman**; **Romella Haiyder**; **Suzanne Hetman**; **Dr. Sara Kalambur**; **Kenneth O'Neill**; **Frank Raia**; **Anna Rodney**; **Ella Rodriguez**; **Michelle Russo**; **George Schorr**.

Second, we'd like to thank the many representatives from HOPES' community partner organizations who provided invaluable insight as well as data. Their comments enabled a much more comprehensive story to be shared in this report.

Community Partners include: **Carmelo Garcia**, Executive Director, Hoboken Housing Authority; **Ed Benoit**, Executive Director, Dept of Health Human Services, Area Agency on Aging; **Ruben Ramos Jr.**, Assemblyman; **John Roslowski**, Former Superintendent of Schools, Hoboken Board of Education, currently Headmaster of St. Peter's Preparatory School, Jersey City; **Dana Berry**, President, Starting Points for Children; **Alice Lemire**, Education Director, Starting Points for Children; **Jessica Peters**, Director of Special Services, Hoboken Board of Education; **Giselle Rodriguez**, Preschool Intervention & Referral Team member (PIRT), Early Childhood Program, Hoboken Board of Education; **Carolyn Best**, PIRT School Psychologist, Preschool Intervention & Referral Team member (PIRT), Early Childhood Program, Hoboken Board of Education; **April Harris**, Director, In Jesus Name Charities; **Marianne Moore**, Executive Director, Hudson County Perinatal Consortium; **Grace Corpuz**, Division of Grants Management, PNC Bank Community Banking; **Dr. Vicki Barnett**, Community Mental Health Center, Hoboken University Medical Center; **Dr. Cecilia D'Elia**, private practitioner; **Dr. Elise Butkiewicz**, Hoboken Center for Family Health; **Craig Mainor**, Program Manager, Jubilee Center; **Dr. Michael Swerdlow**, Community Mental Health Center, Hoboken University Medical Center; **Latrenda Ross**, Employment Specialist, Urban League of Hudson County; **Lillian Hernandez**, CEO, Dress For Success; **Barbara Hines** Coordinator, Hoboken University

Health Center, Employee Assistance Program; **Patricia Drumgoole**, High School Social Worker, Hoboken Board of Education; **Manuel Iglesias**, Executive Director, Hoboken Family Planning; **Joyce Adams**, Marketing Consultant, Hudson County Cancer Coalition; **Bill Bullock**, Coordinator, Hudson County Cancer Coalition; **John Araneo**, President, Hoboken Rotary Club; **Stephanie Hottendorf**, City of Hoboken; **Sondra Freeman**, Liberty Health; **Mark Sales**, Barnes and Noble; **Suellen Newman**, The Hudson School; **Amy Hornbeck**, Tools of the Mind; **Helen Dao**, Program Manager, Prevent Blindness; **Barbara Marrs-Picinic**, RN, North Hudson Community Action Corporation; **Maria Llorente**, Supervisor, North Hudson Community Action Corporation; **Kenneth Prentiss**, Community Outreach Specialist, Family Support of Hudson County; **Juanita Howard**, Hudson County Representative, Housing & Community Development Network of NJ; **Ana Aguilar**, Probation Officer, Hudson County Probation Office; **Ben Lopez**, Director, Dept. of Family Services; **Cheryl B. Stowell**, Public Affairs Director, New Jersey SHARES; **Sarina Vega**, LIHEAP Director, PACO; **Susan Byrne**, Homeless Planning Coordinator, Hudson County Dept. of Health & Human Services; **Debbie Chapman**, SPEC Coordinator, Internal Revenue Services; **Tasha Persaud**, Outreach Worker, Hudson Health Center; **Louris Mikaeil**, Outreach Worker, Metropolitan Family Health Network; **Elizabeth Hemingway**, Mount Calvary Church; **Lucy Dexter** Bilingual Comm. Service Worker, Hoboken Senior Citizens Program; **Richard Ciandella**, Customer Service Representative, PSE&G; **Cheryl Miner**, Program Specialist, NJSHARES.

Third, a huge debt of gratitude is owed to the many clients and residents who took the time to share opinions in surveys, interviews, focus groups, and conversations. It was their input that ultimately ensured the veracity, durability and accuracy of this assessment.

Many thanks to all. May you put this report to good use.

Dave Snyder  
Community Assessment Team Leader

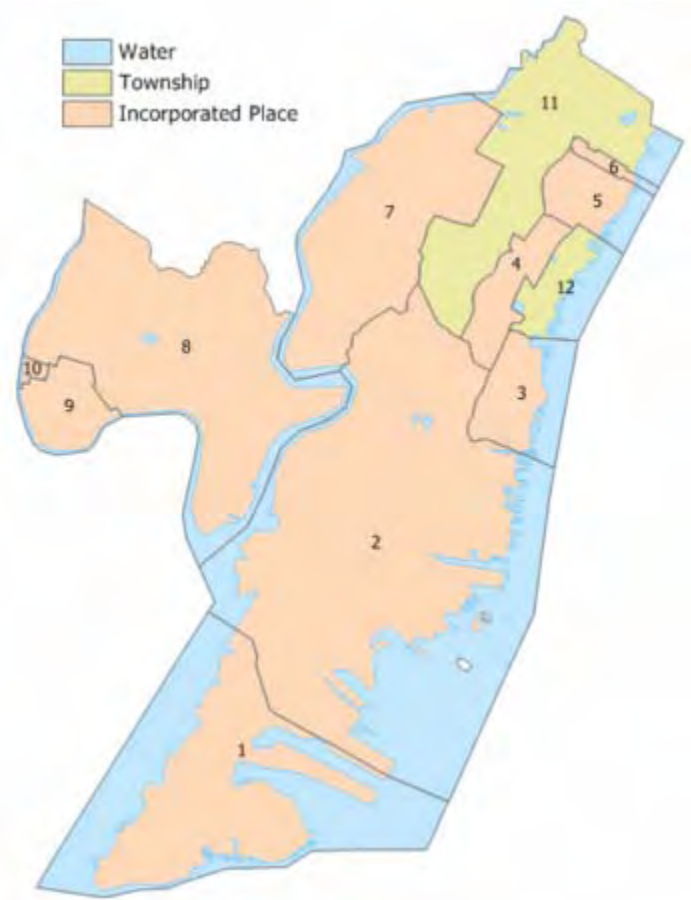
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**MAP OF HUDSON COUNTY MUNICIPALITIES**

(numbers below correspond to map at right)

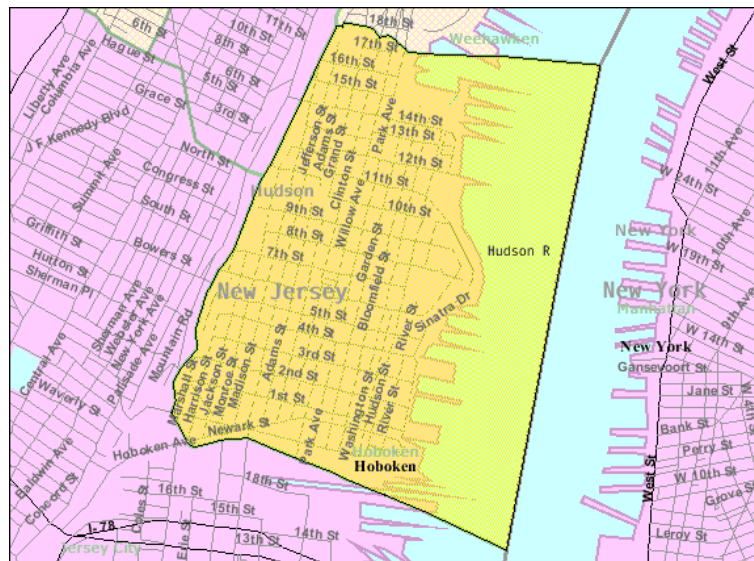
1. Bayonne (city)
2. Jersey City (city)
3. Hoboken (city)
4. Union City (city)
5. West New York (town)
6. Guttenberg (town)
7. Secaucus (town)
8. Kearny (town)
9. Harrison (town)
10. East Newark (borough)
11. North Bergen (township)
12. Weehawken (township)



**MAP of HUDSON COUNTY within STATE of NEW JERSEY**



**MAP OF HOBOKEN**



## **HOPES Community Action Partnerships, Inc.**

The *HOPES Community Action Partnerships, Inc.* (HOPES CAP, Inc.) was established as Hoboken's Community Action Program in 1964 and the HOPES Inc. Head Start Program was implemented in 1966. For the past 45 years, HOPES CAP, Inc. has been providing quality community services that respond to the current social, educational and training needs of Hudson County's low income community in an effort overcome barriers to economic self-sufficiency and fight the causes of poverty. These efforts have results in a variety of programs.

***Early Childhood Program (ECP)*** - The Early Childhood Program offers comprehensive services, including high quality early childhood development, nutrition, health, and social services, along with a strong parent involvement focus, to children 3 to 5 years of age and their families in Hoboken. The program offers Head Start (federally funded through the Agency for Children and Families, Region II) and Abbott Services (State funded through the NJ Dept. of Education) to approximately 300 children and families in four locations within Hoboken. HOPES' Early Childhood Program is accredited by The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

The program currently serves 307 children: 172 Head Start and 135 Abbott. The Early Childhood Program operates out of HOPES Rue site located at 301 Garden Street, which houses 3 classrooms. Other classrooms are also located at 3 schools throughout Hoboken, including the Conners site at 201 Monroe Street with 2 classrooms, the Calabro site located at 524 Park Avenue with 1 classroom, and the Brandt site located at 215 9th Street with 10 classrooms.

***Senior Services*** – Senior citizens participate in the programs listed below in an effort maintain self-sufficient lifestyles.

- ***Assisted Transportation Program*** The Assisted Transportation Program provides transportation to senior citizens to scheduled appointments that will enable Hoboken's elderly to maintain their self sufficiency. There are currently 266 individuals enrolled in the Assisted Transportation Program. This program is only for Hoboken residents.
- ***Senior Home Visiting Program*** provides homebound elderly with home visits, light housekeeping assistance and local errand services.
- ***Senior Information & Assistance Program*** offers one on one support to seniors who are interested in learning about various human service or entitlement programs available to them. Clients receive support understanding and completing applications. Follow up advocacy support is also made available.
- ***Senior Education Program*** offers seniors the opportunity to participate in recreational activities, workshops and classes. This program is specifically tailored to meet the interests and needs of Hudson County's senior citizens.

**Community Assistance Services** – Individuals are educated about entitlement programs and other services that they may qualify for and receive support with the application process. Examples of such programs include: Social Security, Medicaid, Medicare, Food Stamps, Low Cost Food Program, NJ SHARES, Verizon Life Line, United Water Cares, VITA, and NJ CEED.

**Adult Services** – This program assists individuals striving to achieve personal, educational and professional self-sufficiency and advancement through the following services:

- **Adult Classes** – Adult Basic Education, English as a Second Language, and Computer Literacy.
- **Employment Support Program** – Support is provided for obtaining and/or maintaining employment through Career & Skills Assessment, Adult Classes, Professional Development Workshops, and various Employment Activities.

**Youth Services** – Youth are provided a safe place to explore, learn and socialize during the school year and the Summer Computer Classes offered at the agency's computer labs. Both programs offer opportunities for youth to develop technological skills through innovative hands on learning experiences.

*In addition to the programs listed above, other social and educational services are also offered to the community through various collaborative grants HOPES CAP, Inc. has with the Hoboken Board of Education, Hoboken Family Planning, and the Hoboken Housing Authority.*

HOPES coordinates services with each program and facility through its management team, who meet on a regularly scheduled basis to discuss all issues, ensure clear objectives, and coordinate activities for all staff. A networked computer system links all HOPES staff and facilities, enabling seamless communication, up to date record keeping, and well-coordinated provision of services.

## **Methodology of Community Assessment Process**

### **PLAN, ORGANIZATION AND DESIGN**

HOPES CAP Inc. planned a community assessment strategy that would ensure a comprehensive process would be implemented. A team was assembled to support the development of the CA consisting of a consultant, HOPES senior managers, and HOPES program managers. Guidance for development of the CA was sought from members of the Policy Council, including a member from the Health Services Advisory Committee and the Education committee, members from the Parents Committee, Board members, and several specialists and managers from community partners deeply involved in providing services on a daily basis to HOPES targeted service group in Hoboken and Hudson County.

Representatives from the CA team met several times to discuss and plan community assessment goals, objectives, and content as well as identify resources that could provide useful insight into the communities' needs as well as emerging populations and groups.

A multi-phase methodology was established and agreed upon to ensure targeted goals would be achieved. An ad hoc group consisting of research, evaluation, and community specialists provided feedback on the planned methodology and assessment tools.

Meetings were held with HOPES' Family Advocates and Outreach staff who work closely with clients in order to gather information about client needs.

Internal data sources were identified, including but not limited to Program Information Reports, service area reports, agency information, enrollment forms, social services logs, childrens' health records, IEPs, minutes of advisory committees, survey results, self-assessment reports, and HOPES' goals and objectives report for 2008 - 2009.

Important external data sources were identified, including approximately 45 community partners who provide a range of services for family support, housing, child abuse prevention and protective, foster care, bi-lingual services, children with disabilities, homeless, mentoring, after-school care, health, education, intervention, enrichment, employment, transportation, and local government services. Board members were also targeted.

A strategy document was developed defining CA goals and information to be gathered for the community needs assessment. It was shared among key team members and advisory representatives; it was revised based upon feedback, finalized and approved.

### **DATA DESIGN and COLLECTION**

All relevant internal data for the CA was reviewed. Focus groups were planned, scheduled, and held with clients of each of HOPES' 3 current target groups – parents and guardians of pre-school children, seniors, and clients of all ages enrolled in HOPES. The goal was to gather information that would ensure the assessment process and tools would identify current priorities and needs of service groups, identify emerging groups and their needs, and identify gaps in services to these groups.

After each focus group, chosen clients were interviewed to gather further detailed information. Surveys were designed, reviewed and finalized for HOPES service groups, community partners and residents. Surveys incorporated both open-ended and close-ended questions to facilitate the gathering of a cross-section of both quantitative and qualitative data. The surveys' design ensured ease of completion while enabling the provision of important detail about their needs.

Finalized surveys were translated into Spanish, and both English and Spanish versions of the surveys were distributed by HOPES personnel to HOPES clients, community residents, and community partners. Surveys were also posted online ([www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com)) to enable those with access to computers to complete their survey online. Staff was available to help anyone who had problems completing the survey.

Completed surveys were collected by HOPES staff and returned for compilation and analysis. Survey completion rates met industry sampling standards to achieve a highly accurate 99% confidence level of accuracy based on a population size: 257 people provided completed surveys; 52 people participated in focus groups; and 63 people participated in in-depth phone interviews. Community partners who had developed their own needs assessment or similar reports were asked for a copy in order to include relevant data.

Surveys were organized by type (families with children, adults, seniors, community partners), and all responses on each survey were notated in spreadsheets. The results of quantifiable responses were totaled; qualitative responses and comments were individually notated in the spreadsheets. Data was then analyzed and interpreted for this report.

The assessment process provided the opportunity to share updated information about HOPES services and activities with community partners, representatives, clients, and residents. This CA process provided an excellent opportunity to reaffirm existing partnerships and also identify new community partners.

## Poverty in Hoboken and Hudson County

According to a press release by the United States Census on November 18, 2009, Hudson County had the highest poverty rate among New Jersey's 21 counties in 2008, regardless of decades of unprecedented growth on the waterfront. The release the U.S. Census Bureau's Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates went on to state that:

- Hudson County's poverty rate in 2008 was 14.9%, up from 13.9% in 2007;
- Hudson County's poverty level was 71% higher than the overall poverty level in New Jersey in 2008, which was 8.7%;
- Hudson County was one of the few counties in New Jersey that had a higher rate than the national average, which was 13.2%, a figure that is inclusive of areas across the country that were extremely hard hit by high unemployment rates;
- **about 87,700 Hudson County residents lived in poverty in 2008;**
- **Hudson County's poverty rate for residents under 18 years old was 23.7% in 2008, also the highest in the state.** That figure compared to a statewide poverty rate of only 12.3% for people under 18;
- **Hudson County's poverty rate for children between 5 and 17 years of age was 24% in 2008, again the highest in the state,** compared to a statewide poverty rate of 11% for children between 5 and 17 last year;
- **Hudson County's poverty numbers were the highest despite the county having a higher median income than four other counties in the state.**

The perception of Hoboken and Hudson County is often masked by: (1) the striking wealth of some of its residents, particularly those that live on the Hudson County waterfront; (2) the very high incomes of some resident professionals and business owners, and; (3) the high real estate values of properties in the area, particularly along the waterfront. But this perception, and the effect that this population has on some city and county statistics, belies the fact that there are many low income people with a range of needs who live in poverty in Hoboken, Jersey City, West New York, Union City, North Bergen, and other communities in Hudson County.

The 3 groups that by far represent poverty statistics are:

- **children under 18 years of age** (20.3% in Hoboken and 22.6% in Hudson County);
- **single female of households with related children under 18 years** (42.1 % in Hoboken and 34.3% in Hudson County);
- **seniors over 65 years** (26.7% in Hoboken and 16% in Hudson County).

According to county data in the "New Jersey Kids Count Pocket Guide 2008", **the percentage of poor children rose by five percentage points in Hudson County from 21% to 26%.**

## 2008 POVERTY RATES in HOBOKEN and HUDSON COUNTY

	Hoboken	Hudson County
Individuals below poverty level	10.3%	14.9%
Families below poverty level	8.9%	12.6%
- Families with related children under 18 years	12.4%	18.3%
- Families with related children under 5 years only	7.1%	12.8%
Married couple families	3.1%	7.2%
- Married couple families with related children under 18 years	4.4%	9.3%
- Married couple families with related children under 5 years only	3.9%	33.3%
Families with female householder, no husband present	27.5%	26.0%
- Families with female householder with related children under 18 years	42.1%	34.3%
- Families with female householder with related children under 5 years only	39.1%	33.3%
Under 18 years of Age Below Poverty Line	20.6%	23.2%
- Related children under 18 years	20.3%	22.9%
- Related children under 5 years	14%	21.4%
18 to 64 years	7.4%	11.8%
65 year of age or older	26.7%	16%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2008 American Community Survey, American FactFinder

## PROBLEMS and CAUSES of POVERTY in HOBOKEN and HUDSON COUNTY

The following are some of the main problems and causes of the cycle of poverty in Hoboken and Hudson County

1. **Disproportionate numbers of young children who are low income.** While children under 5 years of age comprise 6.2% of Hudson County and 3.2% of Hoboken, they comprise a much higher percentage of residents in poverty: 21.4% in Hudson County and 14% in Hoboken.
2. **Disproportionate percentage of families headed by female single head of household with children under 18 who are low income.** While female head of households with children under 18 years of age comprise only 9.0% of Hudson County and 3.3% of Hoboken, they comprise a much higher percentage of residents in poverty: 33.3% in Hudson County and 39.1% in Hoboken.
3. **Disproportionate number of seniors who are low income.** While adults 65 years or older comprise 9.1% of Hoboken and 11.4% of Hudson County, they comprise a higher percentage of those in poverty: 26.7% in Hoboken and 16% in Hudson County.

