2020
Rensselaer County Community Needs Assessment
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Introduction

CEO (Commission on Economic Opportunity for the Greater Capital Region, Inc.) is the designated Community Action Agency serving Rensselaer County in New York. Incorporated in 1965 in response to President Lyndon B. Johnsons War on Poverty, CEO is part of a larger network of Community Action Agencies (CAAs) across the nation. CEO and other CAAs promote community economic development through partnerships and inter-agency collaborations while ensuring the causes and conditions of poverty are effectively addressed and to strengthen, promote, represent, and serve the Community Action Network.

CEO’s mission is: **CEO creates partnerships and develops opportunities for social and economic growth and empowerment in individuals, families and communities.**

CEO offers services and programs to benefit the most vulnerable residents of Rensselaer County such as Head Start and Early Head Start for young children and families, YouthBuild for at-risk young adults ages 16-24 years old, Foster Grandparent Program for seniors 55 years of age and older as well as the Community Health Project, Women, Infant and Children (WIC) services, Food Pantry, Community Connections services and the Weatherization Assistance Program to list a few.

CEO’s Board of Directors is a tripartite board comprised of an equal number of Public Sector representatives (elected officials), Private Sector representatives and Consumer Sector representatives (individuals eligible to receive services). The Head Start and Early Head Start’s governing body is the Policy Council comprised of parents and guardians and community representatives. Because of the unique composition of the governing bodies, CEO is able to meet the needs of the community on every level.

As a Community Action Agency, CEO is required to complete a Community Needs Assessment every three years, with pertinent updates on an annual basis. This Community Needs Assessment will be used as a vital tool within CEO to assess programming, present and future. The Community Needs Assessment is a public document available to the community at large on CEO’s website [www.ceoempowers.org](http://www.ceoempowers.org) and will be distributed to other non-profit, as well as, for-profit organizations and government entities throughout the Capital District area to illustrate the needs within our community.

The 2020 Community Needs Assessment found the greatest need in the following areas:

- Health and Nutrition;
- Early Childhood and Youth Services;
- Employment and Education;
- Safe and Affordable Housing
The 2020 Community Needs Assessment also demonstrated a need for financial and emergency assistance as a broad category that crosses into each of the need areas above. The Community Needs Assessment explores in greater detail the current and future opportunities and challenges facing the low-income population in Rensselaer County. The key study objectives include the following:

- To conduct a Community Needs Assessment which considers the current met and unmet social, emotional, economic and educational needs of Rensselaer County residents;
- To continue to work toward a comprehensive provision of services for all customers, and toward the expansion of resources to address community needs as identified through consideration of information in this Assessment;
- To develop a report that will guide future decisions about program design, self-evaluation, and the expansion of services into particular areas; and
- To develop a flexible document which can be used as a planning tool, as well as in support of future funding applications to meet current needs.

CEO would like to thank our many partners for their contributions to this Community Needs Assessment including, but not limited to, Alliance for Better Health, The ARC, Boys & Girls Clubs of the Capital Area, CARES of NY, Catholic Charities, CEO Board and Policy Council Members, Circles of Mercy, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Legal Aid Society of Northeastern NY, Literacy Volunteers, One Troy, Rensselaer County NY Connects, Rensselaer County One Stop Career Center, St. Paul’s Center, The Salvation Army, TRIP, Troy School 2, Unity House, Wildwood Programs and YWCA. These partners represent various sectors including; Community-Based Organizations, Faith-Based Organizations, Private Sector, Public Sector, and Educational Institutions.

A special thanks to the State University of New York at Albany School of Public Health and their Internship program.
Methodology

During the information-gathering process for this Community Needs Assessment, CEO included data from several sources so as to incorporate views and opinions from various facets of the target population. In addition to gaining insight into the needs and perceptions of those who are eligible for CEO services, it was determined to be important to understand the current needs of Rensselaer County’s low-income individuals from the point of view of other community-based service organizations. Also deemed important, were the needs and perceptions of those CEO staff members working directly, some on a daily basis, with low-income families and individuals throughout Rensselaer County.

Qualitative Data

Community Needs Surveys

A Customer Needs Survey with 39 questions was distributed to individuals and families who receive CEO services during the months of May 2019 and June 2019. 221 completed surveys were submitted. Among other questions, the survey asked what CEO customers see as their five greatest needs, what services exist to assist with those needs, the barriers preventing customers to obtaining services and what services would benefit their current circumstances.

A Community Needs Partner Survey was distributed to organizations across Rensselaer County providing services to the low-income population between September 2019 and November 2019. The distribution list included non-profit/community based organizations, faith-based organizations, healthcare and educational organizations as well as government organizations. 22 completed surveys were received.

Focus Groups

Five Focus Groups were gathered independently between July 2019 – October 2019 to discuss current needs in the county. One focus group consisted of the CEO Board and Policy Council; one included CEO Leadership Team; two were held in rural areas of the county, Hoosick Falls and Schodack; and one was held with CEO’s direct-line staff. All focus groups were asked the same questions regarding perceived needs, services available, barriers to those services and what they perceive as the root cause of poverty and the unmet needs throughout the community.

