












BASIC & EMERGENCY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Basic & Emergency Needs Snapshot

The Indicator Key			
 Positive trend/ asset	 Negative trend/ concern	 Mixed trend/ neutral/NA	 Racial/ethnic disparity

Current Conditions in Franklin County

-  More emergency food assistance requests.
-  Family homelessness increasing.
-  More demand for homelessness prevention resources.
-  Declining emergency resources for low-income single adults.
-  Long waiting lists for public housing and rental assistance.
-  Demand up for emergency heating assistance.
-  Increases in persons receiving public assistance.

Community Perceptions of Needs, Gaps and Trends

Focus Groups and Interviews: Basic & Emergency Needs Themes

The following are the themes—aggregated across all of the key informant interviews and focus groups—that emerged related to basic and emergency needs, gaps and trends:

Key Informant Interviews	Focus Groups
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness/homeless families • Hunger/food 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness: families, people discharged from institutions, persons of color • Multiple basic needs: food, housing, childcare, transportation

Donor and Agency Web Survey: Basic & Emergency Needs Problems

The following basic and emergency needs issues listed in the survey are rank-ordered by the percent of “major problem” responses:

1. Homelessness
2. Hunger/food shortages
3. Emergency/crisis services and resources

Basic and Emergency Needs Resources Snapshot

The resource inventory prepared for the Community Assessment identified over \$192 million in annual funding resources in Franklin County for basic and emergency needs activities. United Way annually provides \$2.5 million for basic and emergency needs programs. Sources include:

- Federal government: \$129.4 million
- State government: \$50.2 million
- Local government: \$10.4 million
- Local private/philanthropic: \$2.9 million

The primary uses of these funds are: food/nutrition, 62.4 percent; public assistance/benefits, 26.6 percent; homelessness, 7.2 percent.

Basic & Emergency Needs: Current Conditions and Trends

Officials in the [25] survey cities estimate that during the past year requests for emergency food assistance increased by an average of 17 percent. On average, 14 percent of the requests are estimated to have gone unmet. During the past year requests for emergency shelter increased by an average of 13 percent. An average of 30 percent of these requests went unmet.

— 2003 Hunger and Homelessness Survey,
United States Conference of Mayors—SODEXHO

The vast majority of families that turn to food pantries for emergency help are working or have children...A large share of low-income families that used food pantries also reported some use of the federal Food Stamp program the prior year.

— Many Families Turn to Food Pantries for Help,
Urban Institute, 2003

...five partner agencies operate 372 Rebuilding Lives units. The Funder Collaborative continues to work...[toward]...the long-term goal of 800 units of [supportive housing] for [chronically] homeless men and women.

— Rebuilding Lives Impact Statement, August 2003,
Community Shelter Board

Indicators of Basic and Emergency Needs in Franklin County

More emergency food assistance requests.

In 2003, food pantries in Franklin County received 634,480 food requests, up 21.3 percent since 2000. From 2000 to 2003, the number of meals served by Franklin County soup kitchens went up 42.8 percent. In 2003, 1,264,514 meals were served. (Source: Mid-Ohio Food Bank)

Family homelessness increasing.

In 2003, providers of services to homeless families served 656 families with an estimated 1,500 children, an 18 percent increase in families served compared to 2002. In mid-2003, the demand for family shelter was 25 percent more than during same period in 2002. (Source: Community Shelter Board)

More demand for homelessness prevention resources.

The Community Shelter Board reports that demand for homelessness prevention assistance was up 25 percent in the second half of 2002, compared to the prior year. While 2003 reports are not complete, there is no indication that the trend had abated. For the first half of 2003, Lutheran Social Services received 425 applications for the FEMA Emergency Food and Shelter Program, compared with 795 applications for all of 2002. (Source: Preventing Homelessness, Community Shelter Board, 2003)

Declining emergency resources for low-income single adults.

Adult Emergency Assistance funds are provided through state general revenue funds to counties for payments to or on behalf of individuals 18 years or older, with no dependent children. In the last Ohio biennium budget, funding for the program was reduced by 75 percent, with allocations completely eliminated in the 2003-05 state biennium. In 2002, 823 Franklin County adults received \$205,122 in assistance for rent, utilities and other emergency needs, such as medical and clothing costs. (Source: Preventing Homelessness, Community Shelter Board, 2003)

Long waiting lists for public housing and rental assistance.