4. **High cost of child care.** Many low income families with young children need child care in order to work, attend classes, or participate in a training program, but the cost is difficult to afford for low income families. According to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation report, *Commission to Build a Healthier America*, in 2008, the annual cost for center-based infant care ranged from \$4,500 to \$14,600 across the United States; the annual cost of center-based care for a 4-year-old ranged from \$3,400 to \$10,800. Since the cost of living in New Jersey is higher than national figures, the cost range for child care in Hudson County is in the top range of costs. This cost was confirmed by a random sampling of 3 private day care centers in Hoboken, which averaged out to the following rates:
  - **age 6 Weeks – 18 Months** - part time: \$1040/month / full time: **\$1365/month**;
  - **age 19 Months – 37 Months** - part time: \$953/month / full time: **\$1235/month**;
  - **age 38 Months – Kindergarten** - part time: \$910/month / full time: **\$1125/month**.
5. **Varying quality of child care.** According to RWJ Foundation’s *Commission to Build a Healthier America*, child-care workers and early childhood educators are often inadequately trained and poorly compensated. Some child care workers are hired with little or no experience or training. Some aspiring child-care workers pursue the Child Development Associate Credential, either before they obtain a job in child care or at night while they work as child care workers during the day. This credential usually often requires 120 hours of CDA-approved classroom training within a 5 year period and can require up to 480 hours of supervised field work.

A recent report “*The State Of Family Child Care In New Jersey*” was carried out by the New Jersey Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies in partnership with The Child Welfare League of America. According to this report, inclusive of Hudson County and Hoboken:

- 18% of child care workers have completed some high school, 48% have a high school degree or GED, 14% have an associate degree and 20% have a bachelors degree or higher
  - 41% of child care workers reported a pretax annual wages of less than \$15,000
  - only 10% of child care workers reported earning over \$31,000 each year.
6. **Highly limited and affordable infant and toddler center care resources.** According to the study “*Partnerships for Quality: Improving Infant-Toddler Child Care for Low income Families* by Zero to Three and Mathematica Policy Research, not only is most infant-toddler care quality not good today, but there is an insufficient number of infant-toddler care slots. This is certainly true in Hudson County. According to Kids Count of New Jersey most recent report, there were 301 licensed child care centers in Hudson County with a capacity for 19,398 children. But the vast majority of these slots were for 3 to 4 year olds. Based on the population size of Hoboken and Jersey City, we estimate there are currently 139 child care centers with a capacity of 8,884 slots. Of these slots, there are fewer than 500 available for infants and toddlers in licensed child care centers in both cities even though there are over 5000 slots needed.

7. **Disproportionate number of families with two or more children who are low income.** The Legal Services of New Jersey Poverty Research Institute produced the document “*Hard Times Amid Prosperity: A Current Profile of Poverty in New Jersey*” a few years ago. This report indicated that: (1) there were a disproportionate number of families with 2 or more children in poverty in New Jersey; (2) families with 2 or more children had double the rate of poverty than families in poverty with 1 child (10.2% for 2 or more children compared to 4.6% for 1 child). In 2001 Hudson County had the highest level of poverty per resident in New Jersey (17.6%). **In 2009 Hudson County still has the highest level of poverty at 14.9%.**
8. **Lack of affordable housing.** Accessing affordable housing is a major problem for low income individuals in Hoboken and Hudson County. New Jersey is well known for its costly housing, including rentals. The Fair Market Rate (FMR) schedule of the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development states that New Jersey housing is some of the most expensive in the country. The cost of housing has increased steadily over the years throughout New Jersey, including Hudson County, and Hoboken has seen some of the highest rises in housing costs. Renting a private apartment or house is very costly for low income families. While the Census 2007 update reflects that the median rent for a one-bedroom unit averaged \$1,507 in Hoboken and \$973 in Jersey City, the following June, 2009 chart reflects the fact that a sampling of rents for 1 and 2 bedroom apartments throughout Hoboken are even higher.

<b><u>Examples of Hoboken Apartments for Rent 6/2009</u></b>	<b>Sq. feet</b>	<b>Bed- rooms</b>	<b>Bath- rooms</b>	<b>\$/mo.</b>
800 Bloomfield St.	500	1	1	\$1,600
Observer Park Apartments (Model 1A)	630	1	1	\$2,000
Juliana Luxury Apartment Homes (Model 1A)	856	1	1	\$2,000
Curling Club Apartments	1,000	2	2	\$2,300
1100 Adams St.	1,148	2	2	\$2,600

Source: Yahoo! Real Estate

9. **Limited education and skills for high skills market.** The economies of Hoboken and Hudson County are centered on the industries of finance, insurance, real estate, health care, education, and government. These industries require higher education and job skills. There are limited employment opportunities in these industries that match the skills of low income residents, who typically have low education and job skills. Low income residents have to commute further to find available jobs or re-locate to areas where there are jobs requiring their low skills. Between 2000 and 2008 Hoboken had a reduction of 9.9% in residents with either a high school diploma or less; Hudson County had a reduction of 8.3% in residents with less than a high school education.

10. **Low earning power.** Low income residents earn only enough to maintain a low income standard of living, but do not have jobs skills that would enable them to increase their income. According to a 2008 study carried out by Rutgers Center for Women and Work and New Jersey Policy Perspective, *Climbing the Ladder: How to Invest in New Jersey's Working Families*, despite being one of the nation's most affluent states, New Jersey is home to close to 200,000 families that have a working adult but still earn too little in pay and benefits to adequately support themselves. The study found that despite having an adult breadwinner, one in five working families in the state is low income, earning less than 200 percent of the federal poverty threshold. This study also found that the number of low income working families in the state has climbed by 16 percent since 2000, totaling about 750,000 mothers, fathers and children. Hudson County has one of the highest numbers of working poor, with over 18,000 families classified as working poor.
  
11. **Loss of jobs due to the recession.** Many low income residents are working poor; some work more than one job. The economic recovery has caused many residents in Hudson County to become unemployed. As of November, 2009, the Bureau of Labor Statistics indicated the unemployment rate was at 11.6 % in Hudson County – which is more than double since September 2007. This figure does not take into account the many residents: (1) who are still unemployed but no longer receive unemployment; or (2) who work “off the books” by doing work for hire on a “cash only basis” (i.e. housekeepers, clerks, sales people, day laborers with restaurants, landscapers, builders, etc.). These types of jobs are common among low income people with limited English skills, low education, low job skills, or illiterate. Because they work for cash, they do not qualify for unemployment and are difficult to track. But classically those who work “off the books” are among those who lose their job quickly in an economic recession.
  
12. **Children’s safety.** Families are concerned for their children’s safety in areas of Hudson County where drugs, gangs, and criminal activities occur. This issue is a particular concern for those parents who have to be away from home when their children are home, i.e. latch key children. Parents are concerned about these negative influences on their children and the danger of “the street”. Based on the Safety in Community 2006 crime report, in Jersey City there were 11,741 reported crimes, averaging 1 crime for every 20 residents, and in Hoboken 1,633 crimes averaging 1 crime for every 24 residents. Hudson County averaged 24,084 crimes in 2000. Between 2007 and 2008 violent crime decreased but non-violent crime increased. A 2007 New Jersey State Police study of gang culture found that there was a gang presence in many communities, including in Hoboken and every neighboring community in Hudson County, with a substantial presence in Jersey City.

13. **Limited access to local medical and dental professionals.** A number of neighborhood physicians and dentists in Hoboken and Hudson County do not accept government sponsored vouchers or payments for their services, forcing low income residents to travel beyond their communities to visit physicians or dentists who do accept vouchers. Since many low income residents have to take public transportation, if they have medical or dental needs requiring multiple visits, this effort costs them substantial time and monies. In addition, the quality of care, and/or the continuity of care they receive is not always consistent or of the quality that should be received.
14. **Increasing cost of living.** The cost of food, housing, transportation, utilities, and other necessities is rising faster than low income residents' income. According to the 2009 Consumer Price Index inflation tables, between 2000 and 2009 inflation has risen 26.8% or an average of 2.6% per year for 10 years in Hudson County, New Jersey, and the cost of living in Hoboken, New Jersey is 48% higher than the US average.
15. **Chronic health problems.** Asthma, autism, diabetes, obesity, heart disease and other chronic conditions are major health issues among low income residents. Health problems such as these increase residents' challenges to maintain a high state of health that enables them to effectively pursue and achieve self-sufficiency. For example, up to 29% of people in Hudson County are in the range of being classified as obese. According to the "Environmental Health Assessment and Improvement Plan – 2009" report by the Hudson Regional Health Commission, "air pollution in Hudson County, is at times the County's most salient and sometimes visible environmental issue".
16. **Debt.** According to the National Center for Children in Poverty at Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health, debt has grown much faster for most low-income families than has their family income. Based on their latest study, the average total debt of low-income residents, including Hudson County, is more than 50% of total annual family income.
17. **Substance abuse.** In 2006-2008, according to the New Jersey Substance Abuse Monitoring System, there were a total of 3,074 substance abuse admissions of all kinds in Hudson County, totaling 5.7% of all abusers in the state; 2,350 of these cases were from Hoboken's 5 neighboring communities (Jersey City, Union City, Weehawken, North Bergen, West New York), and 90 were from Hoboken. According to a recent report, there was a combined need for alcohol and illicit drug treatment for 49,226 Hudson County residents.
18. **Domestic abuse.** In 2008 there were 1,997 domestic violence cases in Hudson County. These were the cases that were reported; according to domestic violence experts a much larger number of cases go unreported. In some ethnic cultures, domestic violence is often not reported.

19. **Mental Health Issues.** There are over 200 forms of classified mental illness. The New Jersey Mental Health Institute estimates that 1 in 5 New Jersey families have a mental health challenge in the family. In highly diverse ethnic environments, such as Hudson County, there is a cultural tendency to not seek professional help for mental health issues. In Hoboken, it is estimated that at least 1,600 families are affected by someone in the family with a mental health issue, and approximately 27,665 families are affected in Hudson County.
20. **Family support system.** Family support systems are important to low income residents. Because of the cost of housing in Hoboken and Hudson County and recent growth in poverty, approximately 1% of families in poverty in the area have moved in together (doubling up and tripling up) in the last 5 years in order to cope with a lack of income or the increasing cost of living. Many other families do not have extended family support systems nearby to support them because they have emigrated here from another country or moved from another area of the country.
21. **Teen pregnancy.** According to the 2009 Kids Count Data Book, Hudson County has one of the highest teen pregnancy rates in the State with a teen (ages 15-19) birth rate of 83 pregnancies per 1,000 females. The average for the entire state was 25 pregnancies per 1,000 females.
22. **Lack of father involvement in child raising.** Some fathers do not live with their children nor do they have contact with them, eliminating themselves from having an important role and influence in their childrens' lives. According to the US Census FactFinder update, families with a female head of household with related children under 18 years of age comprise 32.8% of families in poverty in Hoboken, and 25.6% in Hudson County.
23. **Increasing homelessness.** Homeless shelters are seeing an increase in the number of homeless who come to their shelters, particularly among senior women 65 years and older. A 2006 study of the homeless in Hudson County by Monarch Housing Associates, a New Jersey-based non-profit focused on supporting homeless families of New Jersey, counted 3,000 visible homeless people in a 24 hour period. The "New Jersey Point in Time Count of the Homeless Data Report" projected that over the course of 1 year 2,583 adults and children are homeless in Hudson County, with 41% of them averaging homelessness for more than 1 year.

## Service Area Information - Hoboken and Hudson County

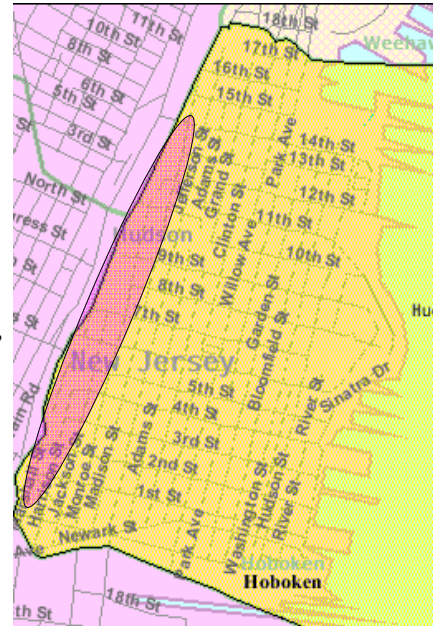
HOPES' service area varies according to the services that are provided.

### HOBOKEN

The service area of HOPES Early Childhood Program and Senior Transportation Program is all of Hoboken which runs from Newark Street in the south to 17<sup>th</sup> Street in the north, and from Marshall and Harrison Streets in the west to Sinatra Drive in the east, as seen in this map of Hoboken..

### **Head Start Recruitment and Selection**

HOPES Early Childhood Program, inclusive of Head Start, focuses on recruiting the lowest income families throughout Hoboken. The largest number of low income families are located in the West Side of Hoboken in Housing Authority apartment building complexes along Jackson Avenue (darkened, oblong area on map). This is the area where families live who have the greatest need of HOPES services and are often selected from this area. A much smaller percentage of families selected live in pockets of subsidized housing located throughout the city. Families are selected based upon a detailed rating scale; the greater the need in several areas, the higher the rating. Families with the highest ratings are selected for Head Start.



### **Senior Services – Assisted Transportation Program and Senior Home Visiting Program**

The Assisted Transportation Program and Senior Home Visiting Program serve Hoboken residents. Clients reside throughout the city, many of whom live in senior apartment complexes as well as Hoboken Housing Authority buildings.

### HUDSON COUNTY

All other HOPES programs serve anyone who seeks help. Those programs include the Senior Information & Assistance Program, the Senior Education Program, Community Assistance Services, Adult Services, and Youth Services. The majority of HOPES' clients for these services reside in Hoboken; however many clients reside in Hudson County communities neighboring Hoboken, including Jersey City, Union City, North Bergen, West New York, and Weehawken.



**Hoboken** is a cosmopolitan city of 40,681 people situated in the eastern most part of Hudson County, which is located in Northeast New Jersey. Hoboken is centrally located on the banks of the Hudson River directly across from the midtown area of the borough of Manhattan in New York City. Known as the “mile square” city, Hoboken has a density rate of 30,138 residents per square mile, which is one of the highest density rates of Hudson County.

**Hudson County** is the 6<sup>th</sup> most densely populated county in the United States, and has the highest density rate (13,044 residents per square mile) of all 21 counties in New Jersey, which has the highest density rate (1,135 residents per square mile) of all states in the United States. Hudson County has a population of 598,160 and consists of 4 cities (Bayonne, Jersey City, Hoboken, Union City), 5 towns (West New York, Guttenberg, Secaucus, Kearny, Harrison), 2 townships (North Bergen, Weehawken) and 1 borough (East Newark).

The largest city in Hudson County is Jersey City with a population of 234,914 (comprising 39.2% of Hudson County) and is one of the state’s largest cities. Jersey City has the highest density rate of any city over 50,000 people in New Jersey with a density rate of 13,043 people per square mile, and is ranked the 5<sup>th</sup> most density populated city in the country.

### **BACKGROUND of HOBOKEN and HUDSON COUNTY**

Prior to the 1960s, Hoboken was a major terminal port for thousands of passenger ships bringing millions of immigrants to the Eastern United States. Its central location to New York City made it a natural hub for several railroads. Hoboken and Hudson County thrived economically. But starting in the 1960s Hoboken and surrounding communities went into decline. The waterfront closed because of larger facilities built on Newark Bay. Railroad usage was displaced by car and truck traffic using newly built interstate highways. Corporations moved their factories inland or abroad to save money. Families who had lived in Hoboken for generations migrated to the suburbs. Real estate values plunged as residential and industrial vacancies grew. A large infusion of immigrants, mainly from Puerto Rico, helped keep the local economy alive. Despite a strong middle and working class, Hoboken was compared to other New Jersey cities in decline, such as Newark, Paterson, Elizabeth, Camden and Jersey City.

Low real estate values caused a large influx of artists, upwardly mobile young urban professionals (yuppies), and others to begin to move to Hoboken in the 1970s and 1980s. They valued the quality of the residences, the sense of community, proximity to New York City, and the low rental prices compared to Manhattan. Investment firms and others began speculative real estate buying, including renovating a number of houses in order to rent them out to the US government as Section 8 subsidized housing for the impoverished.

In the early 1990s a new level of city-wide renovation began, causing real estate values to rise quickly. Private developers built multiple commercial and residential buildings as well as “open spaces” all along the waterfront. Restaurants and small businesses opened. Older buildings were replaced by mid-rise apartment houses and condominiums. These changes enticed a steady stream of high income renters and buyers from New York City and elsewhere to move in. A range of new businesses moved in. As the city improved, the cost of living increased.

Hudson County also has experienced extensive economic development, especially during the 1990s. Real estate values have steadily increased, communities with waterfront have developed them, and many new living complexes have been constructed. One example of many is the Jersey City area called “Wall Street West”. Directly across Hudson River from “Wall Street” in Manhattan’s financial district, this waterfront area has been completely renovated, and now boasts a range of high-end living residences, businesses, and boat basins.

**POPULATION of HOBOKEN by GENDER and AGE GROUPS**

Based on the chart below:

- the percentage of males outnumbering females has increased by 3.8%;
- the (25 to 34) and (35 to 44) age group are the largest;
- certain age groups have increased in their percentage of the population, including: (0 to 2); (3 to 4); (15 to 19); (35-44); and (55 to 59).

<b>Household Residents in Hoboken by group</b>	<b>2008 Percentage of Total Population</b>	<b>2008 Total Population 41,538</b>	<b>2000 Percentage of Total Population</b>	<b>2000 Total Population 38,577</b>
Females	47.2%	19,594	49.1%	18,923
Males	52.8%	21,944	50.9%	19,654
0 to 2 years of age	2.9%	1,208	1.9%	739
3 to 4	2.5%	1,042	1.3%	493
5 to 9	2.2%	1,096	2.9%	1,125
10 to 14	1.7%	710	2.7%	1,041
15 to 19	4.2%	1,726	3.5%	1,356
20 to 24	8.3%	3,456	13.5%	5,190
25 to 34	32.5%	13,494	37.9%	14,604
35 to 44	23.9%	9,944	13.9%	5,344
45 to 54	8.0%	3,308	8.1%	3,129
55 to 59	3.9%	1,621	2.9%	1,126
60 to 64	2.1%	871	2.5%	947
65 to 74	3.6%	1,505	4.6%	1,757
75 to 84	3.0%	1,231	3.5%	1,334
85 years & older	0.8%	326	1.0%	392

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2008 American Community Survey, American FactFinder

**POPULATION in HUDSON COUNTY by GENDER and AGE GROUPS**

Based on the chart below:

- the percentage of females outnumbering males has decreased by 0.8%;
- the largest groups of residents are: **(25 to 34)\***; **(35 to 44)\***; (45-54) years of age;
- certain age groups have increased in their percentage of population, including: **(0 to 2)\***; **(3 to 4)\***; (10 to 14); **(35 to 44)\***; (45-54); **(55 to 59)\***; and **(60 to 64)\***; and **85** years & older.