Interview

Another method of information gathering was an interview with the Project Coordinator of the One Troy initiative. One Troy is a project funded by the Empire State Poverty Reduction Initiative working in the most vulnerable area within the city of Troy. Its vision
is to reduce poverty and increase opportunities in the North Central and Hillside communities through a collaborative effort of several community partners. The implementation of unique programs so that every child and family has the opportunity to live in a stable community where economic mobility becomes a reality is the focus of One Troy. Questions asked during this interview were the same questions that were asked of the five focus groups.

CEO’s Community Needs Assessment Committee reviewed all data obtained via the above-mentioned methods. The needs that were most prevalent comprise the top five broadly-defined needs. These five broad needs became the overarching needs; more specific needs were categorized within those five broad needs. The committee found that the more specific needs varied, mostly based on where in the county the survey was completed, whether rural or urban.

**Quantitative Data**

Quantitative data was obtained from several sources including the US Census Bureau, The Community Action Partnership, American Community Survey 5-year Estimates, Brightside up, New York State Association of Training and Employment, United Way’s ALICE Report, New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS), Child Care Demographics Report 2017 and the US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. This Community Needs Survey data utilized local, state, and national data sources.

The quantitative data analysis of this report was conducted for two major sections: The Community Profile of Rensselaer County and the summarized findings from the community needs surveys distributed from May 2019 to November 2019. Pre-existing government and state data from the US Census Bureau and the American Community Survey, 2013-2017, were collected and analyzed using tools featured on Community Action Partnership’s Data Hub. A collection of draft reports and maps were generated through the data hub in order to capture data on the population demographics, income levels (household and per capita), poverty levels and rates, educational attainment, and employment in Rensselaer County over the past 3 years. Additional data on unemployment rates, health insurance coverage, top industries, free/reduced Lunch eligible students and child care programs were outsourced from the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, the OCFS Child Care Demographics Report 2017, and the open source data platform Data USA.

The comprehensive community needs surveys relied on 221 CEO beneficiaries and 17 community needs partner organization to answer questions covering individual and household demographics, general perceived needs, reported barriers, transportation, and child care. Participants were also given the opportunity to give personalized feedback regarding their community. Once all 243 surveys were collected, responses were manually entered into CEO’s Survey Monkey database for analysis. Data from the 221 customer survey was cleaned and filtered to include only eligible responses.
Community Overview

Rensselaer County Regional Setting
Rensselaer County is located in the Capital Region of New York State, just east of the state capital city of Albany. The County covers a land area that is around 660 square miles and over 423,000 acres and is predominantly filled with rural and suburban communities, with the exception of two cities (Troy and Rensselaer). According to population data taken from the 2010 U.S. Census, 159,442 residents called Rensselaer County their home in 2018. This population figure shows a slight decrease compared to 2015 population data generated by the U.S. 2010 Census (159,456). However, the county demonstrated a greater population percentage increase at 4.76% than New York State (4.33%) from 2000 to 2017, as shown in table 2. The cities of Troy and Rensselaer represent the county’s two major population centers with population densities reaching 4,811 and 2,950 persons per square mile respectively. Although most of Rensselaer County’s services are located in the city of Troy, a significant portion of the county residents live in the outlying suburban and rural towns and villages.
**Demographics**

**Rensselaer County Annual Population Change**

Annual estimated total population of Rensselaer County is shown below. During the seven-year period, the county population has remained stagnant around 159,000.

<table>
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<tr>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rensselaer County, NY</td>
<td>159,572</td>
<td>159,427</td>
<td>159,538</td>
<td>159,661</td>
<td>159,456</td>
<td>159,334</td>
<td>159,261</td>
<td>159,442</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

**2000-2017 Rensselaer County and NYS Population Change**

Population change from 2000-2017 is shown below. During the sixteen-year period, total population estimates for the report area grew by 4.76 percent, increasing from 152,538 persons in 2000 to 159,800 persons in 2017. The state of New York total population grew at a lower rate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rensselaer County, NY</td>
<td>159,800</td>
<td>152,538</td>
<td>7,762</td>
<td>4.76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>19,798,228</td>
<td>18,976,457</td>
<td>821,771</td>
<td>4.33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Population by Gender**

Population distribution of Rensselaer County residents from birth to 65 years and older by gender is shown below for 2018. During the last year the County observed the same 49% to 51% ratio of male residents to female residents as shown in the four years prior. The same pattern of gender disparity in the 18-24 cohort and 65+ cohort has carried over to 2018, with the percent difference being slightly less (25%) for both cohorts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population Age Cohort</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age 0-4</td>
<td>4,299</td>
<td>4,092</td>
<td>8,391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 5-17</td>
<td>11,687</td>
<td>11,113</td>
<td>22,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 18-24</td>
<td>8,845</td>
<td>7,066</td>
<td>15,911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 25-44</td>
<td>20,741</td>
<td>20,760</td>
<td>41,501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 45-64</td>
<td>21,148</td>
<td>22,660</td>
<td>43,808</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 65+</td>
<td>12,043</td>
<td>14,988</td>
<td>27,031</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division
Race and Ethnicity

Population by race within Rensselaer County is shown below. According to ACS 2013-2017 5-year population estimates, the white population comprised 87.33% of the report area, the black population represented 6.52%, and other races combined were 6.15%. Persons identifying themselves as mixed race made up 3.49% of the population. Population by ethnicity (Hispanic/Latino compared to Non-Hispanic/Latino) and gender within Rensselaer County is shown in the second table below. According to ACS 2013-2017 5-year population estimates, 95% percent of residents in Rensselaer County are non-Hispanic for both males and females.