In January 2004, there were 6,335 persons on Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority's public housing waiting list and 10,794 people on the Section 8 waiting list (there is some overlap between the names on the two lists). Last year, CMHA provided housing for about 500-700 people from the waiting list. The Section 8 waiting list has been closed since April 2002, with about 300-400 vouchers a year allocated for project-based housing assistance. (Source: Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority)

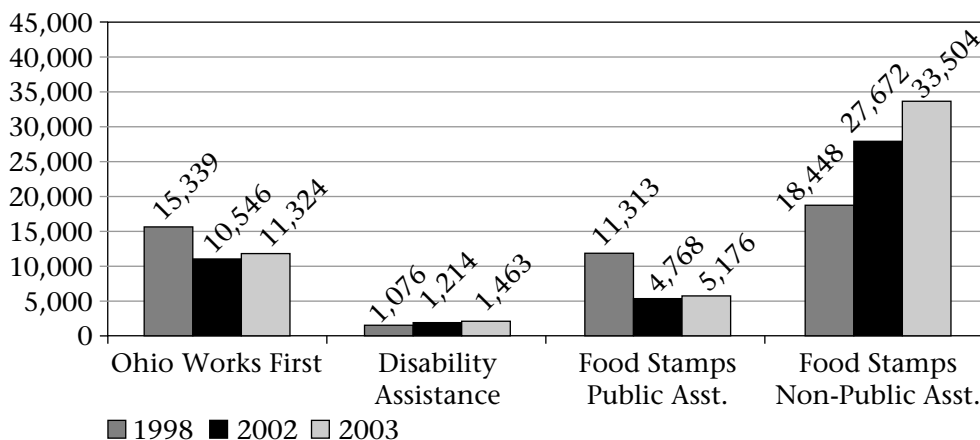
Demand up for emergency heating assistance.

From November 2003 through January 2004, 10,640 families in Franklin County have received payments totaling \$1.4 million for emergency heating assistance from the Columbus Metropolitan Community Action Organization. This was a 25 percent increase over the previous year. Requests were up 8,500 from the same period in 2002 and up 7,500 from 2001. (Source: More Help with Heat, Columbus Dispatch, Jan. 23, 2004)

Increases in persons receiving public assistance.

Between state fiscal years 2002 and 2003, demand for all major forms of public assistance increased in Franklin County (Figure B-1). This is reversal of trends for Ohio Works First and Food Stamps for public assistance recipients, which had declined since 1998, when welfare reform was implemented. However the number of assistance groups receiving Disability Assistance and Food Stamps (non-public assistance) has been steadily in increasing since 1998, and this trend continues. (Sources: Ohio Department of Job & Family Services; Franklin County Dept. of Job & Family Services)

Figure B-1
Average Number of Assistance Groups Receiving Public Assistance
Franklin County, FY 1998-FY 2003



Source: Ohio Department of Job and Family Services

Basic & Emergency Needs Trends, Needs & Gaps: Community Perceptions

There are more kids in schools who are homeless. Something needs to be done to help. Homelessness is becoming more commonplace, more often.

— Key informant interview

Food is a need. People are running out of food, especially those with large families.

— Focus group participant

Key Informant Interviews

Homelessness was mentioned as a need by 28 percent of the 50 key informants interviewed, and hunger was cited by 16 percent (see Appendix C). Gaps in emergency needs/food and shelter were cited by 8 percent. The following are the basic and emergency needs themes that emerged:

- **Homelessness.** Displacement of families through homelessness; we haven't noted a decline in demand for shelter; total scope of homelessness is discouraging; we need to find a way to avoid shuttling homeless families around every night (IHN); ordinary people who have a crisis need help to prevent themselves from becoming homeless.
- **Hunger/food.** Food for families who are out of work; an increasing amount of poverty creating needs in food; summer and weekend support for hungry children and families.

Focus Groups

Issues related to homelessness and basic and emergency needs were mentioned as a need, gap or trend in 9 of the 18 focus groups (see Appendix D). The following are the themes—aggregated across all focus groups—that emerged related to basic and emergency needs:

- **Homelessness.** Numbers are up in homeless shelters; people discharged from prison, hospitals and adult rehab centers to shelters; more homeless families; need programs for homeless youth; individuals of color show up more in shelters; homeless families and not enough shelters.
- **Multiple basic needs.** Tremendous pressure on parents due to needs for housing and food; food and housing for large families are the top needs of Somali families; people who work 50-60 hours a week to afford housing and transportation; needs for rent assistance, childcare and food; violence is the global effect of poverty and poor eating.