\* bolded data match Hoboken change categories

<b>Household Residents by group</b>	<b>2008 Percentage of Total Population</b>	<b>2008 Total Population <u>594,334</u></b>	<b>2000 Percentage of Total Population</b>	<b>2000 Total Population <u>608,975</u></b>
Females	50.4%	299,251	50.9%	309,911
Males	49.6%	295,083	49.1%	299,064
0 to 2 years of age	4.1 %	24,495	3.9%	23,254
3 to 4	2.6%	15,581	2.5%	15,502
5 to 9	5.3%	31,546	6.4%	39,034
10 to 14	6.3%	37,312	6.2%	37,666
15 to 19	6.1%	36,430	6.1%	37,383
20 to 24	6.7%	39,591	7.9%	48,029
25 to 34	16.7%	99,526	19.6%	119,073
35 to 44	18.0%	107,243	16.0%	97,727
45 to 54	13.7%	81,364	11.9%	72,379
55 to 59	5.2%	31,011	4.4%	26,702
60 to 64	4.3%	25,270	3.8%	22,955
65 to 74	5.7%	33,921	6.0%	36,714
75 to 84	3.7%	22,257	4.0%	24,312
85 years & older	1.5%	8,788	1.4%	8,245

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2008 American Community Survey, American FactFinder

## LIVING STATUS in HOBOKEN

Based on the following data:

- increases can be seen in:
  - family households (2.5%);
  - families with children under 18 (5.1%);
  - married couples with children under 18 (5.6%);
  - residents 5 to 15 years with disability (4.3%).
  
- decreases can be seen in:
  - seniors citizens who live alone (0.4%);
  - seniors citizens who have disabilities (6.7%);
  - female head of household with children under 18 (0.6%);
  - residents 16 to 64 years with disability (9.2%).

<b><u>Of 21,003 Total Households</u></b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2000</b>
Family Households	37.7%	35.2%
Family households with children under 18	16.5%	11.4%
Married couples with children under 18	12.2%	6.6%
Female householder with children under 18, no husband present	3.5%	4.1%
Male householder with children under 18, no wife present	.09%	NA
Householders 65 years or older living alone	7.6%	8%
Households with individuals 65 years and over	11.9%	14.5%
Average household size	1.91%	1.91
Average family size	2.71%	2.72
Percent of total residents 65 years or older with disability	44.8%	51.5%
Percent of total residents 16 to 64 years with a disability	3.1%	12.3%
Percent of total residents 5 to 15 years with a disability	11.8%	7.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2008 American Community Survey, American FactFinder

## LIVING STATUS in HUDSON COUNTY

Based on the following data:

- increases can be seen in:
  - female head of household with children under 18 (0.1%);
  - residents 5 to 20 years with a disability (2.0%);
  - average family size (.01%).
  
- decreases can be seen in:
  - family households (1.9%);
  - families with children under 18 (1.2%);
  - married couples with children under 18 (1.7%);
  - householders 65 years or older living alone (1%);
  - households with individuals 65 years and over (2.2%);
  - seniors citizens who have disabilities (1%);
  - residents 21 to 64 years with a disability (21.3%).

<b><u>Of 226,987 Total Households</u></b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2000</b>
Family Households	60.4%	62.3%
Family households with children under 18	28.4%	29.6%
Married couples with children under 18	17.0%	18.7%
Female householder, no husband present	16.4%	16.6%
Female householder with children under 18, no husband present	8.9%	8.8%
Male householder with children under 18, no wife present	2.5%	NA
Householders 65 years or older living alone	8.6%	9.6%
Households with individuals 65 years and over	20.7%	22.9%
Average household size	2.6	2.6
Average family size	3.3	3.3
Percent of total residents 65 years or older with disability	44.8 %	45.8%
Percent of total residents 21 to 64 years with disability	3.1%	24.4%
Percent of total residents 5 to 20 years with disability	11.8 %	9.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2008 American Community Survey, American FactFinder

### **ETHNICITY of HOBOKEN**

Based on the chart below and other supporting data from the US census:

- the largest group, Whites from non-Hispanic origins, increased by 3.6%;
- the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest group, Hispanic / Latinos, decreased by 3.9%;
- African Americans, decreased by 1.7%;
- Puerto Ricans comprise 33.5% of Hispanic / Latinos;
- the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest group, Asians, increased by 1.2%;
- Asians are comprised of: 40% Chinese; 27.2% Asian Indians; 12.7% Filipinos; 9.9% Koreans; 10% comprised of Japanese, Vietnamese, and other Asian countries.

<b>Year</b>	<b>White non Hispanic</b>	<b>Hispanic/Latino</b>	<b>Asian</b>	<b>African Amer.</b>	<b>Other Race</b>	<b>Native Amer.</b>	<b>Pacific Islndr.</b>	<b>2/more races</b>
<b>2008</b>	74.1%	16.1%	5.5%	2.6%	1.7%	0.0%	0.1%	2.0%
<b>2000</b>	70.5%	20.2%	4.3%	4.3%	7.6%	0.2%	0.1%	2.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2008 American Community Survey, American FactFinder

### **ETHNICITY of HUDSON COUNTY**

Based on the chart below and other supporting data from the US census:

- the largest group, Hispanic / Latinos, increased by 0.8%;
- Hispanic/Latinos are comprised of the following percentages of total county population: Central/South American, 24.7%; Puerto Rican, 8.2%; Cuban, 4.9%; Mexican 2.7%;
- the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest group, Whites from non-Hispanic origins decreased by 1.1%;
- the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest group, African Americans, decreased by 2.5%;
- the 4<sup>th</sup> largest group, Asians, increased by 1%;
- the 2007 Asian percentage of 11.3% is comprised of: 40% Asian Indians; 32.3% Filipinos; 12.2% Chinese; 4.6% Koreans; 2.9% Vietnamese; 6.2%.Other Asians.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Hispanic/Latino</b>	<b>White non Hispanic</b>	<b>African Amer.</b>	<b>Asian</b>	<b>Other Race</b>	<b>Native Amer.</b>	<b>Pacific Islndr.</b>	<b>2/more races</b>
<b>2008</b>	40.6%	34.2%	12.2%	11.3%	0%	0%	0%	1.7%
<b>2000</b>	39.8%	35.3%	14.7%	10.3%	0.9%	0.4%	0.0%	5.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2008 American Community Survey, American FactFinder

Ethnic groups comprise a much larger percentage of the population in the 5 neighboring communities than they do in Hoboken, and Hispanic/Latinos are by far the largest ethnic group, averaging 57.7% of the combined total of the 5 communities.

<b>Community</b>	<b>Jersey City</b>	<b>North Bergen</b>	<b>Union City</b>	<b>Weehawken</b>	<b>West New York</b>
<b>Hispanic /Latinos</b>	27.7%	63.5%	78.1%	40.6%	78.7%
<b>Whites not Hispanic</b>	24.3%	27.3%	17.7%	50.1%	15.5%
<b>African American</b>	26.5%	1.4%	2.5%	0%	0%
<b>Asian</b>	18.7%	7.3%	1.2%	0%	0%
<b>Other</b>	2.8%	0.5%	0.5%	9.3%	5.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2008 American Community Survey, American FactFinder

**FOREIGN BORN and CITIZENSHIP in HOBOKEN**

In Hoboken:

- the percentage of residents who are foreign born has increased by 2.1%;
- the number of residents who speak a language other than English in the home has decreased by 6.1%.

Year	Foreign born	Of foreign born, % not citizens	Speak a language other than English at home	Speak English less than very well
2008	16.6%	49.1%	22.6%	9.7%
2000	14.5%	7.6%	28.7%	11.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2008 American Community Survey, American FactFinder

**FOREIGN BORN and CITIZENSHIP in HUDSON COUNTY**

Hudson County is a favored haven for new immigrants coming to New Jersey, and has the highest proportion among all counties in New Jersey of residents that are foreign-born (40.3%) and of those who speak a language other than English at home (56.3%).

In Hudson County:

- foreign born residents have increased by 1.8%;
- foreign born residents not citizens increased by 31.4%.

Year	Foreign born	Of Foreign born, not U.S. citizen	Speak a language other than English at home	Speak English less than very well
2008	40.3%	53.9%	56.3%	25.4%
2000	38.5%	22.5%	56.1%	27.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2008 American Community Survey, American FactFinder

**LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY**

Hudson County:

- has a much larger percentage than Hoboken of bilingual speakers;
- has a much larger percentage than Hoboken of people who speak English less than “very well”.

2008	Hoboken	Hudson County
Speaks English only	77.4%	43.7%
Bilingual in Spanish / English	22.6%	38.2%
Speaks Spanish but English less than “very well”	6.4%	25.4%
Bilingual in English and Other Language (Indo-European)	7.4%	10.1%
Speaks Indo-European language but English less than “very well”	2.6%	4.0%
Bilingual in English and Other Language (Asian & Pacific Islander)	2.2%	5.6%
Speaks Asian/Pacific Islander language but English less than “very well”	0.8%	1.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2008 American Community Survey, American FactFinder

**EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT in HOBOKEN**

Based on the following data:

- residents with a graduate or professional degree increased by 7.7%;
- residents with less than a 9<sup>th</sup> grade education or high school education but no diploma decreased by 2.8%;
- residents with a bachelor degree increased by 3.8%;
- residents with a high school diploma or some college but no degree decreased by 3.3%.

The increase in residents’ educational attainment is very significant – there is a direct proportional correlation between the 11.5% increase in the number of residents with a graduate, professional, or bachelor degree, and the 11.7% decrease in the number of residents with some college but no degree, a high school diploma, or less 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade education.

The increase in residents with a Bachelor degree and graduate or professional degree is due to the increasing number of working professionals who move into Hoboken, often from New York City and other communities of New Jersey.

<b>25 years or older</b>	<b>Less than 9<sup>th</sup> grade</b>	<b>9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade no diploma</b>	<b>High school diploma</b>	<b>Some college no degree</b>	<b>Asso- ciates degree</b>	<b>Bachelor degree</b>	<b>Grad/ Profsnl degree</b>
<b>2008</b>	5.6%	4.2%	10.6%	7%	1,7%	44.5%	26.4%
<b>2000</b>	8.4%	8.3%	12.1%	8.9%	2.9%	40.7%	18.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2008 American Community Survey, American FactFinder

**EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT in HUDSON COUNTY**

There is an across the board increase in the level of educational attainment of residents except for a slight decrease (0.6%) among those residents with some college education but no degree. The data shows the following:

- an increase of 2.3% in residents with graduate or professional degree;
- an increase of 4.8% in residents with a bachelor degree;
- an increase of 0.7% in residents with an associates degree;
- a decrease of 6.2% in residents who attended 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade but received no diploma;
- a decrease of 2.6% in residents with less than a 9<sup>th</sup> grade education.

<b>25 years or older</b>	<b>Less than 9<sup>th</sup> grade</b>	<b>9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade no diploma</b>	<b>High school diploma</b>	<b>Some college no degree</b>	<b>Asso- ciates</b>	<b>Bachelor degree</b>	<b>Grad/ Profsnl degree</b>
<b>2008</b>	10.9%	9.8%	28.5%	14.4%	4.1%	21.1%	11.2%
<b>2000</b>	13.5%	16.0%	26.8%	15.0%	3.4%	16.3%	8.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2008 American Community Survey, American FactFinder

**ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS of HOBOKEN**

Hoboken’s economy is based on health care, finance, education, government, insurance, real estate, publishing and many small service businesses. Of those residents who work:

- 61% are in management, professional, and related occupations;
- 25.9% are in sales and office occupations;
- 6.6% are in service occupations;
- 4.6% are in production, transportation, and material moving occupations;
- 1.9% are in construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations.

Between 2000 and 2008:

- the percentage of all families in poverty with children under 18 increased by 2.4%;
- the percentage of families in poverty headed by a single female head of household with children under 18 increased by 6.5%;
- the unemployment rate rose by 2%;
- the median household income increased by 59%;
- the per capita increased by 58%.

	<b>Median Household Income</b>	<b>Per capita</b>	<b>Population Over 16 Years of Age Unemployed</b>	<b>Families Below Poverty Line with Children under 18</b>	<b>Families Below Poverty Line with Single Female Head of Household with Children under 18</b>
<b>2008</b>	\$106,156	\$74,506	5.4%	12.4%	42.1%
<b>2000</b>	\$62,550	\$43,195	3.4%	10%	35.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2008 American Community Survey, American FactFinder

**2008 Hoboken Household Income**

Of 21,093 households:

- 21.1% had income of \$200,000 or higher
- 52.8% had income of \$100,000 or higher
- 20.1% had income of \$35,000 or less
- 11.8% had income of \$15,000 or less

**November 2009 Unemployment Data**

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported the following unemployment rates.

- Hoboken – 6.3%
- sampling of unemployment in communities neighboring Hoboken:
  - Union City – 15%
  - West New York – 13%
  - Jersey City – 12%
- Hudson County – 11.6% (one of the highest in the State)
- New Jersey – 9.7%

**ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS of HUDSON COUNTY**

Hudson County’s economy, like Hoboken’s, is also based on health care, finance, education, government, insurance, real estate, and many small service businesses.

Of those residents who work:

- 33.2% are in management, professional, and related occupations;
- 27.1% are in sales and office occupations;
- 18.1% are in service occupations;
- 14.0% are in production, transportation, and material moving occupations;
- 7.6% are in construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations.

Between 2000 and 2008:

- the percentage of all families in poverty with children under 18 decreased by 0.6%;
- the percentage of families in poverty headed by a single female head of household with children under 18 decreased by 2.2%;
- the unemployment rate increased by 1.8 % during this time;
- the median household income has increased by 33.1%;
- the per capita increased by 44.6%.

	<b>Median Household Income</b>	<b>Per capita</b>	<b>Population Over 16 Years of Age Unemployed</b>	<b>Families Below Poverty Line with Children under 18</b>	<b>Families Below Poverty Line with Single Female Head of Household with Children under 18</b>
<b>2008</b>	\$53,640	\$30,599	7.1%	18.3%	34.3%
<b>2000</b>	\$40,293	\$21,154	5.3%	18.9%	36.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2008 American Community Survey, American FactFinder

**2008 Hudson County Household Income**

Of 229,065 households:

- 5.7% had income of \$200,000 or higher
- 26.5% had income of \$100,000 or higher
- 34.5% had income of \$35,000 or less
- 14.2% had income of \$15,000 or less

**HOUSING in HOBOKEN**

Of the total of 21,093 housing units in Hoboken,

- 37.9% have been built since 1970;
- the median value of housing rose 38.2% between 2000 and 2008 to \$592,800;
- the average rent rose 58.1% to \$1,584.

	<b>Median Value</b>	<b>Average Rent</b>
<b>2008</b>	\$ 592,800	\$1,584
<b>2000</b>	\$ 428,900	\$1,002

The number of residents who pay more than 30% of their income for rent is 32.6%.

There are 13,831 rental units in Hoboken, which comprise 65.6% of all city units; the rest being owner occupied, with a median mortgage of \$2,813.

Hoboken is a highly mobile city with 16,335 (77.4%) of all households having moved into their current place of residents since 2000.

**HOUSING in HUDSON COUNTY**

Of the total 254,391 housing units in Hudson county:

- 27.7% have been built since 1970;
- the median value of housing rose 167% to \$400,900;
- the average rent rose 45.4% to \$ 1,022.

	<b>Median Value</b>	<b>Average Rent</b>
<b>2008</b>	\$ 400,900	\$ 1,022
<b>2000</b>	\$ 150,300	\$ 703

The number of residents who pay more than (30%) of their income has increased by 12.2% in 8 years, from 36.6% in 2000 to 47.8% in 2008.

There are 148,780 rental units in Hudson County, which comprise 65% of all county units; the rest are owner occupied, with a median mortgage of \$2,495. Since the year 2000 in Hudson County, 61.1% of all households have moved into their current place of residents.

**SERVICE AREA SUMMARY**

**Hoboken and neighboring Hudson County communities are striking contrasts of wealth and poverty.** The most visible perspective makes Hoboken and Hudson County seem models of success. There has been impressive real estate and business growth over the past several years, particularly along the waterfront. Real estate values soared between 2000 and 2007: 38.2% in Hoboken and 167% in Hudson County. Some households have incomes of \$100,000 or higher: 52.8% in Hoboken and 26.5% in Hudson County. (It should be noted this data was before the 2008 recession, which has since lowered real estate values and many household incomes).

**There is another perspective that is much less visible - poverty.** Hudson County ranks #1 in poverty in the State (14.9%) with 87,700 residents deeply enmeshed in it. Over 20% of households in Hoboken and 34% in Hudson County have incomes of \$35,000 or less. In Hoboken 1 in 5 children under 18 (20.3%) live in poverty: in Hudson County 1 in 4 children (23.7%). In Hoboken 4 out of 10 single female of households with related children under 18 live in poverty (42.1%); in Hudson County 3 of 10 (34.3%). In Hoboken 1 out of every 4 seniors live in poverty (26.7%); in Hudson County 1 of every 6 seniors (16%).

## **HOPES CAP Inc. Client Information**

The clients of HOPES CAP, Inc. include all low income groups - families with children, youth, adults, and seniors living in Hoboken and neighboring Hudson County communities. In total they comprise the largest percentage of people in poverty than any other county in New Jersey, including having the highest percentage of children between the ages of 5 and 17 years of age in poverty.

HOPES clients are the 20.1% in Hoboken (4,236 individuals) and 34.5% in Hudson County (78,981 individuals) who have less than \$35,000 of income per year. Based on U.S. Census statistics, it can be conservatively estimated that in Hoboken a minimum of 1,400 individuals live at or below 100% of the 2009 Federal poverty guidelines (\$10,830 for 1, \$14,570 for 2, \$18,310 for 3, etc.) and another 1,700 individuals live at or below 200% of these guidelines. In Hudson County, it can be conservatively estimated that a minimum of 19,800 live at or below 100% of the 2009 Federal poverty guidelines and another 51,400 live at or below 200% of these guidelines.

Each age group HOPES serves – parents with children, youth, adults and seniors - face their own specific challenges.

- Some HOPES Early Childhood Program parents are single with more than one child. Some have not completed high school, hold one or more low-paying jobs, attend classes at night, have a disability or health issue, are doubled up living with another family member or friend, and/or have other complications. In Hoboken, almost 1 out of every 2 single female head of households with related children under 18 (42.1%) live in poverty, and in Hudson County that figure is 1 out of every 3 families (34.3%).
- There are local young people between the ages of 5 and 17 years of age from low income families who need more support as they go through school. Help can range from homework support to supplemental food to having a safe place to go to study and learn until a parent gets home. The Hoboken public school district is still classified as one of 30 special needs districts in New Jersey. In Hoboken 1 out of every 5 children (20.3%) live in poverty, and in Hudson County that figure is almost 1 of every 4 children (22.6%).
- There are an ample numbers of low income adults between the ages of 18 and 64 years of age who want to expand their skills, seek help finding a job, or grow a career. Others just need access to computers to build their knowledge on a range of subjects to help them succeed, and take advantage of local programs such as Women & Infant Care, food pantries, online training programs, job search, preparing tax statements, and English as a Second Language. There are young people 18 years and older who don't know how to go about finding a job or understanding the requirements of maintaining a job, much less planning and pursuing a positive career that enables them to earn a viable livelihood. Some of their families are first or second generation Americans who are not familiar with certain aspects of American life. In Hoboken, 1 out of every 13 adult (7.4%) between the ages of 18 and 64 years lives in poverty. In Hudson County, 1 out of every 10 adults (11.8%) lives in poverty.