Data Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2013-2017
Minority Population Percentage by Tract

According to ACS 2013-2017 5-year population estimates, the highest percentages of minorities in the county reside near the city communities. Parts of the city of Troy have reported minority population percentages as high as 15.9%. The eastern ends of Schodack and North Greenbush show no percentage of minorities.

Household Composition

Rensselaer County Household Type and Size

Number of households and average household size by household type is shown below for Rensselaer County from 2013-2017. According to American Community Survey 2013-2017 5-year population estimates, Rensselaer County has a total of 65,456 households with an average household size of 2.39 persons. 39% of the households in Rensselaer County are occupied by a married couple who both act as the household head. At the same time, 38% of Rensselaer County households are considered nonfamily and have no designated head. Male-head and Female-head households have the largest average household sizes with 3.18 persons and 3.15 persons per household, respectively.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household Type</th>
<th>Total Households</th>
<th>Male Head Household (Absent Wife)</th>
<th>Female Head Household (Absent Husband)</th>
<th>Nonfamily Household</th>
<th>All Household Types</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Married-Couple Household</td>
<td>28,595</td>
<td>2,979</td>
<td>7,691</td>
<td>25,191</td>
<td>65,456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Household Size</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>2.39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey. 2013-17.

Rensselaer County Family Size

The number of families and average family size by family-household type is shown above for Rensselaer County from 2013-2017. According to American Community Survey 2013-2017 5-year population estimates, Rensselaer County has a total of 39,265 families with an average family size of 3.00 persons. Married couple families have the largest average family size in the county at 3.06 persons while reported families with absent wives have the smallest average family size at 2.64 persons.
Poverty

Median Household Income
Median Household Income and Per Capita Income for Rensselaer County based on U.S. Census Bureau estimates is shown below. According to the 2018 Asset Limited Income Constrained Employee (ALICE) report, sufficient wage for a family with two parents and two children below school age level (infant and a preschooler) is approximately $72,360.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Median Household Income</th>
<th>Per Capita Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rensselaer County, New York</td>
<td>$63,166</td>
<td>$33,067</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey. 2013-17, The Self Sufficiency Standard for New York State

Rensselaer Per Capita Income by Tract
Rensselaer County’s per capita income by tract is shown below. According to ACS 2013-2017 5-year population estimates, the sub county tracts with the lowest income are the Village of Hoosick Falls ($27,997), the Town of Hoosick ($24,445), the Town of Berlin ($29,955), part of the City of Rensselaer ($25,460), and part of the City of Troy (lowest at $14,184).
Median Household Income by Age

The Median Household Income by selected age group of householder for Rensselaer County in 2017 is shown below. According to ACS 2013-2017 5-year population estimates, homes whose householders are between the age cohort of 25- 44 years old and homes whose householders are between the age cohort of 45- 64 years old exceed the reported median household income level for the entire county.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Householder Age Cohort</th>
<th>Median Household Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 25</td>
<td>$28,535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-44</td>
<td>$64,462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-64</td>
<td>$79,108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>$45,491</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates
Rensselaer County Poverty Levels

According to the American Community Survey 5 year estimates, 12.6% of all Rensselaer County residents lived in a state of poverty during the 2013 – 2017 period. During this same time period, 19.7% (6,217) of children age 0-17 in Rensselaer County lived in a state of poverty while 21.5% (1,805) of children below the age of 5 years old lived in a state of poverty. For both age groups, Black or African Americans and those of Multiple Race were reported to have the largest percentage of children in living in poverty in Rensselaer County for the 2013-2017 period. Additionally, the percentage of Hispanic/Latino Rensselaer County children living in poverty was significantly higher than the percentage of non-Hispanic/Latino children.

Poverty Rates for Rensselaer County

Poverty rates for Rensselaer County show a total of 18,459 persons living below the poverty level. The overall estimated poverty rate for Rensselaer County according to the New York State Community Action Association Poverty Report for Rensselaer County is 12%. In addition, the poverty rate for children under the age 18 is the highest of any age range, at 18.9%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>All Ages</th>
<th>All Ages Poverty Rate</th>
<th>Under Age 18</th>
<th>Under Age 18 Poverty Rate</th>
<th>Age 25+</th>
<th>Age 5-17 Poverty Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rensselaer County, New York</td>
<td>18,459</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>5,883</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
<td>11,000</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: New York State Community Action Association Rensselaer County Poverty Report

Poverty by Sub-County Area

According to the American Community Survey 5 year estimates, the sub county areas observed to have the highest percentage of their respective population in state of poverty were the Town of Hoosick (17.5%), part of the City of Rensselaer (34.6%), and part of the City of Troy (highest at 49.4%).