Donor and Agency Web Survey

Hunger in central Ohio is the most urgent issue to address. Without proper nutrition people are not able to benefit from the other programs available to better their situations.

— Web survey respondent

A total of 566 web survey responses were received from United Way agency staff, United Way volunteers, donors and others. Table B-1 shows the percentages of respondents who thought the basic and emergency needs issues listed in the survey were either major or medium community problems.

Table B-1
Basic & Emergency Needs Community Problems
Donor and Agency Web Survey

Issues	Major Problem	Medium Problem
Homelessness	42.6%	35.9%
Hunger/food shortages	36.0%	37.1%
Emergency/crisis services and resources	24.9%	32.3%

N=566 survey respondents; not all respondents answered all questions.

Current Efforts in Basic & Emergency Needs

Community Plans and Strategies

A review of planning documents and strategy statements of key community organizations involved in human services and community development planning and funding (see Appendix F) found the following areas of focus related to basic and emergency needs policy:

Organization	Plan/Strategy/Policy Focus					
	Food/ Nutrition	Public Assistance/ Medicaid	Emergency Shelter	Clothing/ Household Goods	Geographic Focus	Population Focus
Franklin County Department of Job and Family Services <i>Source: FCDJFS Website</i>	X	X		X	Franklin County	Persons receiving public assistance
Franklin County Veterans Service Commission <i>Source: FCVSC Website</i>	X	X	X		Franklin County	Veterans
Franklin County <i>Source: Consolidated Plan 2000-2003</i>			X		Franklin County	Persons who are homeless or at risk of homelessness
City of Columbus <i>Source: Consolidated Plan 2000-2003</i>			X		City of Columbus	Persons who are homeless or at risk of homelessness
Community Shelter Board <i>Source: 10-Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness</i>			X		Franklin County	Persons who are homeless or at risk of homelessness
Children's Hunger Alliance <i>Source: Hunger in Ohio: The State of the State 2004</i>	X				Ohio	Hungry people

Basic & Emergency Needs Resources

As part of the data gathering for *What Matters 2004*, Community Research Partners compiled an inventory of sources and uses of human services funding in Franklin County. A summary of the full inventory, including methodology, definitions and caveats, can be found in Appendix E. The following summarizes the information related to the basic and emergency needs issue area. It is a profile of one year of funding from federal, state and local government and major local philanthropic/private sources. Also included is a graph illustrating how United Way funds for basic and emergency needs are allocated among various use categories.

Overview of Annual Funding Sources for Basic and Emergency Needs

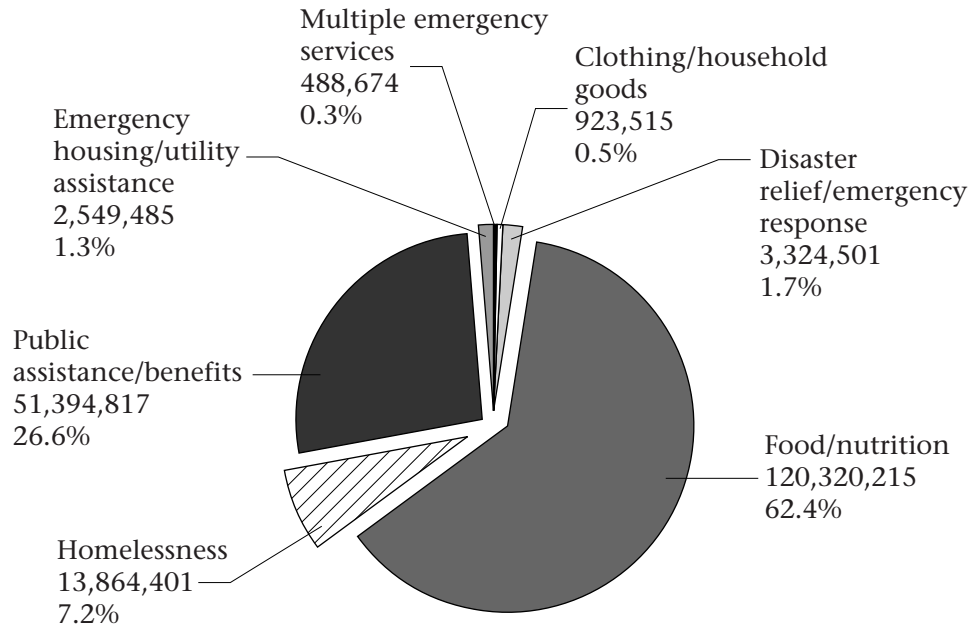
Basic and Emergency Needs Total **\$192,865,608**