- There are many seniors 65 years of age and older who live in poverty and need help carrying out a number of activities. Some are disabled and can't leave their homes. Others need transportation to shop for food, receive food assistance, attend medical and dental appointments, and even to socialize. In Hoboken 1 out of every 4 seniors (26.7%) lives in poverty. In Hudson County 1 out of almost every 6 (16%) lives in poverty.
- United Way of Hudson County indicated that at any one time approximately 19% of households in Hudson County are at risk of becoming homeless.
- Hoboken organizations that provide emergency food pantries have indicated that:
  - requests have quadrupled over the past year, particularly during the last 10 days of the month when low income households' food budget is extremely low or they have run out of food stamps;
  - requests come from: single mothers with children, the unemployed, the underemployed, the sick, the disabled, seniors on social security, grandmothers who are primary care takers, mentally ill, etc.
  - children are the most affected, have hunger that is sporadic, temporary and cyclic rather than continuous.

Almost 100% of HOPES clients living in Hoboken reside in subsidized public housing or Applied Housing. According to the New Jersey Council on Affordable Housing and the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development, in Hoboken there are 1,353 housing units managed by the Hoboken Housing Authority (HHA). The HHA also has Section 8 relationships with approximately 100 landlords in Hoboken.

In Hoboken there are 3 main Public Housing complexes with a total of 903 units where low income families live: Andrew Jackson Gardens at 400 Marshall Drive (598 units); C. Columbus Gardens at 460 8th St. / 455 9th St. (97 units); and Harrison Gardens at Jackson and Harrison Streets (208 units).

There are also 3 Hoboken Public Housing complexes with a total of 451 units dedicated solely to low income seniors and the handicapped live: Fox Hill Gardens at 311 13th Street (200 units); James Monroe Gardens at 221 Jackson Street (125 units); and John Adams at Gardens 220 Adams Street (125 units).

There are approximately 550 non Public Housing units for seniors and the handicapped including: Eastview Apartments 58-72 Washington Street (79 units); Westview Apartments 59-77 Bloomfield Street (116 units); Columbian Arms 514-26 Madison Street (66 units); Marian Towers 400 1st Street (154 units); and Columbian Towers Bloomfield Street (135 units).

There are over 1,000 units of Applied Housing for low income residents, such as: Church Square South at 124-215 Willow Avenue (81 units); Elysian Estates at 1300-12 Washington St.(56 units); Northvale Apartments 3A at 1233 Park Avenue (70 units); Northvale Apartments 3B at 11th and Clinton Streets (82 units); Northvale Apartments 4 at 58 11th Street (11 units); Hudson Estates at 1200-22 Hudson Street (162 units); Midway Apartments at 500-08 Adams Street (77 units); Northvale Apartments 1 at 11th and Clinton Streets (138 units); Northvale Apartments 2 at 59 Willow Avenue (134 units); Washington Estates at scattered sites (154 units); Willow View at 1203-19 Willow Avenue (95 units).

There are also other building complexes available to low income residents that have units labeled as “Affordable Housing”, such as: Church Towers at Clinton and Grand Streets Family (399 units); Clock Tower Apartments at 300 Adams Street Both (172 units); Project Uplift at 800-12 Willow Street Unknown (54 units); Bloomfield Manor at 1305-07 Bloomfield Street Family (55 units); Observer Park at Observer Highway (115 units); Grogan Marineview Plaza at 3rd and Hudson Streets (432 units); 600 Monroe Street at 600 Monroe Street (14 units).

## Head Start Eligible Children and Families in Hoboken

### CHILDREN by AGE, FAMILY & HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION in HOBOKEN

Age	6 – 18 months	18 months - 2 years	3 – 4 years
<b>Estimated Number of:</b>			
<b>Head Start Eligible Children</b>	63	70	162
<b>Head Start Eligible Children Attending Head Start</b>	25	21	158
<b>Abbott Eligible Children</b>	80	93	166
<b>Total Eligible Children</b>	143	163	328

### HEAD START ELIGIBLE HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION in HOBOKEN

Household Composition	Number
Two parent families	927
One parent families	566

### AVERAGE EDUCATION LEVEL of ECP PARENTS in HOBOKEN

Less Than High School Graduation	High School Graduate	Some College, or Associates degree	Bachelors Degree or advanced degree
7.4%	38.3%	34.9%	19.4%

### TYPES of EMPLOYMENT of ECP PARENTS in HOBOKEN

Retail	Housekeeping	Restaurant Kitchen Laborer	Barback
Waitress	Delivery Person	Construction Laborer	Cook
Nurse's Aide	Receptionist	Landscaping Laborer	Bartend
Office Clerk	Babysitter	Warehouse/Factory Laborer	Bouncer

### HOUSING & ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS of ECP FAMILIES in HOBOKEN

Housing Status	Percentage	Number
Own Residence	0%	0
Rent Residence	100%	172
Homeless	8%	14

### GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION of SERVICE AREA in HOBOKEN

Approximately 75% of Head Start eligible families live in the “Projects” on the West Side of Hoboken along Jackson Street. These housing complexes consist of approximately 700 units of small 1 and 2 bedroom apartments in a total of 8 buildings on the West Side, each with a community room and 4 floors. There are approximately 200 low income units elsewhere in Hoboken plus approximately 450 units in 3 senior sites.

### **EMERGING / GROWING POPULATIONS in HOBOKEN**

The growth populations in Hoboken are: 0.8% White non-Hispanic families with middle to high income; 1.4% Asian families and ethnic groups with middle to high income from a range of countries in Europe, Asia, and 3.8% Middle Eastern families.

### **POPULATION SHIFTS in LAST FEW YEARS in HOBOKEN**

Hispanic/Latinos have decreased by 2.6% and African Americans by 1.4% Hoboken in the last few years, often moving to one of the neighboring communities in Hudson County (i.e. Jersey City, West New York, North Bergen) or out of county, often due to employment opportunities, personal reasons, and/or cost of living.

### **RACE ETHNICITY of HEAD START ELIGIBLE CHILDREN 0-5 & PRIMARY LANGUAGES in HOBOKEN**

<b><u>Ethnicity</u></b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Primary Language(s)</b>
White (Alone) - Non-Hispanic	11%	English
Hispanic / Latino total	72%	
- Hispanic / Latino where English is primary language	54.3%	English
- Hispanic/Latino with Spanish as primary language	17.7 %	Spanish
Black / African American (Alone)	13%	English
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (Alone)	0%	English
Persons Reporting Some Other Race	0%	
Persons Reporting 2 or More Races	2%	English
American Indian or Alaskan Native (Alone)	0%	
Asian (Alone)	2%	English

### **CULTURAL INFLUENCES AMONG HOPES ECP FAMILIES**

The main cultural influences among Early Childhood Development families are their own extended families and network of friends. Hoboken and neighboring communities in Hudson County are very urban with a range of organizations actively involved with small groups of people in their respective communities, ranging from churches to youth sports to social and other special interest groups. But the largest influences are the ECD families own families and friends.

### **PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN HOPES EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM**

HOPES PIR reports document that over 72% of parents participate in at least one, and usually several, of the activities provided by HOPES Early Childhood Program and/or in collaboration with community partners. These activities range from a one time experience to participation on a monthly basis throughout the year. Repetitive activity examples are: volunteering in classrooms, preparing food/materials used in the classroom, attending parent/teacher conferences, participating on the Policy Council, and “New Mommy” meetings. One time activity examples include: attending an all day parenting conference, a field trip, father/daughter dance, and an all-day health/fun fair.

HOPES staff indicated that parents with higher involvement in HOPES Head Start activities were not only more collaborative in their parenting strategies, but implemented change at a faster pace than non-participants. PIR reports indicated that since many teachers are bilingual, greater parent involvement is facilitated.

Some parents indicated in CA parent surveys as well as during interviews that they have difficulty participating in HOPES ECP activities because of their schedule. They work, train, or attend class during the timeframe activities occur, or have other responsibilities such as care for their other children, household responsibilities, or health issues. HOPES staff stated during interviews that the greatest level of parent participation in activities occurs during the fall and spring. Parents also indicated in interviews that extended family members (grandparents, uncles, aunts, etc.) who live in the area or with the family are available to help with child care. Parents also indicated that neighbors and friends are an important source of help and support for their families, and that those families who are members of a religious organization also receive support from other members.

Client satisfaction surveys revealed that the vast majority of parents (94%) consistently indicated very high levels of satisfaction with HOPES Early Childhood Program staff. Parents who requested information and guidance were asked about their satisfaction. Parents routinely reported that their needs were fully met as it related to: staff knowledge; staff performance meeting their expectations; staff providing accurate, clear information and easy to understand guidance in a timely way; and being courteous and friendly.

Client satisfaction surveys and PIR reports document that the vast majority of parents (over 95%) also reported the highest levels of satisfaction with the HOPES Early Childhood Program, indicating staff:

- help their children grow and develop;
- ensure the health and safety of their children;
- support them in their role as parents;
- are inclusive of parents' ideas and value their contributions;
- show respect and consideration of their family's culture;
- provide services children need and guide parents to needed community resources;
- make parents feel part of the community and their importance in this community;
- support parents when encountering barriers to obtaining external services;
- ensure the children are fully prepared to enter and succeed in kindergarten.

Over 70% of parents indicated they implemented a number of activities in the home that paralleled and/or supported classroom activities, including:

- storytelling;
- doing a task/chore in the house;
- playing/listening to music together;
- watching a video or TV;
- talking about these activities.

**PROGRAMS SERVING HEAD START ELIGIBLE CHILDREN in HOBOKEN**

Child Care Agency	HOPES	Mile Square	Nuestros Ninos Day Care	Day Care 100
Locations	4	1	1	1
Infant Slots	0	39	0	12
Toddler Slots	0	15	8	16
Pre-Schooler Slots	172	45	63	44
Children Served	172	99	58	73
Licensed to serve disabled	yes	yes	yes	yes
Children with Disabilities	43	24	14	17
Capacity to serve non-English	yes	yes	yes	yes
Staff Reflect Cultures Served	yes	yes	yes	yes
Availability or accessibility of service	7:30am – 5:30pm	7:30am – 5:30pm	7:30am – 5:30pm	7:30am – 5:30pm

**ESTIMATED KITH & KIN CARE SITUATIONS IN HOBOKEN**

Based on the number of estimated children between the ages of 0 and 4 years of age in Hoboken living in poverty, and the number currently attending child care programs, we estimate there are approximately 140 children cared for by relatives and neighbors. These caretakers are usually unlicensed and care arrangements are informal.

**HEAD START ELIGIBLE CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES in HOBOKEN**

**NUMBER OF DISABLED CHILDREN IN SERVICE AREA**

Infants	Toddlers	Pre-Schoolers
38	71	91

**TYPES of DISABILITIES**

Asthma	Emotional/ Behavioral Disorder	Speech or Language Impairment	Non-categorical Development Delay includes Autism, Learning, Occupational, Physical
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**ENROLLED HEAD START ELIGIBLE CHILDREN with DISABILITIES in HOBOKEN**

Health Impairment	Emotional/Behavioral Disorder	Speech or Language Impairment	Non-categorical Development Delay
9	13	44	32

**RESOURCES AVAILABLE to DISABLED CHILDREN in HOBOKEN**

- Hoboken Board of Education Child Intervention Team
- Milestone Early Intervention Center
- Hoboken University Medical Center
- North Hudson Community Action Corporation
- Prevent Blindness Tri-State
- Community Mental Health Center
- Jersey City Medical Center
- Montclair State University Audiology Center

## **Seniors in Hoboken and Hudson County**

According to the Hudson County Office of Aging Senior Report and the U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2008 American Community Survey, American FactFinder:

### **In Hoboken, of a total 2008 population of 3,483 people 65 years and older:**

1. 26.7% of seniors lived in poverty, which is almost 3 times the 9.1% they represent of the total county population;
2. the 2 main groups in poverty break out into: Whites (46.9%); Hispanic/Latino (43.1%);
3. 49% had some type of disability;
4. 81.5% lived in rental housing;
5. 19.8% were still working;
6. 2,801 received a mean social security income of \$11,900;
7. 58.9% were widows/widowers;
8. 23% spoke Spanish and 19.8% spoke another language;
9. 1,610 lived alone;
10. 2,501 households had 1 or more people 65 years or older living with them.

### **In Hudson County, of a total 2008 population of 69,271 people 65 years and older:**

1. 16% live in poverty, which break out into 4 main ethnic groups – Whites (41.3%); Hispanic/Latinos (39.7%); African Americans (11.3%); and Asians (4.6%);
2. 24.7% spoke Spanish & 21.3% spoke another languages;
3. 43% had some type of disability;
4. 20.7% were still working;
5. 20% had social security as the only source of income;
6. 49,153 received a mean social security income of \$13,153;
7. 57.1% lived in rental housing;
8. 55.9% were widows/widowers;
9. 50% did not graduate high school;
10. 19,962 lived alone;
11. 47,484 households had one or more people 65 years and older living with them.

## Strengths And Needs of Low Income Residents

### Families with Children

The following information was based upon feedback from surveys, interviews, and focus groups held with 116 parents served by HOPES Early Childhood Program.

### STRENGTHS of LOW INCOME FAMILIES with CHILDREN

#### **1. Families demonstrate resourcefulness and determination.**

- 93% of respondents indicated they faced at least 3 of the following challenges: rising living costs; maintaining a job, training or education while caring their children; health problems; debt; health care; changes in relationships with family members, friends, mate and/or significant other; safety issues; and negative neighborhood influences.
- 77% of respondents believed they would be able to eventually overcome these challenges.

#### **Comments from Parents**

- “It’s hard. We keep going and going. Sometimes it’s not so good. But we figure out a way to do things.”
- “I’m going to do what it takes to do right by my family.”

#### **2. Parents value the educational experience their children receive in HOPES ECP.**

- 100% of respondents repeatedly mentioned the high quality of education their children received at HOPES Early Childhood Program.

#### **Comments from Parents**

- “HOPES provides an excellent pre-school for kids and a racially and culturally diverse population.”
- “I love HOPES because my daughter has progressed and learned so much.”
- “It is a very good program and my expectations are met.”
- “This is an excellent program – there is no need to improve it.”
- “Just the fact that HOPES exists is wonderful.”
- “HOPES staff are great – they love the kids and the organization.”

#### **3. Families feel valued by HOPES.**

- 98% of respondents appreciated having the opportunity to be involved in their children’s education and felt their involvement in the program was seen as important to the success of the program and their children.

#### **Comments from Parents**

- “HOPES is important to me and I know me and my child are important to HOPES.”
- “Staff ask my opinion; they listen.”

#### **4. Parents are optimistic about their children’s success in ECP and later in public school.**

- 87% of respondents indicated they believe their children eventually will have a better life than they currently have.
- 71% of respondents indicated they had long-term goals for their children, such as attending college and having a career.

##### **Comments from Families**

- “Education is important. It will help her be what she wants to be.”
- “My children have a good beginning, but they have a ways to go. This program will help them get there.”

#### **5. Parents view family relationships as an important support system.**

- Many families indicated their positive relationships with family members are an important source of support.
- 62% of respondents expressed an interest in classes about parenting and relationship building.

##### **Comments from Families**

- “Family is everything to me.”
- “If my family doesn’t help me, who will?”

### **NEEDS of LOW INCOME FAMILIES with CHILDREN**

Low income families have a variety of needs that are met by HOPES Early Childhood Program.

#### **EDUCATION**

HOPES ECP provides full-day, 5 days per week, year-round classes (11 months/180 days) to the children as well as support to their families. The children are immersed in a robust, comprehensive center-based program.

From 2008 – 2009, HOPES ECP has an actual enrollment of 187 Head Start eligible children and 135 Abbott children at 4 Head Start centers; 75 of the children are in their second year, and 2 are in their third year.

HOPES ECP employs capable staff:

- 85% of teachers have an Associate degree or higher (Head Start only requires an AA);
- 80% of teachers have a Bachelors degree or higher;
- 50% of Education staff is bilingual in Spanish;
- 46% of assistant teachers have the Child Development Associate credential or higher.

HOPES Early Childhood Program switched the curriculum in 2008 to Tools of Mind. Recent educational data indicated the children required a curriculum that prioritized the building of “cognitive control skills”, skills crucial to children's ability to succeed scholastically and socially. These skills include retaining information, not allowing distractions to interfere with functioning, and adapting to change. It is based on research that found connections between poor executive function skills and difficulties including: ADHD; poor school performance; drug use; and criminal behavior. Research indicated that while some children are biologically predisposed to disorders such as ADHD, cognitive skills training can help.

The majority of families consider the switch to this curriculum highly effective. Tools of the Mind focuses on 40 activities designed to develop children's executive function, including child-directed, teacher-supported, and cooperative peer activities. Instruction is individualized through teacher scaffolding. Dramatic play is a main component of the curriculum. With intentional planning by the children and support from the teacher, this component exposes children to a range of experiences that foster self-regulation skills.

In addition, HOPES ECP has helped many of the parents grow a career in child care. Over the years HOPES ECP has trained 32 former or current Head Start parents as staff out of a total of 95 staff. Another 214 of 240 volunteers are former or current Head Start parents.

### **HEALTH**

Each year HOPES Early Childhood Program ensures that enrolled children have their basic health care needs met. During the 2008 – 2009 program year:

- all children had health insurance;
- all children had an ongoing source of continuous and accessible, routine, preventive and acute medical care;
- 184 children had up-to-date immunizations as determined by a medical professional;
- all children had an ongoing source of continuous and accessible, routine, preventive and acute dental care;
- all children completed a professional dental exam during the operating period or within the last 12 months;
- 176 children received preventive dental care;
- 44 children were diagnosed with dental care;
- 40 children received dental treatment;
- all children were observed by a mental health specialist working 100 hours per month;
- staff and parents were consulted by a mental health specialist about 46 children;
- 5 children received a mental health assessment;
- 6 children received a mental health referral;
- 56 children were determined to have disabilities, which were all either speech/language related or developmental delays.

### **NUTRITION**

Every year HOPES Early Childhood Program ensures that enrolled children receive basic nutrition. During the 2008 – 2009 program year the ECP provided:

- 45,555 breakfast meals;
- 45,335 lunch meals;
- 38,465 snacks.

HOPES ECP ensured supplemental nutrition was provided to 27 families through the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program.

## **SOCIAL SERVICE**

HOPES Early Childhood Program met the social service needs of 163 families with the following services in 2008:

- provided emergency crisis intervention (food, clothes, shelter for 37 families;
- housing assistance (subsidies, utilities, repairs, etc.) to 14 families;
- transportation assistance (subsidized public transportation, etc.) to 17 families;
- mental health services to 28 families;
- English as a Second Language training for 1 family;
- adult education (GED programs, college selection, etc.) for 10 families;
- job training for 10 families;
- substance abuse prevention or treatment for 1 family;
- child abuse and neglect services for 7 families;
- health education (including prenatal education) for 59 families;
- parenting education for 42 families;
- marriage education services for 2 families.

In addition:

- 77 fathers/father figures participated in father-related activities sponsored by ECP/Head Start;
- 158 families participated in a family goal setting process which resulted in an individualized family partnership agreement;
- 14 homeless families were served, 7 of who were able to acquire housing during the enrollment year.

**NEEDS of LOW INCOME FAMILIES with CHILDREN as DEFINED by FAMILIES & COMMUNITY INSTITUTIONS SERVING NEEDS of YOUNG CHILDREN**

Overall the vast majority of parents felt very positive about HOPES Early Childhood Program and that the services provided fully met their children’s needs and helped them be more effective.

**ECP EDUCATION**

Parents gave a 96.5% combined rating for the educational experience of their children and families.

<b>HOPES Early Childhood Program</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Combined Approval Rating</b>
<b>Education</b>	81.0 %	15.5 %	96.5 %

Room for improvement focused on curriculum enrichment activities and Spanish education.