Poverty by Gender

According to the American Community Survey 5 year estimates, poverty within Rensselaer County in 2017 affected female residents slightly more than male residents, 55% Female compared to 45% Male. In addition, according to the New York State Community Action Association Rensselaer County Poverty Report 40.2% of families with a Female Head of Household with children present live in poverty.
Poverty by Race and Ethnicity
According to the American Community Survey 5 year estimates, poverty in Rensselaer County in 2017 was most prevalent among the Black or African American population (35.56%) followed by members of the population who identified as more than one race (30.05%). Furthermore, poverty was shown to significantly affect the Hispanic/Latino population (29.2%) more than the Non-Hispanic/Latino population (11.8%).

Data Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate
Key Findings

This section includes a detailed discussion of key indicators of well-being in Rensselaer County and its respective municipalities. Indicators are pieces of information, facts or statistics that provide insight into the condition of a population or community. Statistical data are offered in both table and narrative formats to provide a picture of the current status and the needs of families and children in Rensselaer County. There are many indicators used in assessing the quality of life experienced by community members throughout the County. The following is a snapshot of the broad range of data and key findings from the 2020 CEO Community Needs Assessment:

- The 2018 median household income for Rensselaer County was $63,166;
- Communities with the lowest per capita household income are the Cities of Troy; the Towns of Berlin and Hoosick; and the Village of Hoosick Falls;
- Self-Sufficiency standard for a single parent with one infant and one preschooler is a household income of at least $58,656;
- Rensselaer County has a poverty rate of 12% for individuals and 18.9% for children under the age of 18;
- Child poverty is prevalent in many municipalities in Rensselaer County. As a whole, 21.5% of all children under 5 years of age live below the poverty level, which is up from 19.8% in 2017;
- The number of Rensselaer County children receiving SNAP Benefits has decreased by 16% between 2010 and 2018, however, 21% of children continue to receive SNAP benefits;
- About 8.2% of Rensselaer County adults have not received a high school diploma. Municipalities with high levels of low educational attainment include the Cities of Troy, Lansingburgh, and Rensselaer;
- The average unemployment rate in Rensselaer County has steadily decreased from 7.8% in 2010 to 4.4% in 2018;
- According to Brightside Up, Rensselaer County has a shortage of child care center slots with an average of 28 children per regulated slot; 64% of census tracts have a shortage of regulated child care;
• Public transportation options are highly limited in areas outside of the Cities of Troy and Rensselaer. Many low-to-moderate income and poverty-level individuals reside in small towns and villages across the County and the lack of affordable transportation options for travel to school, work and child care greatly affects a low-income family’s ability to obtain and sustain employment.

• Fully 63% of Rensselaer County’s housing units were constructed prior to 1970. Housing age is a significant factor in affordability, energy efficiency and safety for residents;

• In 2019, a Rensselaer County resident would have to earn $21.44 per hour to afford a 2-bedroom apartment according to the County Fair Market Rent;

• During the 2018-2019 school year, 46% of all Rensselaer County children were eligible for participation in the Free or Reduced-Price Lunch program, up from 42% in 2017. Berlin (52%), Lansingburgh (65%), Rensselaer (68%) and Troy City School Districts (74%) report a majority of their students falling into this category.

• 30.2% of Rensselaer County children in government-sponsored health care programs have not had the recommended number of well-child visits. Of this demographic, the age range with the largest gap in care is ages 12-21, 37.8% have not had the recommended number of well-child visits;

• 12.2% of Rensselaer County children tested show elevated blood lead levels;

• According to the New York State Vital Statistics records from 2016, heart disease, cancer, chronic lower respiratory disease (CLRD), and stroke are the major causes of death in Rensselaer County. Rensselaer County also suffers from higher rates of tobacco use, obesity and lack of physical activity compared to the rest of New York State;

• Reported cases of Child Abuse and Maltreatment have risen from 823 in 2010 to 939 in 2018 showing a continued need for children/youth services and parenting supports and education;

• Rural Communities continue to show different needs from the urban communities, due to lack of transportation and a lower level of resources. Rural communities highlighted a need for transportation, child care, and adult education. Hoosick Falls and the nearby areas continue to be impacted by the PFOA water contamination, causing ongoing health and safe housing concerns.
The charts below represent the top needs as noted by the Customer Survey and the Community Partner Surveys distributed.
Goals and Recommendations

- Providers in the County, including CEO, should look to further develop services and expand resources to meet the top needs identified:
  - Health & Nutrition
  - Childcare & Youth Services (especially during the summertime)
  - Adult Education & Job Training
  - Safe, Affordable Housing
  - Transportation (particularly in rural areas)
  - Assistance (Financial/Heating/Utility/Emergency/Crisis)

- CEO, Partners, and other Service Providers should continue to find opportunities to increase customer knowledge around services available, both within and outside of the organization.