FUNDING SOURCE	PROGRAM	AMOUNT
PUBLIC		\$189,920,393
FEDERAL		\$129,340,940
ED	Homeless Children and Youth	139,391
USDA	Child & Adult Care Programs	194,037
	Federal School Breakfast	4,056,318
	Federal School Lunch	17,612,114
	Food Stamps	48,453,289
	Nutrition Incentive Services Program	214,437
SSA	SSI	10,028,000
HUD	CDBG	535,307
	ESG	681,000
	HMIS	16,667
Homeland Security	N/A	2,318,698
FEMA	N/A	283,552
HHS	E-HEAP	472,930
	HEAP(crisis cooling program)	989,584
	Title IV E	1,346,813
	Title XX	631,986
	Title IV A (TANF)	41,366,817
STATE		\$50,173,711
ODJFS	Food Stamps	48,453,289
	Adult Emergency Assistance	205,122
ODOD	Emergency Shelter Grants	77,500
Ohio Housing Trust Fund	N/A	1,437,800

FUNDING SOURCE	PROGRAM	AMOUNT
Local		\$10,405,742
FCCS Levy	FCCS	4,679,733
City of Columbus Dept. of Development	Social Services Contracts	209,040
City of Columbus General Fund	N/A	2,127,463
Franklin County General Fund	Meals on Wheels	46,124
	Veteran Relief	1,634,471
	N/A	805,911
	Rebuilding Lives	775,000
City of Columbus Hotel/Motel Tax	Emergency HS Fund	128,000
LOCAL PRIVATE		\$2,945,215
Nationwide Foundation	N/A	153,700
The Columbus Foundation	N/A	281,550
Wolfe Associates, Inc.	N/A	22,100
United Way of Central Ohio	N/A	2,487,865

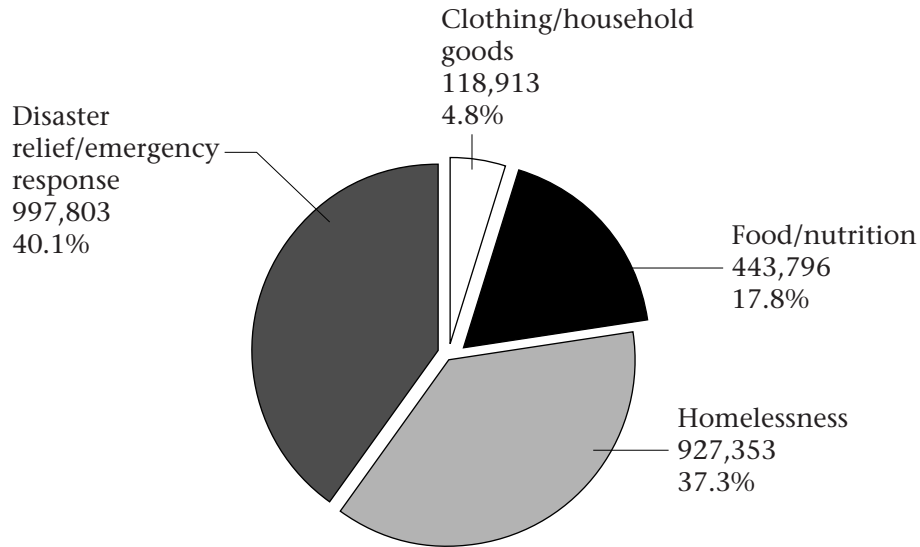
Overview of Annual Uses of Funding for Basic and Emergency Needs

Figure B-2
Annual Use of Funds for Basic & Emergency Needs Activities
Total Annual Funding: \$192,865,608



How United Way Resources are Used for Basic and Emergency Needs *(per the CRP Resource Inventory Taxonomy)*

Figure B-3
Use of United Way of Central Ohio
Funds for Basic & Emergency Needs Activities
Total Annual Funding: \$2,487,865



Some programmatic funding supported by other vision councils is represented in this section of the report.