**Parents comments:**

- “I’d like to see more music programs, movement programs, special story time, zoo animals and classroom parent involvement.”
- “The program needs more flexibility with Tools of the Mind curriculum; introduce concepts that worked in prior years, and use more parent suggestions in the curriculum.”
- “Give Spanish classes to the children.”
- “We need more funding for activities like field trips.”
- “Extend summer program through August.”

**ECP HEALTH**

Parents gave an 89.6% combined rating for health care services organized by ECP on behalf of their children.

<b>HOPES Early Childhood Program</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Combined Approval Rating</b>
<b>Health</b>	67.2%	22.4 %	89.6 %

Parents focused their comments on two areas: health services and physical activity time.

**Parents comments:**

- “Sometimes I can’t find a doctor near me when I need one.”
- “I’d like to see HOPES be less strict with the requirements for immunizations.”
- “Need more physical education for kids.”
- “More outdoor activities for children.”
- “Need more time in the gym and play time outside.”

**ECP NUTRITION**

Parents gave a combined rating of 88% to the nutritional program provided to their children.

<b>HOPES Early Childhood Program</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Combined Approval Rating</b>
<b>Nutrition</b>	64.7%	23.3 %	88.0 %

Parents indicated they would like a range of eating and nutrition preferences.

**Parents comments:**

- “I’d like a larger selection of food for my children.”
- “More hot meals and different choices for food program.”
- “Add recycling bins to the community.”

**ECP SOCIAL SERVICES**

Parents gave a combined rating of 89.7% for social services ECP provided to their children and the families.

<b>HOPES Early Childhood Program</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Combined Approval Rating</b>
<b>Social Service</b>	64.7 %	25.0 %	89.7 %

Parents indicated they would like to see extended care hours in the afternoon, more outreach, and family support.

**Parents comments:**

- “I’d like to be able to pay an hourly rate for extended child care and have more flexible hours.”
- “I’d like to see the center provide after school care later in the day – 6:00pm or later.”
- “Need wrap-around care to at least 6:30pm.”
- “Give extended time at the end of the day for parents to arrive.”
- “Give more notice for changes to the class schedule.”
- “Need more centers and programs for teens.”
- “Need toddler care.”
- “Need drug and alcohol counseling.”

**FAMILY VIEWS of 10 of THEIR HIGHEST NEEDS**

Families prioritized 10 needs that are important to them.

<b>Need</b>	<b>Very Important</b>	<b>Important</b>	<b>Combined Importance Total</b>
1. Infant/Toddler Center Child Care	69.8 %	12.0 %	81.8 %
2. Extended Child Care	69.8 %	12.0 %	81.8 %
3. Access to Physician	63.4 %	22.0 %	85.6 %
4. Access to Dentists	62.7 %	20.9%	83.6 %
5. Finding a Job	57.7 %	16.2 %	73.9 %
6. Job Training	53.6 %	17.0 %	70.6 %
7. Safety	53.5 %	30.3 %	83.8 %
8. Food	53.0 %	21.1 %	74.1 %
9. Affordable Housing	52.7 %	24.1 %	76.8 %
10. Improved Health Care	51.0 %	28.1 %	79.1 %

**Priority Need #1 – Infant/Toddler Center Child Care.** The Hoboken Housing Authority reported that 80% of its residents were working in 2008; some worked more than one job. Since TANF recipients are required to work, take classes or be in training, TANF parents with children between 0 to 5 years of age need child care. We estimate there are at least 180 children between 0 and 2 years of age living in poverty that need child care. This estimate is based on the figure from the 2008 update to Census 2000 that 21.8% of children under 5 years of age in Hoboken lived in poverty. It is likely that the actual number is higher due to the current economic recession and subsequent loss of jobs and incomes for many low income families.

Despite the need for infant and toddler care, there are not near enough child care slots for infants and toddlers in child care centers that serve low income families, and there aren't any Head Start programs that provide infant-toddler care in the area. There are approximately 1,880 children between the ages of 0 and 2 years of age in Hoboken. We estimate that of these 1,880 children, there are approximately 180 infants and toddlers that live below the poverty line. Despite this need there are only about 82 existing infant and toddler care slots for low income families with children in Hoboken. The two centers that provide slots for infants and toddlers from low income families are Mile Square Day Care (39 infants & 15 toddlers) and Day Care 100 (12 infants and 16 toddlers), totaling 82 slots.

To meet the need for infant and toddler care, many families use extended family members, neighbors, and/or other local home care providers to care for their infants and toddlers. These care providers often are not trained in best practice care strategies, are not regulated, and are not in licensed environments that meet safety regulations. According to a 2002 study *“Partnerships for Quality: Improving Infant-Toddler Child Care for Low income Families by Zero to Three*

and Mathematica Policy Research, not only is there an insufficient number of infant-toddler care slots in New Jersey, but most infant-toddler care quality is not good. In its annual report, Kids Count 2008 indicated that very little has changed in infant and toddler care in terms of availability or quality over the past several years. There are private infant\toddler centers, but they are cost prohibitive for low income families, since these centers costs range from \$8,500 to \$22,000 per year.

**Priority Need #2 - Extended Child Care.** HOPES Early Childhood Program runs from 8:30am to 2:30pm, and offers extended hours Monday through Friday from 7:30am to 8:30am in the morning and from 2:30pm to 5:30pm in the afternoon. Parents indicated that extended hours would help them better meet their responsibilities. Suggestions were to keep the centers open to at least 6:00pm in the evenings to give families more time to pick up their children when returning from work, class, or training. One parent suggested allowing them to pay an hourly rate for this service as needed.

**Priority Needs #3 & #4 - Access to Physicians and Dentists.** There are an ample number of physicians and dentists in Hoboken, but according to low income residents there are very few willing to take a Medicaid voucher for payment. Physicians and dentists willing to see low income patients often put them on long waiting lists. For families who need immediate services, or who have children with a chronic condition such as asthma or diabetes, or a dental issues, parents often have to travel to other communities like Jersey City to receive services. This effort adds more complexity to their living challenges. Every time they have an appointment, they have to expend costs for public transportation and invest additional time in travel.

**Priority Needs # 5 & #6 - Finding a Job and Job Training.** Families have been deeply affected by the current economic recession. Some have been recently laid off from their job; some have lost one of the two jobs they had. Many parents want more resources to help them find a job, and to find a job quickly. In addition, many want to improve their job skills, either to gain a job, gain a better paying job, or increase their competitiveness and viability for promotion in the job they hold. Several parents mentioned that it would be highly useful to have ongoing job fairs in Hoboken, and/or have access to a resource that could list available jobs in the local area. If jobs are not available locally, parents indicated they would use public transportation to travel to wherever the jobs are located.

**Priority Need #7 - Safety.** Families expressed concern about the safety of their living environment. Many of the families attending HOPES Early Childhood Program live in the “Projects” on the West Side, and have concerns about safety for their children, gang activity among young people, and illegal drug sales. They worry about their young children being influenced by “negative images” projected by others in the neighborhood, and not feeling comfortable allowing their young children to play outside unattended. Parents indicated they would like families in their buildings to take greater responsibility for the safety and maintenance of their own floors “like families used to do”, “where everyone watched out for each other”. They mentioned that it is difficult to overcome a pervasive attitude among many people in their neighborhood who “are not willing to point out people who cause problems for others in the building and who carry out illegal activities like selling drugs”.

**Priority Need #8 - Food.** Several parents expressed concern about the rising cost of food and this effect on the family budget. Families indicated that despite being conservative in their budget expenditures, they or other families experience food shortages when they run out of food stamps before the end of the month. They indicated they would like to be able to buy food in bulk amounts to help reduce costs, or have access to shopping at food sources that had lower costs than local supermarkets.

**Priority Need #9 - Affordable Housing.** It is very difficult for low income families to find housing they can afford in Hoboken. Housing costs in Hoboken have continually increased, and access to low income housing is limited. Families indicated that there has been a radical reduction in subsidized Section 8 housing units, and that several families they know are “doubling up and tripling up” by moving in with their mother, aunt, grandmother, or friend in order to help them reduce their housing expenses.

**Priority Need #10 – Help Improving Health.** Parents want help achieving and maintaining good health for themselves and their children. Parents indicated that while they are aware of the state of their own health, and their childrens’ health, they need more professional support dealing with and improving their health, ranging from managing chronic conditions like diabetes, asthma, and mental health issues to weight control.

## **Youth**

**Youth Services Program** enables youth in grades 4 through 12 to have a safe place to explore, learn and socialize. Opportunities are provided to learn about Microsoft applications, access educational websites, and work independently or with support on homework and school projects. Youth are encouraged to develop technological skills through innovative hands on learning experiences. Services are offered weekdays from 2:30 - 5:00 PM during the school year, and for six weeks during the summer.

## **Adults**

The following information was based upon feedback from surveys, interviews, and focus groups held with 52 clients served by HOPES Community Assistance, Adult , and Youth Services programs.

### **STRENGTHS of LOW INCOME ADULTS**

#### **1. Respondents believe in the importance of education.**

- 67% of respondents had at least a high school education and 32% of this percentage had taken some college courses.

#### **Comments from Respondents**

- “I’m glad I got my degree.”
- “I wished I could have gotten my G.E.D. sooner.”
- “I’m trying to figure out how to pay for college.”
- “I wanted to go the university; I had to take SATs, and then I decided on Hudson County College.”
- “School? School starts at home.”

## **2. Respondents value access to information via technology.**

- 84% of respondents felt computers were very important to them.

### **Comments from Respondents**

- “It would be great to have parent and child computer classes; that would help them have something in common.”
- “It should be mandatory that kids take computer classes themselves and learn how to use all aspects of it.”
- “Most adults don’t have skills that kids have with computers; a lot of us don’t like to use the computer; it’s not part of our generation, but we have to use it”
- “I don’t like technology, computers, but I need to learn it – everyone should learn how to use it.”

## **3. Respondents see HOPES Community Assistance Services as an important source in their lives.**

- 100% of respondents indicated that HOPES’ services bring value to their lives.

### **Comments from Respondents**

- “We need more people like Evelyn (Manager of Community Assistance Services) that care about you as an individual.”
- “The instructors are very knowledgeable, dedicated; they follow through on everything.”
- “Evelyn helped me; she asked me what I wanted to do for the rest of my life.”
- “The instructors know a lot about computers; and they are good teachers.”
- “When I came to this country I didn’t know such help was available until I came to the center.”
- “My neighbor, through HOPES Community Assistance Services, got her GED and then found a career, so I came here.”

## **4. Respondents believe in the power of community.**

- 68% of respondents felt that if they could work together with others in their community as an organized unit, they could improve their lives.

### **Comments from Respondents**

- “My greatest reward; there were kids who I helped; I told them they could do something; they are doing better than me but I’m proud of them.”
- “There has to be unity in the community. It goes back to people working together.”
- “I remember when there was unity on each Housing Authority floor; each day a different tenant on the floor would clean the hallway. We took care of things ourselves.”
- “We need to establish an environment where people are going to do something about it if something is wrong; that creates opportunity. Everyone needs to have the same understanding.”

## **NEEDS OF LOW INCOME ADULTS**

Many of the services provided by HOPES Community Assistance Services, Adult Services, and Youth Services are delivered through the Family Resource Center (FRC). The main FRC is located at 532 Jackson Street, Unit 1B, on the ground floor of a small 1 bedroom apartment in a Housing Authority building on the West Side of Hoboken. Its location in the main Public Housing Authority complex in Hoboken ensures ease of accessibility for many low income families. Here low income seniors, adults, and youth (an average of 132 people per month) receive a range of services that assist them in their personal and professional growth.

HOPES staff that provide these community services are well prepared for their tasks:

- 100% of staff have a Bachelors degree.
- 100% of staff are certified Microsoft Specialists.
- The FRC is the only site in Hudson County that is VITA certified for free tax preparation.
- 100% of staff are bilingual in Spanish.
- 100% of staff live in or near the communities they serve.

## **FINANCIAL COUNSELING SUPPORT**

**Income Tax Preparation** is offered by HOPES staff and trained volunteers to help income eligible residents prepare and file their tax returns. HOPES staff is VITA certified; this program is the only such certified site in all of Hudson County.

**Entitlement Guidance** is provided by HOPES staff to help low income residents learn about, and benefit from, various entitlement programs available to low income individuals such as NJ SHARES energy assistance program, food stamps, and Public Services Electric and Gas Home Energy Assistance.

## **CAREER EXPLORATION/ JOB SEARCH**

**The Employment Support Program** provides individuals with employment related case management services, including career exploration, job search strategies, resume development, employment counseling, and educational programs that support clients with obtaining employment and career advancement.

## **EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT**

HOPES staff provide several types of classes 5 days per week, year-round to adults and youth in order to: help them build knowledge and skills to pursue and complete their education; attain life skills, a job and/or career; and/or apply for services available for low income residents.

**Basic Computer Classes** are provided to clients with minimal computer knowledge. Topics covered include: understanding a desktop and its components, using applications, working with CDs, folders, and files, printing with Windows, personalizing Windows, setting up programs, using Windows accessories and maintaining the system. Clients are familiarized with Microsoft programs Word, PowerPoint and Publisher. Classes include connection to online services and the Internet. After successful completion of this class (measured by pre and post exams), clients receive certificates. Once clients feel comfortable with the basic level of computer usage, they are encouraged to enroll for the Intermediate Computer Class.

**Intermediate Computer Classes** teach students Microsoft applications commonly used in work environments, including MS Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Publisher at advanced levels. Students work on researching information from the Internet. Students are expected to complete projects that utilize and test acquired skills and knowledge. Assignments consist of creating spreadsheets, newsletters and multi-media graphic presentations. These classes prepare students to enter the work place. After successful completion of this class (measured by pre and post exams), students receive certificates.

**GED preparation classes** are available to help individuals pass the GED exam. Classes are offered both days and evenings. The GED exam consists of five different tests: Math, Social Studies, Science, Reading, and Writing with five different time limits. Once a preliminary exam is administered and reviewed clients receive support in those subject areas that require strengthening using Tutor Systems, a specialized software system. Tutor Systems educational software helps individuals master basic skills in reading, grammar, and mathematics through a four-step process. Adult students are tested to determine basic skills deficiencies and lessons are prescribed to remediate deficiencies. Clients are tested again to ensure skill mastery. Clients receive homework, computer work, and tutoring to enhance academic skills.

**ESL- English as a Second Language** assists beginning and intermediate clients develop and improve English skills in reading, writing, and speaking. Classes are directed at improving English conversational skills for home and workplace literacy. BEST Literacy software is used to measure basic literacy skills in reading, language, mathematics and spelling in order to determine if the learner is at an Easy, Medium, Difficult, or Advanced level. Classes are taught using Rosetta Stone software for English language learners.

**Adult Basic Education in Writing and Reading** helps build low income residents' skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing as a process for communication. This class focuses on skills development and student motivation. Skills application is reinforced through the usage of relevant materials, teaching strategies, and the integration of skills in students' daily routines. Life skills related to consumer economics, community resources, health issues, and employment is intertwined. The writing component emphasizes writing as a process. Students communicate purpose, thought, and information clearly while incorporating the development of appropriate grammar, structure, spelling, and punctuation. The Basic Skills series of the Tutor Systems software is utilized to teach the subject area and provides instruction in word analysis, vocabulary, comprehension, spelling, language mechanics, and capitalization. At the end of the course a post test is administered to assess client progress.

**Adult Basic Education in Math** helps individuals use it with confidence. Most of the materials in the classes are individualized. Some clients enter classes with very little math know-how or with skills that might require a quick brush up. Pre-tests are administered to assess skill levels so that lessons can be tailored to each client's academic needs. Emphasis is on analytical thinking applying math skills to home, school, and work. Tutor Systems Software provides instruction in the fundamentals of mathematics, including addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. Following this course a post test is administered to evaluate the level of progress made.

**FOOD SUPPORT**

**Low Cost Food Program** enables the ordering of low cost food items by residents through HOPES, which works collaboratively with community partner Mount Calvary Church to provide this service. On a monthly basis HOPES staff manage the orders and low-cost payment of the food for clients, and interface with Mount Calvary Church. HOPES staff receive the bulk food items from Jersey City and distribute orders to individuals from a central location. Disabled and senior clients have their food delivered directly to their homes.

**NEEDS of LOW INCOME ADULTS as DEFINED by ADULTS & COMMUNITY INSTITUTIONS SERVING THEM**

**MOST OFTEN USED HOPES COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE SERVICES, ADULT SERVICES, and YOUTH SERVICES**

Computer Classes	Employment Services	Tax Preparation	ESL	ABE	Other
42.3%	32.7%	19.2%	15.4%	13.5%	13.5%

**FREQUENCY OF USAGE**

Few Times a Week	Daily	Few Times a Month	Few Times a Year
53.9%	17.3%	15.4%	3.8%

**TASKS HOPES HELPED ACCOMPLISH**

Access Needed Service	Complete Resume	Gain Computer Skills	Find a Job	Complete Taxes	Learn English
40.3%	38.5%	38.5%	23.0%	19.2%	13.5%

**Clients also stated HOPES services helped them do the following types of activities.**

- “Complete my CWEP activity.”
- “Receive assistance w/ my PSE&G bill.”
- “Helped with completing paperwork.”
- “Get access to computers.”
- “Order food for a low price.”
- “Prepared me for my college entry exam.”
- “Helped to fill out paperwork I don't understand.”
- “Helped with resumes, jobs, computers, and paperwork.”
- “Enabled me to sharpen basic skills with the computer class.”
- “Evelyn helped a lot with finding a job that's close to home.”
- “Computer class helped a lot – I feel more comfortable with typing a letter.”

## **RESPONDENT' VIEWS of 11 of THEIR HIGHEST NEEDS**

Clients prioritized 11 needs that are important to them.

<b>Need</b>	<b>Very Important</b>	<b>Important</b>	<b>Combined Importance Total</b>
1. Rental Assistance	75.0 %	15.4 %	90.4 %
2. Food	69.2 %	17.3 %	82.7 %
3. Affordable Housing	67.3%	17.3%	84.6%
4. Utilities Assistance	65.4%	17.3%	82.7%
5. More FRC Locations	65.4%	13.5%	78.8%
6. Job Training	57.7%	17.3 %	75.0%
7. Help Dealing with Agencies	55.8%	13.5%	69.2%
8. Money Management / Budgeting Guidance	55.8%	13.5%	69.2%
9. Career Information & Help	51.9%	32.7%	84.6%
10. Clothing	51.9%	26.9%	78.8%
11. Housing Counseling	51.9%	25.0%	76.9%

**Priority Need #1 - Rental Assistance** The average rent of a 1 bedroom apartment has risen 34.6% in 7 years, or approximately 5% every year, and the recession has not caused rents to stabilize or decrease. Approximately 31% of residents pay more than 30% of their income for rent. Even though many of the lowest income families live in subsidized housing, families indicated they are always looking for every means possible to stretch their income.

**Priority Need #2 - Food.** The cost of food continues to increase. Low income families' budgets have not increased in a comparable way, so families are not able to purchase the same amount of food as they had in the last few years. Toward the end of the month, as their food budget runs out, they are compelled to supplement their food supplies with monies assigned to other purposes in their budget, or go to food banks, or innovate other ways to stretch their food budget or food preparation. In addition, the cost of fresh food (vegetables, fruit, fish, chicken) is more costly than foods with high fat, high carbohydrates, and more chemicals. Lower income families often feel compelled to purchase these lower cost, lower quality foods in order to stretch their food. This food in turn is less nutritious and much more likely to causes such problems as obesity, which in turn is a portal to a range of problems such as diabetes and various types of cancer.