- Continued advocacy and efforts should be made around the need for individuals to earn a livable wage, including bringing awareness around the impact of New York State Minimum Wage on population eligibility for low-income services that are guided by Federal Poverty Rates.

- CEO can work to conduct needs assessment surveys and focus groups at different times of the calendar year during update periods, in order to capture seasonal challenges that the low-income population faces.

- The data and information contained in this document should be utilized to guide CEO’s Strategic Plan for 2021.

- Area providers should work on collaboration and strategies to bring services to the rural areas of Rensselaer County noted as underserved.

- CEO should share the results of the 2020 Community Needs Assessment with the community and key stakeholders to raise awareness and mobilize opportunities to meet identified needs moving forward.
Health and Nutrition

An individual's social and economic situation plays a large role in their overall physical and emotional well-being. Indicators of poverty and physical health of children and families include, but are not limited to, the following markers: number of households receiving SNAP benefits; participation in the free/reduced price lunch program; levels of chronic disease; levels of prenatal care; teen pregnancy; infant and child mortality; access to medical health care; engagement in physical activity and proper nutrition. Chronic diseases such as asthma, diabetes, cancer and heart disease affect the quality of life for many Rensselaer County residents.

The health and nutritional needs of the residents of Rensselaer County have been a priority for CEO since its incorporation in 1965. The agency provides a variety of health and nutritional services through the WIC (Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children) Program, CEO Food Pantry, CDPHP Community Health Project, Babies in Waiting, and the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Nutritious meals, including breakfast; lunch and snacks, are provided to children participating in CEO's Head Start and Early Head Start programs, also through CACFP.

Since 1982, CEO has operated its food pantry in the City of Troy. In the 2018-2019 year, CEO’s Food Pantry provided approximately 176,589 meals to adults and children in Rensselaer County. Food packages provided through the pantry include a three-day supply of nutritious items for each person. Families are permitted to use the pantry up to two times per month, and many customers note that they still have gaps in meeting their household’s nutritional needs even after receiving SNAP benefits and utilizing Food Pantries.

Food Insecurity

Throughout Rensselaer County there are a number of areas considered to be Food Deserts, with low or no access to food resources for residents. Additionally, 11.1% of the Rensselaer County population, and 17.8% of children in the County are food insecure according to the non-profit data source, Feeding America. Food insecure means a lack of access, at times, to enough food for an active, healthy life for all household members and limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate foods. Food insecure children are those children living in households experiencing food insecurity.¹

¹https://map.feedingamerica.org/county/2017/child/new-york/county/rensselaer
**Free and Reduced-Price Lunch**

One of the important indicators of the presence of low-income children and families in any community is the percentage of students receiving free or reduced-price lunch at the local public schools. Eligibility for the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s free and reduced-price meal programs is high in some areas of Rensselaer County. NYS Kids’ Well-being Indicators Clearinghouse (KWIC) reports that, in 2017/2018, 46% of all 19,163 Rensselaer County children in kindergarten through sixth grades were eligible for participation in the free and reduced-meal programs. **The table below** illustrates the enrollment of each school district in Rensselaer County as well as the percentage of children who are eligible for free lunch and reduced-price lunches. According to the NYS Education Department, as of the 2017-2018 school year, 74% of the students in the Troy City School District were eligible for the Free Lunch Program, and the same was true for 68% of the students in the Rensselaer City School District, 65% of the students in the Lansingburgh School District, and 52% of Berlin Central School District. These percentages have all increased from the 2015-2016 program year, with the exception of North Greenbush Common and Rensselaer City.

**Child Poverty Indicator, Free and Reduced-Price Lunch**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of School District</th>
<th>Total Enrollment</th>
<th>Eligible for Free Lunch</th>
<th>Eligible for Reduced-Price Lunch</th>
<th>Combined Free Lunch/Reduced Lunch Eligibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Averill Park Central</td>
<td>2708</td>
<td>531 (20%)</td>
<td>89 (3%)</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berlin Central</td>
<td>686</td>
<td>323 (47%)</td>
<td>36 (5%)</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brunswick Central</td>
<td>1,181</td>
<td>280 (24%)</td>
<td>61 (5%)</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Greenbush Central</td>
<td>4023</td>
<td>809 (20%)</td>
<td>127 (3%)</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoosic Valley Central</td>
<td>920</td>
<td>260 (28%)</td>
<td>654 (6%)</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoosick Falls Central</td>
<td>1,111</td>
<td>468 (42%)</td>
<td>62 (6%)</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lansingburgh Central</td>
<td>2,253</td>
<td>1,394 (62%)</td>
<td>75 (3%)</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Greenbush Common*</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rensselaer City</td>
<td>1,073</td>
<td>700 (65%)</td>
<td>32 (3%)</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schodack Central</td>
<td>863</td>
<td>136 (16%)</td>
<td>33 (4%)</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Troy City</td>
<td>3,943</td>
<td>2,793 (71%)</td>
<td>122 (3%)</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wynantskill Union Free</td>
<td>382</td>
<td>92 (24%)</td>
<td>17 (4%)</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Food Stamp Enrollment**
Many low-income households rely on one or more resource programs to meet their nutritional needs. The NYS Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) issues monthly benefits that can be used like cash at authorized retail food stores to purchase healthy food. Food stamp benefits help low-income working people, senior citizens, people with disabilities, and others to feed their families. The NYS KWIC reports that the number of children birth to age 17 who participate in SNAP decreased from 2015 to 2019, with 6,535 or 21% of children in the County receiving SNAP benefits. This decrease does not correlate to a decrease in nutritional food assistance, but rather changes in eligibility requirements for households.