**Priority Needs #3 - Affordable Housing.** As indicated previously, finding affordable housing is a major issue in Hudson County and Hoboken. Housing costs have continually increased. Some families move in with other family members or friends in order to stretch their monthly budget, sometimes not only doubling up but tripling up with 2 other families.

**Priority Needs # 4 - Utilities Assistance.** The cost of utilities has risen substantially in the past several years. When low income families have problems paying for utilities of any kind, or are delayed paying a bill, utilities place a time limit on them before the utility is withdrawn. Low income families look to the FRC to help them make arrangements with the utility company to develop a payment accommodation plan.

**Priority Need #5 - More Family Resource Center Locations.** Clients and non-clients of HOPES expressed a clear interest in having more Community Assistance Service locations closer to their homes. Hoboken Housing Authority residents living in the West Side found the Community Service's Family Resource Center easily accessible since it was located in the Jackson Street Housing Authority building complex. But clients living in other areas of Hoboken and neighboring communities would like to have a Family Resource Center located closer to them. Approximately 20% of the clients participating in the survey came from neighboring communities including Union City, Jersey City, North Bergen, West New York, and Edgewater.

Clients also indicated they would like to see the Community Assistance Services program expand, including being able to provide more in-depth classes and a greater range of services and types of services.

Suggestions for expanded services included the following statements.

- “Bigger staff.”
- “More classes.”
- “Open on weekends.”
- “More "access" classes.”
- “More job fairs for clients.”
- “A class on how to get a job.”
- “More financial literacy workshops.”
- “Citizenship classes.”
- “Class on how to improve job skills.”
- “More job search materials.”
- “More activities to get youth involved with neighborhood and community.”
- “Kid’s recreation center.”
- “Computer classes without gaps.”
- “More job opportunities.”
- “Advanced computer classes.”
- “Health and low income housing help.”
- “Child care for young kids with no income parents.”
- “Educational field trips for youth and adults.”
- “Need more programs for kids - after school care.”
- “More teachers in the ESL classes.”

**Priority Need #6 - Job Training.** There is a great deal of interest and need to find jobs in Hudson County and participate in training programs for jobs that are in demand. The unemployment rate continues to climb in Hudson County due to the economic recession. As of May, 2009, the Bureau of Labor Statistics indicated the unemployment rate was 10.3% in Hudson County, but it is no doubt a higher percentage for low income residents since they often are only able to acquire the types of jobs that are highly influenced by economic slowdowns.

**Priority Need #7 - Help Dealing with Government Agencies.** Participants expressed an ongoing need for help dealing with and understanding the requirements of government agencies such as social security, the internal revenue service, and TANF as well as services such as utilities, health insurance, debt collection, etc.

**Priority Need #8 - Money Management / Budgeting Guidance.** Participants are interested in ways to save money to help them cope with financial challenges, and exploring alternatives to their current financial challenges.

**Priority Need #9- Career Information & Help.** Low income adults, particularly young people, are interested in learning about careers, requirements for careers, how their strengths match various career paths, and the steps they need to take in order to pursue development of a career.

**Priority Need #10 – Clothing.** Some survey and focus group participants indicated they consider many of the clothing stores in the area too costly for their budgets, and that they do not have ready access to stores where clothing is less costly.

**Priority Need #11 - Housing Counseling.** Some residents want help finding viable housing they can afford. Others want help getting repairs completed by the landlord of the housing in which they live.

## Seniors

The following information was based upon feedback from the surveys, interviews, and focus groups held with 47 senior citizens served by HOPES Senior Services.

### **STRENGTHS of LOW INCOME SENIORS**

#### **a. Seniors want to remain in their communities.**

- The average number of years of senior participants in the community assessment had been living in their community was 37 years, and they wanted to continue living in their community.

#### **Comments from seniors**

- “I like being here. I raised my family here.”
- “This was my first home in this area.”
- “My family isn’t here any more, but I want to be here.”
- “All my friends are here.”

#### **2. Seniors support one another and those who support them.**

- 91% of respondents mentioned the importance of being near organizations like HOPES that care about seniors, and the importance of friendships and contact with others their age because they share information and resources.

#### **Comments from seniors**

- “I help my friends and my friends help me.”
- “My friends are good.”
- “HOPES - they helped me with my papers and service information and they are also very lovely.”
- “Keep HOPES – it’s a good program and helps a lot of people.”
- “I vote for the candidate who wants to help seniors.”

#### **3. Seniors believe they can be a valuable resource to the community.**

- 67% of respondents indicated that they felt they could still bring value to others in the community because of their life experiences.

#### **Comments from seniors**

- “I’ve seen a lot – I still know how to get around.”
- “Young people could learn some things from us.”
- “People think your old and you can’t do anything, but we can.”

#### **4. Seniors strive to be as self-sufficient as possible.**

- 83% of respondents wanted to maintain some independence and not have to completely depend on others, despite whatever limitations they had.

#### **Comments from seniors**

- “I need this wheelchair for getting around, but I do okay.”
- “I wouldn’t mind working part time; I just have to find some work.”
- “I really appreciate the services here at HOPES. I don’t like to depend on anyone, but they are a big help with things I can’t do myself.”

## **NEEDS OF LOW INCOME SENIORS**

HOPES CAP Inc. provides services to seniors at multiple locations, i.e. 124 Grand Street, 532 Jackson Street, and at many clients' homes through the Senior Home Visiting Program. HOPES provides the following services to meet the needs of low income seniors.

**Assisted Transportation** transports Hoboken senior citizens to scheduled appointments, many of which are for medical needs.

**Senior Home Visiting Program** provides homebound elderly with home visits, light housekeeping assistance and local errand services.

**Senior Information & Assistance Program** offers one on one support to seniors who are interested in learning about various human service or entitlement programs available to them. Clients receive support understanding and completing applications. Follow up advocacy support is also made available.

**Senior Education Program** offers seniors the opportunity to participate in recreational activities, workshops and classes. This program is specifically tailored to meet the interests and needs of Hudson County's senior citizens.

The Senior Programs provide services to an average of 400 seniors per year. Senior Program services are provided by committed, capable staff:

- 100% are specialists in elder care;
- almost all are bilingual in Spanish;
- almost all have long term experience providing services to low income residents of Hoboken and Hudson County.

## **NEEDS of LOW INCOME SENIORS as DEFINED by SENIORS & COMMUNITY INSTITUTIONS SERVING SENIORS**

### **MOST OFTEN USED SENIOR SERVICES**

<b>Senior Outreach</b>	<b>Assisted Transportation</b>	<b>Senior Information &amp; Assistance</b>	<b>Senior Education</b>
59.6%	53.2%	19.1%	10.6%

### **FREQUENCY OF SENIOR SERVICES USAGE**

<b>Few Times a Month</b>	<b>Few Times a Year</b>	<b>Few Times a Week</b>	<b>Daily</b>
57.4%	10.6%	8.5%	0%

**SENIOR VIEWS of 10 of THEIR HIGHEST NEEDS**

Seniors prioritized 10 needs that are important to them.

<b>Need</b>	<b>Very Important</b>	<b>Important</b>	<b>Combined Importance Total</b>
1. More Senior Transportation	78.7% %	4.3 %	83% %
2. More Senior Housing	76.6%	2.0%	78.6%
3. Help Dealing with Agencies	72.3%	10.6%	82.9%
4. Nearby Physicians Who Take NJ Family Cares	72.3%	6.4%	78.7%
5. Rent Money Assistance	68.0%	10.6%	78.6%
6. Nearby Dentists Who Take NJ Family Cares	65.6%	8.5%	74.1%
7. Low Cost Food or Food Bank	59.6%	8.5%	68.1%
8. Utilities Assistance	59.6%	8.5%	68.1%
9. Help Shopping	55.3%	27.8%	83.1%
10. Social Visits in Home	53.2 %	14.9%	68.1 %

**Priority Need #1 - More Senior Transportation.** Seniors greatly value the transportation services provided by HOPES and consider it a “lifeline” to needed services such as medical and dental appointments for check-up/annual exams, testing, treatment, pre-procedure screening, procedures, post-procedure treatment, therapy, fittings, medical equipment selection and purchase, etc. HOPES routinely receives the highest level in satisfaction ratings for all its services, including Assisted Transportation. The fact that they requested more senior transportation reflects the success of this service. Some seniors indicating that this is the one opportunity they have to travel outside of Hoboken, or even within the community, to complete such tasks as food shopping and other necessity purchasing. When asked what community organizations they would recommend to others in the surveys, seniors almost only recommended HOPES, not any other service, and many mentioned the transportation service in particular.

**Priority Need #2 - More Senior Housing.** As mentioned previously, housing is a major problem in Hoboken and neighboring communities for people such as seniors who are on a fixed income. Rents continue to rise, but their income often does not. For those with savings, their income has actually decreased as interest rates radically dropped due to the economic recession.

**Priority Need #3 - Help Dealing with Government Agencies.** Seniors need help responding to and processing requests from the internal revenue service, social security, Housing Authority, utility company, New Jersey Cares, and other agencies and organizations requiring forms and information. Since several seniors do not speak and/or read English well, many also need translation services to help them respond.

**Priority Need #4 - Nearby Physicians Who Take NJ Family Cares.** Seniors need a range of medical services as they age, and several physicians in the community do not accept payment vouchers. This in turn requires seniors from Hoboken to be transported to physicians outside of the community who do accept them. Seniors from other communities have to take public transportation or be driven to physicians who accept this payment.

**Priority Need #5 - Rent Money Assistance.** Seniors mentioned several times in surveys, interviews, and focus groups that their rents have increased, and they are concerned about being forced to leave the area because of rising housing costs. A few seniors suggested that it would be very helpful if rental assistance could come in the form of a subsidy for the difference “between their old rent and their new rent”.

**Priority Need #6 - Nearby Dentists Who Take NJ Family Cares.** Seniors face the same issue with dentists as they do with physicians. Only certain dentists in the community accept seniors’ payment vouchers.

**Priority Need #7 - Low Cost Food or Food Bank.** Some seniors indicated that they have cut back on their food budget in order to accommodate other costs, such as the increased cost for medicine or rent, or that their income does not enable them to purchase as much food as they used to be able to purchase. They indicated that it would be helpful to have a food bank that they could use when their food dollars don’t enable them to purchase the food staples they need.

**Priority Need #8 - Utilities Assistance.** The need for utilities assistance ranged from help responding to the utilities paper work to speaking to a representative, and/or help arranging payment or requesting a service from the utility.

**Priority Need #9 - Help Shopping.** Shopping needs greatly ranged, from being able to go to a store where they could most economically purchase food, medicine, or other necessities they need to just having a service that would help them shop.

**Priority Need #10 - Social Visits in Your Home.** Several seniors mentioned that they greatly value HOPES Senior Outreach program, and that would like that to continue.

#### **Seniors also wrote in other needs and comments**

- “more medical insurance” (written in by 25% of respondents in the surveys and mentioned multiple times in interviews and focus group)
- “less rent increases”
- “more senior programs”
- “more senior housing”
- “more food benefits”
- “bigger senior services department”
- “need people to go to other peoples' homes to bring applications for food stamps”

In response to the question “*Has the recent increase in Social Security benefits changed your living situation?*”

- 48.9% indicated “no” it had NOT changed their living situation.
- 44.7% indicated “yes” it had changed their living situation
  - in response to “*how has it affected you?*”, respondents consistently wrote in that it “helped them pay their bills”.

In response to the question “*Has the current economic recession affected your living situation?*”

- 34.0% indicated “no” it has NOT affected their living situation
- 61.7% indicated “yes” it has affected their living situation
  - in response to “*how has it affected you?*”, respondents wrote in the following:
    - “everything is expensive” (written in by 32% of respondents in survey and mentioned multiple times in interviews and focus group)
    - “higher food prices, health costs, money problems”
    - “rent increased”
    - “can't buy everything I did before”
    - “economy is bad”

In response to the question “*Have the changes in Hoboken and/or Hudson County the past 10 years affected your lifestyle?*”

- 44.7% indicated “no” it has NOT affected their living lifestyle
- 51% indicated “yes” it has affected their lifestyle
  - in response to “*how it affected you?*”, respondents write in the following:
    - “everything is expensive” (written in by 23% of respondents in survey and mentioned multiple times in interviews and focus group)
    - “higher food costs”
    - “my job was privatized by the Board of Education”
    - “lost job because it was privatized”
    - “all the prices are rising”
    - “there is no work”

## **COMMUNITY RESOURCES VIEW OF NEEDS**

The following information highlights that portion of surveys and interviews with 47 community partners that focus on the needs of low income residents of Hoboken and Hudson County.

## **GENERAL COMMENTS ABOUT COMMUNITY NEEDS**

### **Affordable Housing**

- *Grace Corpuz of PNC Bank N.A.* indicated that the prices of rental units in Hudson County continue to increase despite the economic downturn, and there are an increasing number of low-to-moderate income residents who are facing possible homelessness.
- *Susane Byrne, Executive Director, St. Joseph's Home*, said there is a need for more affordable housing, for residents to learn how to manage an apartment; there are a number of homeless with mental health problems, including young people who grew up with violence in the home.

### **Food**

- *Elizabeth Hemingway, Mount Calvary Baptist Church, Each One Feed One (Angel Food Ministries)* said there is an increasing need to provide food to low income families. She indicated there are an increasing number of people relying on low costs food baskets throughout Hudson County. She stated low income people are experiencing more job layoffs and people have less money to buy food.

### **Jobs and Job Fairs**

- *Alice Lemire of Starting Points for Children, Inc.* stated families need job fairs quickly because families are losing jobs so fast.

### **Job Training and Employment Preparation**

- *John Roslowski, Former Superintendent of Schools, Hoboken Board of Education, currently Head Master of St. Peter's Preparatory School*, pointed out that there is a major need for job training for teens as well as for adult education in a variety of areas that they don't have now that respond to the immediate needs of the community at a critical level.
- *Grace Corpuz of PNC Bank N.A.* states there is a need for increased job skills training, including jobs that offer highly hour wages such as in the trades, i.e. plumbing, carpentry, construction.

## Low Income Services Coordination and Collaboration

- *Carmelo Garcia, Executive Director of the Hoboken Housing Authority* said there is a need for a comprehensive understanding by all agencies serving low income residents to know and understand what other stakeholders are doing in order to develop a uniform plan of action that lays out priorities, activities for each organization, and avoids redundancy of services.
- *John Roslowski, Former Superintendent of Schools, Hoboken Board of Education, currently Head Master of St. Peter's Preparatory School* pointed out the need for an organization like HOPES, with substantial credibility in the community, to bring together a range of organizations serving the community in order to discuss and take action on critical community issues in a non-political, and non-politicized, manner. There is need for more collaboration between community service stakeholders to take the time to think through activities, services, and mutual agendas, and then collaborate on a mutual plan of action.
- *Jessica Peters, Director of Special Services, Early Childhood Program, Hoboken Board of Education* indicated there needs to be thorough follow-through on information provided about children, and greater communication about barriers, including administrative, that prevent follow-through.
- *April Harris of In Jesus Name Charities* stated there is a need for more collaboration between her organization, HOPES, and other community resources to help create a greater sense of community and coordination.
- *Susane Byrne, Executive Director, St. Joseph's Home*, said there is need for coordination between services; organizations need to look beyond their own priorities and understand the priorities of other organizations in order to better serve low income clients.
- *La-Trenda Ross of the Urban League of Hudson County* sees a need for stronger coalitions among non-profits in terms of meeting on a regular basis to discuss and prioritize specific community problems, presenting capabilities to each other, and building common plans of action in order to maximize use of community resources.
- *Carmelo Garcia, Executive Director, Hoboken Housing Authority*, said there is need for a common cost benefit analyses tool that measure the effectiveness of budget expenditures by all community service agencies serving low income residents. It should not only document services rendered to low income residents but also measure the actual, specific, direct and indirect benefits of these expenditures.
- *Jessica Peters, Director of Special Services, Early Childhood Program, Hoboken Board of Education*, revealed that there is a need for greater program depth with low income families to ensure their needs are being met and that services aren't being too spread out.

## **Low Income Services Communication and Advocacy**

- *Carmelo Garcia, Executive Director, Hoboken Housing Authority*, said there is a need for better outreach to low income residents to learn of their needs and effectively respond to them, i.e. having outreach coordinators go door to door to survey low income residents on a regular basis to learn about their current situation and their needs.
- *La-Trenda Ross of the Urban League of Hudson County* feels there is a major need for a better and more consistent way to communicate to low income residents the range of services that are available and how to best use these services.
- *Dr. Elise Butkiewicz of the Hoboken Center for Family Health* indicated that many families, special needs groups, and seniors often need support learning of all the services appropriate for their specific needs, and how to navigate these support systems, utilize specific agencies, and meet their requirements. For example, some families underutilize food stamp services and child health insurance, even though they qualify, just because they don't know how to use these services.
- *Carmelo Garcia, Executive Director, Hoboken Housing Authority*, said that there is major need to help young moms, who need a "road map" to guide them to the right services.

## **Mental Health Support**

- *Dr. Vicki Barnett of the Community Mental Health Center of Hoboken University Medical Center* said parents have a need for more mental health support and more families at risk need to be identified and referred by HOPES and other referring organizations.

## **Online Communication**

- *George Schorr of HOPES Board* said there is a need for more online communication to involve the entire community in low residents' issues, keep the entire community informed of activities for low income residents as well as identification of low income residents' needs.

## **Sense of Community and Independence**

- *April Harris of In Jesus Name Charities* stated more organizations are needed like HOPES that help families gain a sense that they can self-define problems and develop solutions, in essence, learn “we power”.
- *Carmelo Garcia, Executive Director, Hoboken Housing Authority*, said there is need to change the negative perception of the Housing Authority as dangerous and help all residents appreciate that it is a safe neighborhood with hard-working people.
- *Jessica Peters, Director of Special Services, Early Childhood Program, Hoboken Board of Education*, said there is a multi-level need for connections between the “haves” and “have nots” in Hoboken and other communities.

## **Small Business Training**

- *April Harris of In Jesus Name Charities* stated there is a need to train young people how to build a business, i.e. a need for business incubators where young people and adults could experiment with building a business, and where local business people could mentor these young people and adults to help them grow the business. There is a need for an ongoing idea exchange between community residents and business people.

## **COMMENTS SPECIFIC TO NEEDS OF FAMILIES AND CHILDREN**

### **After School Care**

- *Alice Lemire of Starting Points for Children, Inc.* stated that Hudson County families need after school care, weekend care, and enrichment programs.

### **Child Care Centers Managed by Child Care Specialists**

- *Alice Lemire of Starting Points for Children, Inc.* indicated that there is need for more early childhood specialists to either manage and/or influences decision making for child care centers. She indicated that the reason HOPES manages such an effective child care program is because they are specialists in early childhood, they understand how to be inclusive of parents, support their roles as parents and child care workers, and create a “culture of growth”. Many others who manage child care centers, or are responsible for them, do not specialize in early childhood education and don’t understand or appreciate the important details about this age group. Decisions are being made by non early child care specialists, sometimes at a district-wide level, which greatly affects the quality of care children receive, causes stress, and prevents care from being optimum.