**WIC Program**
CEO's Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) provides nutrition services to over 2,700 Rensselaer County residents on an annual basis. WIC has been shown to improve the health of pregnant women, new mothers and their infants and children. The foods provided through WIC are good sources of essential nutrients that are often missing from the diets of low-income women and young children. WIC participants have longer, healthier pregnancies and fewer premature births.

**Health Insurance**
According to the New York State Community Action Association 19.8% of the unemployed population and 5.5% of the employed population have no health insurance.

In Rensselaer County it is reported by the New York State Department of Health that 18.2% of the total population receive public health care coverage. As individuals and families have transitioned to using the New York State of Health database, the low-income population continues to need assistance with enrollment, re-enrollment reminders, and ongoing system navigation support.

Of those individuals and families who do have health insurance, there are many who do not utilize the insurance for preventative care or chronic disease care, and unnecessary hospital visits rates have continued to rise, highlighting the need for ongoing education, support, and expansion of available services.

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3 [http://www.nyskwic.org](http://www.nyskwic.org)
Health Care
The CEO Community Needs Assessment Customer Survey found that the customers surveyed noted their primary health care challenges to be an inability to receive needed services in dental, mental health, and prescription drug care.

The barriers to receiving needed care can be for a number of reasons; one of which can be living in an underserved area. Medically Underserved Areas/Populations are areas or populations designated by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) as having: too few primary care providers, high rates of infant mortality, high poverty and/or high elderly population. As shown below, the HRSA Bureau of Primary Health Care has designated the following census tracts in Rensselaer County as Medically Underserved Areas (MUAs) or Medically-Underserved Populations (MUPs):

**Medically-Underserved Areas/Populations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census Tract</th>
<th>Medically-Underserved Area/Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>517.01</td>
<td>Town of Hoosick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>517.02</td>
<td>Village of Hoosick Falls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>402</td>
<td>City of Troy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>403</td>
<td>City of Troy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>404</td>
<td>City of Troy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>407</td>
<td>City of Troy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>408</td>
<td>City of Troy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>409</td>
<td>City of Troy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>410</td>
<td>City of Troy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*source: [https://datawarehouse.hrsa.gov/tools/analyzers/MuaSearchResults.aspx](https://datawarehouse.hrsa.gov/tools/analyzers/MuaSearchResults.aspx)*

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**CEO Community Member Needs Assessment**

**Reported Healthcare Needs**

- **Medical Care**: 23.65% Yes, 58.85% No
- **Dental Care**: 66.67% Yes, 33.33% No
- **Mental Health Care**: 60.00% Yes, 15.38% No
- **Prescription Drugs**: 62.50% Yes, 12.50% No
In addition to living in an underserved area, the chart below illustrates the answers received by customers in regard to what their primary challenges were with accessing services.

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**Pregnancy and Prenatal Care**

New York State Department of Health vital statistics demonstrate that there were approximately 6,654 pregnancies and 4,909 live births in Rensselaer County between 2014-2016\(^7\). According to the NYS Department of Health, between 2014-2016, 78.2% of all births were to women who began prenatal care in their first trimester of pregnancy while 4.4% of women giving birth in 2014 began their prenatal care during their third trimester, or late in pregnancy.\(^8\) Women without prenatal care have babies that are three times more likely to have low birth weights and five times more likely to die than are babies of women who receive care.

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According to the NYS Department of Health data on Adolescent Births, 26.4 of every 1,000 adolescents ages 15-19 have a child. Problems associated with adolescent pregnancy are well-documented, as adolescent pregnancy often leads to dropping out of school; marriage ending in divorce; poverty and dependence on public assistance; a greater risk of infant mortality; and poor health and lower cognitive development in children born to teenage mothers. Among women aged 10-19 years giving birth in Rensselaer County, only 53.4% began prenatal care in their first trimester while 9.4% received late prenatal care that began in the third trimester.

Services providing low-income, pregnant women with intensive and personalized case management, goal planning, advocacy, linkage and referrals are scarce in Rensselaer County. Most services that do exist to assist this population focus on the medical care needs of the individual and the unborn child. CEO’s Early Head Start Program operates a Babies in Waiting Program, which works with pregnant mothers on preparing for the arrival of their child, receiving appropriate pre- and post-natal care, and on socialization activities.

**Substance Abuse**

Substance abuse continues to be an issue for all economic demographics in Rensselaer County. The National Survey of Drug Use and Health estimated 3% of Rensselaer residents with drug dependence/abuse, and 2% needing, but not receiving, drug treatment. This number continues to rise and Rensselaer County has developed a number of strategies, coalitions, and services to continue to combat the growing epidemic.

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Child and Adolescent Health

As indicated by the New York State Community Health Indicator Report, and outlined in the table on below, Rensselaer County continues to see infant, childhood, and adolescent mortality rates above those of New York State as a whole.11

Physical Health Indicators of Infants and Children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>indicator</th>
<th>Rensselaer County</th>
<th>New York State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adolescent Births by age - 15-19 Years (rate/1,000)</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>29.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Birthweight (&lt;.5.5 lbs.) – Mother All Ages</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Low Birthweight (&lt;.2.5 lbs.) – Mother All Ages</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Premature Births (&lt; 37 Weeks) – Mother All Ages</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infant Mortality (3-year average) – (rate/1,000)</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neonatal - (3-year average) – (rate/1,000)</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Neonatal - (3-year average) – (rate/1,000)</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childhood/Adolescent Mortality - (3-year average) - 1-4 Years – (rate/100,000)</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-9 Years – (3-year average) – (rate/100,000)</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-14 Years - (3-year average) – (rate/100,000)</td>
<td>36.3</td>
<td>31.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asthma Hospitalization - (3-year average) – (rate/10,000)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>43.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-4 Years - (3-year average) – (rate/10,000)</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>18.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-14 Years - (3-year average) – (rate/10,000)</td>
<td>69.5</td>
<td>75.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children Screened for Lead – Birth to Age 3</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Early Childhood and Youth Services

Head Start Eligible Children

According to the Census Bureau’s ACS 2013-2018 5-year estimates, there are 5,883 children under the age of 18 that are living below the poverty level, including an estimated 1,754 children less than 5 years of age living below the poverty level in Rensselaer County. ACS estimates of child poverty are based on a three-year sampling of the Rensselaer County population.

Given the fact that the CEO’s Head Start and Early Head Start programs had the capacity to serve only a total of 592 children in the 2018-2019 school year, there could be as many as 1,162 Rensselaer County children under the age of 5 who are eligible for the Head Start or Early Head Start programs, but are not receiving services.

Family Schedules and Child Care

The majority of responses in CEO’s Community Needs Assessment Customer Survey indicated the need for childcare during daytime hours, with 53% of respondents noting daytime hours as the primary need. In addition, 23% of survey respondents noted the need for before or afterschool programming for their children. CEO’s Early Head Start and Head Start programs offer daytime hours, with extended care offered in one location for parents in need, as well as summer and home-based care. According to the Early Head Start and Head Start Program Information Annual Report (PIR) for the 2018-2019 school year, 56% of the enrolled families reported at least one primary caregiver as being employed.

According to Brightside Up’s Restoring the Grid report for Rensselaer County, 64% of census tracts have a shortage of regulated childcare, and there are an average of 28 children per regulated slot; some locations throughout the county have little to no regulated child care. 12

The affordability of childcare is a regular challenge for low-income families, 36% of customers surveyed in the CEO Community Needs Assessment Survey reported having to pay for child care costs out of pocket.

12 https://www.brightsideup.org/community-reports
The current market rates for the County are outlined in the table below, and would be unaffordable or cost burdensome to low-income households making minimum wage.

**Childcare Market Rates for Rensselaer County 2019**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child Care Type</th>
<th>Under Age 1.5</th>
<th>Ages 1.5-2</th>
<th>Ages 3-5</th>
<th>Ages 6-12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Day Care Centers</td>
<td>$280</td>
<td>$264</td>
<td>$245</td>
<td>$215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Age Child Care Programs</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$245</td>
<td>$215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Care Type</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family /Group Family Day Care Homes</td>
<td>$190</td>
<td>$185</td>
<td>$180</td>
<td>$175</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Prekindergarten Programs**

As outlined in Brightside Up’s Capital Region Child Care Landscape, there are 646 Universal Prekindergarten spots available compared to 1,402 children ages 3 and 4 who reside in the County. Prekindergarten in Rensselaer County is operated by the following school districts; Berlin, Hoosic Valley, Hoosick Falls, Lansingburgh, City of Rensselaer, City of Troy. ¹³

**Children with Disabilities**

The New York State Early Intervention Program (EIP) is part of the national Early Intervention Program for infants and toddlers with disabilities, and their families. Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the EIP is administered by the New York State Department of Health through the Bureau of Early Intervention. In New York State, the Early Intervention Program is established in Article 25 of the Public Health Law and has been in effect since July 1, 1993. To be eligible for services, children must be less than 3 years of age and have a confirmed disability or established developmental delay, as defined by the State, in one or more of the following areas: physical, cognitive, communication, social-emotional, or adaptive. As reported by the New York State Department of Health, 426 or 3.5% of children ages birth-3 were enrolled in Early Intervention Services between July 1, 2017-June 30, 2018.