## Children's Rehabilitative Services

- *Dr. Sophie Pierog of Hoboken University Medical Center, Center for Family Health* said there is a major lack of childrens' rehabilitation services. One of the few services available in Hudson County is a hearing testing program at Jersey City Medical Center, but it is the only hearing testing program for the entire county. There is a major need for satellite centers for hearing and other basic services.
- *Dr. Sophie Pierog of Hoboken University Medical Center, Center for Family Health* also said dental services are badly needed. She said there are dentists who take Medicaid, but that there is a long waiting list and there are very few prophylactic services available. In a recent survey she carried out with low income families with children, 50% of the children needed prophylactic care but there were no local dental clinics to refer the children. For serious dental problems families referred to UMDNJ NJ Dental School, but by the time the referral is made it is usually too late for preventative work to be carried out that would have a significant, long-term impact.

## English as a Second Language Training

- *Jessica Peters, Director of Special Services, Early Childhood Program, Hoboken Board of Education*, emphasized that reading and writing language skills are needed in Hudson County. She said many non-English speakers won't attend class because they are embarrassed by their lack of skills, and/or fearful of "bureaucratic" implications of attending class and being "tracked by the government".

## Family Counseling

- *Carolyn Best of Preschool Intervention & Referral Team member (PIRT) for Hoboken Board of Education*, states there is a need for more family counseling within the school system rather than referring them out. She is concerned families do not seek assistance if they are referred to an outside resource. She is seeing a distinct increase in anger issues among the children; the children are bringing problems, including violence issues, from the home to school. Counseling within the home could help reduce family issues.

## Health Screening Follow-Up

- *Helen Dao of Prevent Blindness Tri-State* sees a need to help families' follow-up on referrals for children who failed the vision screening within the first 30 days after the screening. Some families, such as new immigrants, tend not to follow-up for any number of reasons - fear of the unknown, concern about follow-up cost, belief that there couldn't be anything wrong with their child, and/or they do not have legal status and are concerned about deportation.
- *Dr. Sara Kalambar* emphasized that there is a need for thorough lead and hemoglobin testing done for the children in addition to the hemoglobin testing that WIC does.

## **Infant and Toddler Child Care**

- *Assemblyman Ruben Ramos* said he hears about the need for expanded child care services from constituents, the need for infant and toddler child care, the need for expanded funding to support wrap around services for early morning and late at work, yet funding has been cut 80% in the last 2 years, and that it is very hard for someone working for \$30,000 to \$50,000 year to pay for child care.
- *Michelle Russo of the HOPES Board* said that infant and toddler child care is badly needed for low income residents, and that there should be a sliding scale fee charged for middle income families since they also need child care services and many middle class families find it challenging to pay for the cost of child care.

## **Job Training and Employment Preparation**

- *Dr. Elise Butkiewicz of the Hoboken Center for Family Health* indicated parents need help with the practical aspects of job application and maintenance, i.e. resume development, dressing for a job interview, appropriate clothes for work, etc. They also need more information about services that can help them prepare for a job interview, i.e. where they can get a woman's suit for a job interview.

## **Parenting Guidance**

- *Dr. Elise Butkiewicz of the Hoboken Center for Family Health* stated there was a tremendous need for parenting classes about topics that parents consistently ask about, such as behavior management, appropriate disciplinary strategies, nutrition, and food preparation. She indicated these are major issues for almost all the parents the center serves.
- *Dr. Michael Swerdlow of Hoboken University Medical Center, Community Mental Health Center* said there is a need for more parenting guidance groups.
- *Giselle Rodriguez of Preschool Intervention & Referral Team member (PIRT) for Hoboken Board of Education* indicated parenting classes and support groups are needed for aunts, grandmothers, and other extended family who have related children living with them and not with the childrens' parents.
- *Dr. Elise Butkiewicz of the Hoboken Center for Family Health* stated staff see many overweight children and their parents want detailed nutritional counseling.

## **Special Needs Training for Teachers Aides**

- *Alice Lemire of Starting Points for Children, Inc.* indicated that a Learning Resource Center (LRC) is needed in Hudson County to help teacher aides build their special needs knowledge and skills. LRCs are state-subsidized resource centers that offer highly valuable resources to child care educators. Currently the only LRCs located in the area are in East Orange and Morris Plains; visiting them requires a major effort for teacher aides to access since they often don't own cars.

## **COMMENTS SPECIFIC TO NEEDS OF YOUTH**

### **Jobs and Job Fairs**

- *Craig Manor of the Jubilee Center* said there is a major need to create job opportunities for teens.

### **Job Training and Employment Preparation**

- *April Harris of In Jesus Name Charities* said there is need to prepare young people between the ages of 17 and 22 for entry into the job market. They are not becoming self sufficient and do not know how to make the transition from dependency to self-sufficiency. They sometimes cause disruptions in their families and are not prepared to participate in the economy. They try to unsuccessfully compete with higher qualified people for minimum wage jobs.
- *La-Trenda Ross of the Urban League of Hudson County* believes there is a major need for ongoing job fairs and job training. This effort should include helping teens transition from high school to work readiness. Needed support includes how to: write a resume; get a birth certificate, photo identification or social security card; work with a computer; plan a career; find a job; present oneself; meet job expectations; meet employer and customer requirements.
- *Nellie Moyeno of the Hoboken Board of Education* said a range of youth programs are much needed, i.e. “how to” workshops for applying to a trade school, look and apply for a job. She said a lot of local employers don’t hire young people since they don’t find them responsible. If teens have to go out of Hoboken to take a class or go out of their way, they don’t.

### **Mentoring and Role Modeling**

- *Carmelo Garcia, Executive Director, Hoboken Housing Authority*, said there is a major need for role models for young people, someone who can help them see beyond their immediate surroundings and see the possibilities for careers and an improved lifestyle that exists in the larger world.
- *Ana Aguilar, a Probation Officer for the Hudson County Probation Office* said teenagers need more activities to keep them from becoming involved in gang and drug activity, such as a mentoring programs and summer jobs. There is also a need for more organizations willing to employ teenagers who have been on probation.

## **Youth Issues Communication**

- *John Roslowski, Former Superintendent of Schools, Hoboken Board of Education, currently Head Master of St. Peter's Preparatory School, Education* indicated there is a need for concerted, high quality student education to be done about 1-substance abuse (alcohol-tobacco-drug), 2-sexuality, and 3-violence. He said the public school system needs to work in concert with parents, Hoboken private schools (2 charter schools, 1 catholic school, 3 independent schools), the police department, and other organizations in order to send a collective message to kids.

## **COMMENTS SPECIFIC TO NEEDS OF ADULTS AND SENIORS**

### **Free Tax Services Expansion**

- *Debbie Chapman of the Internal Revenue Service* indicated there is a major lack of free tax preparation sites in Hudson County. She said HOPES Family Resource Center is the only VITA site in the entire county, and that others need to establish an excellent client base similar to HOPES.

### **Home Based Care for the Disabled**

- *Ed Benoit, Executive Director, Department of Health and Human Services Area Agency on Aging*, indicated there is a growing need for services for disabled in their homes.

### **Home and Facility Based Care for Seniors**

- *Ed Benoit, Executive Director, Department of Health and Human Services Area Agency on Aging*, indicated there is a growing need for services for home delivered meals, adult day care facilities, and home health aides for seniors.

### **Senior Transportation**

- *Ed Benoit, Executive Director, Department of Health and Human Services Area Agency on Aging* indicated there is a need for increased transportation support. After updating software, transportation scheduling was much improved and ridership increased 25%, but it has been difficult to respond to the demand without support for more vans and drivers since they are at 100% capacity. Despite this need there is less financial support than previously.
- *Howie Forman of HOPES Board and the Board of Education* said help is needed to reactivate the cross-town bus since many low income residents rely on it, particularly seniors, as well as medical transportation
- *Jaclyn Cherubini of The Homeless Shelter in Hoboken*, said elderly homeless women and other guests need help getting identification, and getting some kind of a job.

## **GROUPS WITH THE GREATEST NEEDS AMONG LOW INCOME RESIDENTS**

The following are those low income groups with the greatest needs in Hoboken and neighboring Hudson County communities. While numbered, each group has equal needs.

### **1. Children between the ages of 0 and 17 years who:**

- live below the poverty line;
- have a disability;
- are homeless;
- are in foster care;
- have families with an abuse problem;
- have families who speak English “less than very well”.

### **2. Heads of household who:**

- are a single female or male head of household;
- are homeless or live in subsidized housing;
- live below the poverty line;
- have children;
- have children with a disability;
- have an abuse or domestic issue;
- have had a significant loss of income;
- speak English less than “very well”;
- have less than a high school diploma;
- have low job skills.

### **3. Seniors 65 years of age or older who:**

- are homeless or live in subsidized housing;
- have income below the poverty line;
- have a disability;
- live on a fixed income;
- speak English less than “very well”;
- have less than a high school diploma;
- have low job skills.

### **4. Adults between the ages of 18 and 59 years of age who:**

- are homeless or live in subsidized housing;
- have income below the poverty line;
- have an abuse or domestic issue;
- have had a significant loss of income;
- speak English less than “very well”;
- have less than a high school diploma;
- have low job skills.

## COMMUNITY RESOURCES

### *COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS*

HOPES Inc. maintains a variety of community partnerships that include formalized relationships, mutual referrals, and joint projects. Current partners include the following:

1. **Hoboken Board of Education** – HOPES Early Childhood Program is one of 4 pre-school programs offered by the Hoboken Board of Education. HOPES ECP Director, Director of Operations, Director of Finance, and 4 ECP managers meet with other early childhood specialists on a regular basis with Board of Education representatives to plan strategies, organize activities, discuss issues, and make decisions about subsequent plans of action. The ECP team works closely with the HBE Preschool Intervention & Referral Team (PIRT).
2. **Hoboken Housing Authority** – Provides space within the West Side housing complex for HOPES Family Resource Center and awards the FRC with grants to serve HHA residents.
3. **Department of Health Human Services Area Agency on Aging** – Provides services to low income seniors in Hudson County. HOPES receives funding through HCAAA for Senior Transport, Education and Information & Assistance Programs.
4. **Hoboken University Medical Center, Community Mental Health, Employee Assistance Program** – Provides contractual services to support organization's employees. HOPES contracts annually with EAP to support HOPES' employees.
5. **City of Hoboken** – Directs low income families where to access city and low income services, including those who receive block grant from city for child care services. HOPES receives a grant for child care services from the city of Hoboken.
6. **Starting Points for Children** – Advocates for child care and trains low income residents to work in child care. Partners with HOPES for a scholarship program for teacher assistants. Also involved in local and state political sector to represent child care causes.
7. **Hoboken Family Planning** – HOPES has been contracted by HFP every year since 2001 to provide cancer education and outreach to low income eligible individuals served by HOPES.
8. **Jubilee Center** – Provides after school care and academic support to children 8 -13 years of age during the school year, and comprehensive all day programs throughout the summer. Contracts with HOPES Family Resource Center to provide a technology training course to youth from low income families.
9. **Internal Revenue Service** – Newark Regional Office provides general tax information services to the area. Trains HOPES staff and volunteers as VITA tax preparers and certifies HOPES VITA sites.

10. **Hoboken University Medical Center** – Provides a broad range of medical services. For HOPES provides services to Head Start children identified as having health issues needing follow-up.
11. **Urban League** – Works with HOPES Inc. assisting clients with job search resources, administers child care payments for participants and others who are in the welfare to work programs. The Urban League also provides information about HOPES to clients and community residents.
12. **Prevent Blindness Tri-State** – Provides free vision screening for Head Start children.
13. **New Jersey SHARES** – Provides electric/gas assistance to low income families. Contracts with HOPES to process NJSHARES applications.
14. **George Street Playhouse** – New Brunswick-based non-profit was contracted by a granting foundation to provide actors to work with HOPES ECP teachers to demonstrate how to use theater dramatics to teach literacy and art.
15. **Fan 4 Kids** – Private enterprise that provide nutrition and exercise programs to children. HOPES contracted Fan 4 Kids to work with ECP teachers to customize a nutrition and exercise program for Early Childhood Program children.
16. **Mount Calvary Church** – Provides food baskets for individuals to purchase at reduced rates. HOPES manages ordering, transactions, and delivery of food baskets to low income individuals and families through its Low Cost Food Program.
17. **PNC Bank** – Provides community banking services to Hudson County communities. For HOPES provides small grants to support a health and nutrition program for HOPES Early Childhood Program and also offer free financial literacy workshops for HOPES clients.
18. **Hoboken University Medical Center** – Provides a broad range of medical services. HOPES refers Head Start children identified as having health issues needing follow-up.
19. **Hoboken University Medical Center, Hoboken Center for Family Health (HCFH)** – Provides family check-ups. HOPES refers families to HCFH.
20. **Hoboken University Medical Center, Community Mental Health Center (CMHC)** – Provides family counseling. HOPES refers families as needed to the CMHC.
21. **North Hudson Community Action** – Provides a range of services including health, housing, transitional housing, homeless prevention, emergency food, rental assistance, and more. HOPES refers its clients to NHCA for primary care.
22. **Boys & Girls Club of Hoboken** – Provides recreational programs for children between the ages of 5 and 17 years. Refers parents and students to all the programs offered through HOPES Community Assistance Services program.

23. **Jersey City Medical Center** – Provides speech/hearing screening to children attending HOPES ECP.
24. **City of Hoboken Senior Programs** – Provides support services to seniors in Hoboken. Refers clients to HOPES for Assisted Transportation, Senior Education, and other services.
25. **City of Hoboken - Rent Control Dept.** – Helps families explore available apartments.
26. **Horizon Health Center of Jersey City** – Provides primary health care services to HOPES clients.
27. **PSE&G** – Refers clients to HOPES to apply for NJ SHARES or LIHEAP
28. **In Jesus Name Charities Sponsored by Our Lady of Grace Church** – Provides shelter for women and children, and families living in poverty.
29. **Hoboken Shelter** – Provides shelter and meals to the homeless.
30. **PACO Home Energy of Jersey City** – Assists low income residents with reducing payment of energy bills through the Low Income Heating Assistance Program and refers clients to HOPES for NJSHARES.
31. **The Hudson School** – Private school for children that provides volunteers to work in HOPES ECP centers.
32. **Hudson County Probation Office** – Provides probation services for youthful offenders. Probation officers refer juveniles to HOPES Inc. for community services.
33. **Housing/Community Development Network** – Supports housing and economic opportunities for low income families.
34. **Metropolitan Family Health Network of Jersey City** – Provides primary health care services to HOPES clients.
35. **Good Council of Hoboken** – Provides shelter for homeless pregnant women.
36. **Dress For Success** – Helps low income individuals prepare for and find jobs, including lending them clothing for job interviews.
37. **Women Rising – Jersey City** – Assists women and families with social services, economic development, and advocacy services.
38. **Housing & Community Development Network of NJ** – Advocates for community needs in Trenton, NJ.

39. **TD Bank** – Provides small grants to support community services programs offered by HOPES.
40. **Department of Family Services, Jersey City** – Provides family support services to Hudson County residents.
41. **Family Support of Hudson County** – Provides family support services to Hudson County residents.
42. **City of Hoboken Dept. of Cultural Affairs** – Organize community events in which HOPES provides a booth to inform public of HOPES services.
43. **City of Hoboken Community Development** – Provides community service block grant to HOPES.
44. **Hoboken Fire Department** – Gives out free turkeys to HOPES clients on Thanksgiving as well offers its museum for community events and fundraisers.
45. **Hoboken Rotary Club** – Helps HOPES make business contacts.
46. **International Longshoremen’s Local 1804-1** – Makes donations to HOPES Early Childhood Program.
47. **Barnes and Noble** – Donates books to HOPES Early Childhood Program.
48. **Borders Bookstore** – Donates books to HOPES Early Childhood Program.
49. **Bayonne Community Bank** – Provides financial workshops to HOPES clients.

**COMMUNITY RESOURCES RECOMMENDED BY COMMUNITY PARTNERS**

50. **Hoboken University Medical Center, HIV Program** - Provides HIV education, treatment, and support, including a well run case management system.
51. **Children’s Specialized Hospital in Mountainside** – Provides pediatric specialty services.
52. **Hoboken University Medical Center, Outpatient Drug Program** – Provides a comprehensive program, including early intervention and thorough communication.
53. **Medical and Social Services for the Homeless (MASSH)** – Jersey City based organization serving Hudson County homeless, inclusive of a transportation for homeless guests which takes them to the 3 homeless shelters in Hudson County plus other locations as needed.
54. **Saint Mathew Trinity** – Hoboken-based homeless support program, inclusive of a dependable lunch program Monday through Thursday for homeless and other needy.

55. **Hudson County Child Abuse Prevention Center (HCCAPC)** - Offers child advocacy and abuse education services to Hudson County.
56. **Hudson County Community College** - Provides several programs that enable low income residents to explore and build a career.
57. **Hudson County Perinatal Consortium** - Provides quality-driven perinatal services to pregnant mothers.
58. **Jersey City Episcopal** - Provides services for the homeless, including but not limited to mental health services, job training, and construction/rehabilitation of housing in Jersey City sold at affordable pricing for low income residents.
59. **York Street Project** - Sponsored by Sisters of Saint Joseph for Peace, this educational program supports single women who dropped out of school prior to obtaining a high school degree, inclusive of housing for single, working, low income women; transitional housing for single women with children; and a child development center for children 4 months old through preschool. The program has strong follow-up and open door policy for returnees.
60. **Partners in Prevention** – Program addresses substance abuse with information, trainings and workshops for individuals, families, schools, and other community organizations.
61. **Project Single Mom** – Sponsored by My Daughter’s Keeper in New Brunswick, this national advocacy program motivates and supports single mothers to change their lives. The program partners with other organizations to create opportunities to strengthen and enhance the quality of life for single mothers and their families.

### **COMMUNITY RESOURCES TO BE EXPLORED**

62. Hudson County ELKS
63. Hudson County Knights of Columbus
64. Sons of Hoboken
65. Hoboken Little League Coaches Association
66. The Hudson County Alliance to End Homelessness
67. Hoboken Family Alliance
68. Coalition for Better Waterfront
69. Hudson County Vocational Technical School
70. Hudson County Community College

## Identification of Issues

### PROGRAM & COMMUNITY GAPS IN SERVICES BASED UPON UNMET NEEDS

The following gaps in services have been identified based on needs defined by low income community residents.

### PROGRAM GAPS in HOPES EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM

#### 1. **Infant and Toddler Care Programs**

The data demonstrates that there is a major unmet need for infant and toddler care in Hoboken as well as in Jersey City. This need was a recurring theme in the responses to the survey, discussions in focus groups, and interview comments by several community residents and community partners. The need for early child care was particularly emphasized in this assessment by mothers who are female head of household as well as by community resources who work closely with families.

We estimate that of the 1,880 children between the ages of 0 and 2 years of age in Hoboken, there are approximately 180 infants and toddlers that live below the poverty line. Despite this need there are only about 24 existing infant and toddler care slots for children from low income families in Hoboken.

Two of the age groups that grew between 2000 and 2008 in both Hoboken and all of Hudson County were children 0 to 2 years of age and 3 to 4 years of age. These two age groups also have a disproportionately large percentage in poverty versus the much smaller percentage of the population they represent.

Many low income families with children 0 to 2 years of age respond to the need for infant and toddler care by cobbling together a range of child care situations, particularly single female head of households. Families are using a relative, a grandparent, a neighbor, or someone in the community to care for their child while they work, train, or pursue a degree. But this care is often not optimal for young children. Caretakers in these situations are rarely child care professionals, and there is little or no training or oversight of these “kith and kin” services by outside organizations. Payment for these services places strain on the family budget.

Low income parents, particularly single female head of household, need qualified child care, since they are working, attending school, participating in a training program, or practicing a combination these activities as required by the welfare reform act.

#### 2. **Extended Care Hours**

Currently HOPES ECP offers child care services until 5:30pm. Several parents indicated they are challenged arriving on time to pick up their child by 5:30pm, due to work, training, and educational responsibilities, and would like to have the option to have hours extended to 6:30pm, and be willing to pay for that service.

## **PROGRAM GAPS in HOPES SENIOR SERVICES**

### **1. Homeless Prevention Support Services**

U.S. Census data indicates that 43.1% of Hispanic/Latinos seniors 60 years of age and older live in poverty in Hoboken. In the CA survey, 71% of low income seniors 65 years of age and older who were interviewed indicated the cost of living has become expensive for them; 31% indicated that they have cut back on living expenses to help them pay for essential costs such as food, rent, and medical care. Community partners serving the homeless indicated that there has been a substantial increase in the number of clients they are serving who are Hispanic Latino or African American senior women 65 years of age and older with limited education. Community partners indicated these homeless women have worked their entire lives but now do not have the means to meet their expenses. Despite their homeless predicament, they still consistently hold out hope that they can regain self-sufficiency. Jaclyn Cherubini of the Homeless Shelter in Hoboken indicated that when she surveyed her clients, female senior clients age 65 and older routinely indicated they wanted to get a job, save money, and rent their own apartment. Between 2007 and 2000 the number of seniors living in Hoboken has slightly decreased (1.8%).

### **2. Expanded Disabled Support Services**

In Hoboken, 50% of seniors 60 years or older have at least one disability: 45.5% of males and 53.4% of females. In Hudson County, 43% of seniors have at least one disability: 40.2% of males and 45.7% of females. Many seniors are disabled among the 21.8% of seniors in Hoboken and 15.2% of seniors in Hudson County that live below the poverty line. Services need to be provided that ensure disabled senior citizens living below the poverty line have their needs met.

## **PROGRAM GAPS in HOPES COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE SERVICES**

### **1. Multiple Locations**

Clients indicated an interest in seeing more service sites in Hoboken and Hudson County. This need is based on several reasons. (1) HOPES main Family Resource Center is located in a small space of Hoboken's West Side "projects". While the space is very well organized, maintained, and managed, the environment is often busy and crowded with clients and classes. (2) 20% of the respondents to the Community Assistance Service survey were from neighboring towns and cities in Hudson County, and it is only logical that they would want to have similar service sites more accessible to their communities. (3) Some low income HOPES clients reside in other neighborhoods of Hoboken, and it is also logical that they too would want such service sites closer to them as well.

## **PROGRAM GAPS in HOPES ADULT SERVICES**

### **1. Range and Number of Classes**

In addition to the current computer courses provided, clients indicated they would like other courses provided that teach them the use of software applications for business and life skills. Clients indicated they would like to have courses made available on career development, job search, and job training.

### **2. Job Opportunity Programs**

Many clients requested that Adult Services hold job fair programs where they could discover job opportunities, apply for jobs, and arrange for interviews.

## **PROGRAM GAPS in HOPES YOUTH SERVICES**

### **1. More Classes for Young People**

Respondents indicated that they would like HOPES to offer an expanded after school program.

### **2. More Career and College Development Courses**

Several clients requested that HOPES provide a program or more services to help young people learn about the wide range of career opportunities that are available to them and the requirements they need to complete to enter these fields. Young people interviewed also felt it was important for HOPES to continue to expand services that help them learn about college opportunities, how to apply for college, how to pay for college, and what to expect in college.

## **COMMUNITY GAPS**

### **1. Affordable Housing for Low Income Families with Children and Seniors**

As many Section 8 contracts expired during the past several years, owners did not renew the contracts so they could charge a higher rent. Since the low income residents living in these Section 8 homes couldn't afford the new higher rents, they had to move out. Many of these low income residents ended up moving in with family/friends, doubling the number of families living in one apartment.

### **2. Physicians and Dentists Willing to Serve Low Income Residents**

As affluent and near affluent resident increase in Hoboken, they bring with them the ability to directly pay for health care services, and/or the ability to pay at a higher rate. This discourages physicians and dentists from taking payment vouchers from low income residents with lower fixed payment rates. As the number of local physicians and dentists willing to see low income residents decreases, the waiting period increases for those health care professionals who do take payment vouchers. For low income residents who want to see a specialist locally, such as a developmental pediatrician, there are even longer waiting lists.

3. **Jobs and Employment of Low Skilled Residents**

There is limited employment opportunity or upward growth for low income residents in Hoboken and neighboring communities who only have a high school degree or less. The recession only makes it more difficult for a low skilled worker to gain a well-paying job

4. **Emergency Food Banks**

Food continues to increase in cost and there are only a few emergency food banks in the area.

5. **Senior Support**

Hoboken has become a town for younger people. Outside of HOPES and Senior Housing, there is little organizational support for seniors.

6. **Youth Programs**

The most robust youth programs seem to focus on a few sports programs. There is a gap in services to young people who are looking for career information, job training, and employment. As two of the 31 special needs school districts among the 593 school districts in the state, Hoboken and Jersey City are struggling to improve the educational preparation of young residents. Many community partners and families confirmed the need for a range of youth services.

7. **Mental Health and Family Counseling Services**

Many low income residents experience a range of mental health and family issue stresses, and need mental health and family developmental support. There are few services that effectively respond to either need. The result is that people mistakenly try to minimize mental health or family issues, which often only aggravates situations.

8. **Coordination of Low Income Services**

Several leading representatives of well established community services indicated there need to be coordination of all services for low income residents in order to pinpoint community priorities, eliminates duplication of services, and empower all resources to work efficiently and collaboratively together.

## **ISSUES and TRENDS of GREATEST IMPACT**

### **1. Community Priority Differences Due to Economic Divide**

There is a widening economic divide between low income and upper middle to upper income residents throughout Hudson County, particularly in the waterfront communities. This division is making lower income residents more vulnerable and increasing the potential for “ghettoization” and isolation of low income areas as growth continues in many areas. There is an economic divide in Hoboken and neighboring communities with similar situations, causing clear differences of opinion as to community priorities. For example, there are low income parents as well as students who need help to improve their job readiness skills, yet there are other educational issues that middle to higher income residents want emphasized instead, such as taking measures to increase the likelihood of high schools graduates entering high-ranked universities.

### **2. Expensive Housing**

The cost of housing in Hoboken and Hudson County is prohibitively expensive for low income individuals or families to purchase. Unless they have had a mortgage on a home for several decades, being able to purchase a home now is very unlikely. As a result, the only housing option for low income groups is to remain in, or move into, public housing or subsidized housing.

### **3. Doubled Up Families**

Section 8 housing continues to disappear as owners want to charge market rates, which are much higher than Section 8 rents. When the Section 8 contract expires, low income individuals are moving in with other family members and friends to save money. This is known as “doubling up, tripling up, or stacking”. Many young families are working hard to try to grow roots in Hoboken and Hudson County, but find it difficult because of the high cost of living.

### **4. Food Shortages**

There continue to be food shortages in food pantries that support low income residents. As a result there is an increase among individuals and families requesting food help.

### **5. Overweight Children**

The number of overweight children in Hudson County continues to rise.

### **6. Extended Family Care of Related Children**

The number of households is increasing where neither biological parent is living with the child, but instead the child lives with an aunt or grandparent.

### **7. Gang Awareness and Activity**

Gang issues are a growing influence in Hudson County. Young people who don't envision job or career opportunities in Hudson County are more prone to consider gang life a viable option. In addition, young people are becoming involved in gangs at an earlier age.

**8. Home-Based Services for Disabled and Seniors**

There is growing governmental interest in serving seniors and disabled in their homes rather than center-based care.

**9. Homelessness among Young People and Teen Age Mothers**

There is an increase in homelessness young people between the ages of 14 and 17 with no place to live. The shelters are completely full. Included in this group are teen mothers who have no means to support their baby and are moving around in a “patch work” pattern as they try to find some way to support themselves and their baby.

**10. Lack of Health Care Follow-up**

There is an increase in the number of parents who are not following up on screening tests for their children. They don’t understand the implications of not following up, the services that are available to them at no cost, and/or that they qualify for this help.

**11. Mismatch of Low Income Residents Job Skills and Local Business Community Needs**

There is an ongoing trend of low income residents not qualifying for new jobs that open up along the waterfront in Hoboken, Jersey City, and other waterfront communities in Hudson County because of their low skills. Job growth areas are in such fields as finance, real estate, insurance, publishing, law firms, transportation, energy, and back office technology, but these jobs require higher education. Low income residents, particularly youth, routinely don’t have the credentials to fill higher income jobs. Many blue collar jobs in Hudson County have disappeared in Hudson County over the last 30 years, and it is much harder for residents who don’t have a well paying job to live in the area.

## Conclusions

1. HOPES Inc. Early Childhood Programs meet Head Start Performance Standards and HOPES Senior, Adult, Youth and Community services programs meet CSBG and HCAAA requirements as it relates to program philosophy, objectives, services, program options, recruitment and service areas, program locations, and criteria for recruitment and selection.
2. HOPES Early Childhood Program implements a bilingual recruitment and selection process to serve children with significant disabilities, who are homeless, in foster care, and who are from families with the lowest incomes and have challenges such as domestic abuse, substance abuse, and mental health issues.
3. HOPES' programs serve the lowest income residents.
4. Clients gave high ratings to HOPES' programs for program satisfaction.
5. Programs that HOPES offers are valued by clients and community partners.
6. The majority of clients rated HOPES well on knowledge, delivery, and reliability of services.
7. There is an absence of significant center-based infant and toddler care programs for children from low income families in Hoboken and Jersey City.
8. Many low income parents, particularly single female of households, need infant and toddler care in order to effectively work, attend class, and attend job training.
9. Outside of public housing and subsidized housing, any other type of affordable housing is very difficult to locate in Hoboken for low income people. A similar situation exists in neighboring communities of Hudson County, but it is not as difficult a situation as it is for low income residents in Hoboken.
10. Some low income families, particularly single female head of household with children, are doubling and tripling up in the apartments of family and friends in order to seek relief from economic stress.
11. As food costs increase and food budgets buy less, some low income residents either run out of food by the end of their pay period and seek help from food banks, or stretch their food budget by purchasing low quality foods high in fats, carbohydrates, and chemicals. Consumption of this low quality food is increasing the likelihood of obesity, diabetes, cancer, and other chronic and long term health issues.
12. There is an increase in homeless seniors, particularly female seniors.
13. Seniors need increased support due to economic stress.
14. Seniors and others with low income, and little or no means of increasing their income, find their living costs are very expensive.

15. Low income residents, particularly families, need more mental health services. This is complicated by the fact that many are concerned about the “onus” of seeking mental health or/and family development services, as well as concern about the cost.
16. Many low income residents want to find jobs and can not. They indicated there are very few job fairs, and they want to be able to carry out job search opportunities.
17. Many low income residents have lost jobs due to the recession; more continue to lose jobs.
18. Low income pre-teenagers, teenagers and young people are being underserved in Hoboken and Hudson County in terms of career development and job preparation for job market demands in Hudson County.
19. Low income families need increased nutrition education
20. HOPES has significant credibility in the community among community partners and resources as a community action agency that provides high quality services, as evidenced by the data below. HOPES received an effectiveness rating of at least 85% in all 3 main areas.

	<b>Very Effective</b>	<b>Effective</b>	<b>Somewhat Effective</b>	<b>Not Effective</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>
<b>Expertise Knowledge</b>	75%	10%	2%	0%	13%
<b>Delivery of Services</b>	75%	12%	0%	0%	13%
<b>Reliability of Services</b>	72%	13%	2%	0%	13%

The only reason HOPES did not receive even higher scores was that some community partners and resources interviewed were not fully aware of all HOPES programs and service and did not feel qualified to rate HOPES level of performance (“Not Applicable”).

21. HOPES is well prepared for capacity building in terms of: (1) expansion of existing services; (2) initiating new services; (3) expansion of service areas in Hudson County and New Jersey.
22. If HOPES programs were not available it can be projected that the quality of several thousand lives of HOPES’ clients would be negatively affected on a short and long term basis. The loss of HOPES’ services would have a massive negative impact on the structure of pre-school education in Hoboken, the city’s educational and social services, and services provided in support of several Hudson County social service agencies. The financial repercussions from a loss of HOPES services would have an exponentially rippling affect on each client’s formal and informal networks of support that depend on HOPES to provide an array of services.

## Recommendations For Proposed Changes

1. **Develop Infant/Toddler Care Programs.**

Establish an infant and toddler care program for low income families in Hoboken and in neighboring communities such as Jersey City, and/or in other needy communities.

2. **Purchase Needed Medical Equipment for Childrens' Screenings.**

Purchase Sure Sight hardware to enable low-cost, accurate eye screening by qualified professional. Purchase Euroscan hardware to enable low-cost, accurate hearing screening by qualified professional.

3. **Recruit, Reward, and Maintain Cooperating Groups of Medical / Dental Professionals.**

Determine and implement a "reward" strategy or system that motivates more local physicians, dentists, and other medical resources to support the health needs of low income residents and accept payment vouchers.

4. **Develop Senior Homeless Prevention Initiative.**

Develop an initiative that explores, determines, and implements a program to prevent low income senior homelessness. Collaborate with the Hudson County Department of Health Human Services Area Agency on Aging and other invested stakeholders in this effort.

5. **Develop the Position of Senior Advocates.**

Much like Family Advocates for the Early Childhood Program, Senior Advocates for HOPES' Senior Programs could support a range of seniors' needs as they arise, particularly those who are disabled, home bound, and/or challenged by a health issue. Advocates could be trained to take initiative as needed to advocate for needed services and ensure seniors' needs are met.

6. **Establish More Family Resource Center Locations.**

The HOPES FRC has made a significant contribution to the lives of many low income residents. It is important that it is located in the Housing Authority. Consider locating more FRCs with the same services in more low income locations in Hoboken and neighboring communities. These satellite technology centers could become important information, guidance, and communication centers, helping low income residents build computer and job skills while also learning about a wide range of community based programs.

7. **Offer More Skills Classes.** Several clients indicated an interest in classes to help them build various skills in business management (bookkeeping, accounting), financial management (budgeting, checking, debt management), and advanced computer classes.

8. **Offer Sliding Scale Child Care Fees.**

Feedback from community partners, residents, and clients indicated there are a number of families living above the federal poverty line who need help with child care. As the recession continues, and more people at all income levels lose their jobs, this need is increasing. HOPES should consider providing a sliding scale fee for those community members who don't qualify for subsidized care but need help with child care costs.

9. **Explore a Non-Profit Real Estate Development Model.**  
The need for affordable housing for low income residents is one of the most dominant needs for all HOPES' service groups. HOPES has significant experience in the purchase, renovation, and management of real estate. Explore the potential for developing a program that would enable low income residents to acquire housing, either individually or as a group, or live in housing at low rental rates. Two local models for possible exploration are New Community Corporation in Newark, and North Hudson Community Action.
10. **Expand Child Care Hours.**  
Develop flexible wrap-around care hours that extend to 6:30pm on an as needed basis for parents.
11. **Collaborate on Development of Employment Support.**  
Job training, job search, and job fairs were often mentioned needs. Collaborate on development of a new initiative, or enhancement of existing program(s) in the community, to locate existing job training programs, and sponsorship and organization of: (1) workshops on effective job search techniques; (2) job fairs; (3) multiple links to listings of available jobs in the local area.
12. **Explore Medical Transportation for Families and Non-Senior Adults.**  
Determine program requirements, budget, and feasibility of offering medical appointment transportation to low income families and adults for out of area appointments.
13. **Expand the Parenting Workshop Initiative.**  
Offer more workshops that help parents effectively parent. These workshops could range from educational ( i.e. behavior management, recognizing/coping with disabilities, financial management, debt management) to experiential (i.e. parent/child fun computer learning experience or craft workshop to jointly make a useful implement for the home, i.e. pot holder, picture frame, etc.).
14. **Offer Food Preparation Workshops.**  
Poor nutrition is a portal to a range of health problems that increasingly plague low income residents (obesity, diabetes, heart disease, etc.) and have direct implications on learning, decision-making, problem-solving, mental health, behavior, physicality, work patterns, lifestyle, etc. Good nutritional practices can have life changing implications. To facilitate low income residents' learning of good nutrition and to motivate the practice of it on a daily basis, consider developing a series of fun but practical workshops in or near low income housing. Bring in *engaging* guest speakers from some of the many community restaurants to present nutritious, *low cost* food preparation of culturally sensitive, tasty meals. Very important, nurture the development of small groups who support each other in practicing good nutrition and meet regularly for related activities and cooperative efforts.
15. **Enhance HOPES Community Communication Process.**  
Develop a multi-channel public relations/marketing/branding initiative that consistently informs community partners, resources, low income residents, funding resources, and the public of HOPES programs, services, activities, and accomplishments.

- 16. Collaborate on Creation of Pre-Teen/Teens/Youth Career Development Initiative.**  
Collaborate with youth focused community organizations, i.e. Jubilee, Boys and Girls Club, and outside organizations, including local corporations, to develop a careers program that helps children between the ages of 10 and 17 learn about careers, pathways leading to careers, and how to develop a step-by-step ladder to approach to enter targeted careers. Provide a similar program for young people between the ages of 18 and 24. Hire Career Counselors who can support participants' interests and provide guidance. Explore the existence and/or possible inclusion of a mentoring and/or job shadowing program.
- 17. Collaborate on Business Incubation Initiative.**  
Working in collaboration with a consortium of other organizations, establish and develop a business incubation initiative for low income residents. Each consortium member should contribute or bring to bear a significant specialty or resource for the initiative, i.e. business faculty members from a local university willing to help structure and provide ongoing guidance, local business people willing to mentor participants, city or corporate representative willing to offer facility space, etc. Initiative priorities could include exploration of opportunities to support the needs of local industries such as finance, real estate, insurance, publishing, computer services, "Green" services, transportation, energy, etc.
- 18. Develop New Community Partners Based on Expertise, Experience, and Structure.**  
There are many community resources available with a wide range of specialization. HOPES has substantial credibility as an accomplished community action agency experienced at structuring/re-structuring programs and initiatives to enable low income residents to succeed. As program and initiatives require, HOPES should utilize its expertise where appropriate, to collaborate with well-structured, experienced agencies with clearly differentiated expertise.
- 19. Expand Efforts To Develop A Broad Array Of Funding Streams.**  
Despite the recession there are an array of funding opportunities from government, foundations, corporations and individual sources to support HOPES' current and new initiatives and programs. Present HOPES funding priorities in a way that powerfully matches targeted group's funding priorities, i.e. Dept. of Labor grant to train low income residents in "Green" capacity building, energy, or non-traditional jobs for women; a corporate / foundation grant for preventative health care education for young mothers or young fathers program, etc.
- 20. Increase The Involvement of Talented, Invested Volunteers.**  
When people feel part of a community, they are more willing to help when asked. Hoboken and neighboring communities are comprised of many gifted people and resources. Ensure effective strategies and ongoing practices are in place that enables people to contribute in meaningful and specific ways to advance HOPES' priorities.