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¹³ [https://www.brightsideup.org/community-reports](https://www.brightsideup.org/community-reports)
CEO coordinates with all appropriate service providers to ensure that children identified as at-risk receive support and services, as outlined in CEO’s Early Childhood Services Disabilities Content Area Plan. As reported in the PIR, 79 of the Head Start and Early Head Start enrollees, or 13%, have been identified as having a disability (speech/language or other impairment) and now receive special education services, including speech; occupational therapy; physical therapy and itinerant services through Rensselaer County Early Intervention Services at Capital District Beginnings, Unity Sunshine Program, or other area service providers of their choice. CEO maintains a formal collaboration with Capital District Beginnings to provide inclusion classrooms for children with special needs, screening for emotional and behavioral disorders, and development of interventions for Head Start and Early Head Start children.

Child Abuse and Maltreatment

Child abuse and maltreatment, as defined by the NYS Kids’ Well-Being Indicators Clearinghouse (KWIC), represents an impairment or imminent danger of impairment of a child’s physical, mental or emotional condition due to the failure of a parent, guardian or other person legally responsible for the child to exercise a minimum degree of care toward the child. This can involve the failure to provide a minimum degree of care regarding a child’s basic needs, such as food, clothing, shelter, medical care, education, or proper supervision or guardianship. KWIC reports that Rensselaer County had 823 cases of child abuse and maltreatment in children ages 0-17 years in 2010 as compared to 939 in 2018. The rates for reported child abuse and maltreatment are considerably higher in Rensselaer County than they are across New York State as a whole, and have increased over time compared to the rest of the New York State which shows a decrease in reported abuse as outlined in the table below.

Indicated Reports of Child Abuse/Maltreatment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>2010 # Children 0-17 Years</th>
<th>2010 Rate/1,000</th>
<th>2018 # Children 0-17 Years</th>
<th>2018 Rate/1,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New York State</td>
<td>79,668</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
<td>73,282</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rensselaer County</td>
<td>823</td>
<td>22.3%</td>
<td>939</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Foster Care**

Foster care is often provided as a solution for children whose parents are temporarily unable to care for them due to either serious family illness, financial or marital issues, conviction of a crime, or child abuse and maltreatment. The foster parent assumes day-to-day care for the child, while the birth parents maintain legal guardianship. Data show that children in foster care are more apt to be from lower-income families and that a large percentage of children in foster care are placed there by Child Protective Services because the child has been abused or neglected. Studies show children in foster care have more chronic illnesses and behavioral, emotional, and developmental problems than do children who are cared for in a stable family setting. According to KWIC, foster care admissions in Rensselaer County decreased between 2010 and 2018, from 3.8 per 1,000 children to 1.7 per 1,000 children, Rensselaer County is also below the New York State average as shown in the Foster Care Admission chart below.

**Foster Care Admissions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td># Children 0-21 Years</td>
<td>Rate/1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York State</td>
<td>23,182</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rensselaer County</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: [https://www.nyskwic.org/get_data/indicator_profile.cfm?subIndicatorID=107](https://www.nyskwic.org/get_data/indicator_profile.cfm?subIndicatorID=107)

**Juvenile Delinquency**

The amount of illegal behavior displayed by teenage youth in a community is often an indicator of needed youth interventions and strategies, including sports, arts, education, training, and ongoing engagement and supports. According to KWIC, both juvenile (below age 16) and young adult (ages 16-21) arrests for both property damage and violent crime have decreased between 2010 and 2018. While this report only captures those crimes in which arrests occurred, it is worth noting that County rates are below that of New York State in all areas; property crime, violent crime, driving while impaired, and drug use/possession/sales.
Parent/Caregiver Concerns

CEO’s Community Needs Assessment Customer Survey asked families who reported to have children under the age of 18 in their household “Have any of the following been an issue or concern for the youth?” and received the responses in the chart below:

This chart shows that primary caregivers are reporting Mental Health, Bullying, and Poor Grades as their top concerns for the children whom reside in their care.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Youth-Related Issues</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health</td>
<td>22.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bullying</td>
<td>17.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor Grades/Missing School</td>
<td>16.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Health / Nutrition</td>
<td>10.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eating Disorders</td>
<td>9.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smoking</td>
<td>8.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol / Drug Use</td>
<td>6.67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After School and Summer Programming

Customer responses to open ended questions in both survey and focus group format noted the ongoing need for safe and healthy environments for their children outside of school, particularly during the summer months when school is not in session, but also year round in an afterschool setting.

In many areas of Rensselaer County, particularly those with high rates of poverty, the options available for school-aged children for out-of-school organized activities are limited. There are programs operated in the major cities (such as Troy) by area providers to help meet some of these needs, such as Boys and Girls Clubs, 21st Century, and T.E.A.M Hero, but these resources are limited and the demand remains high. Summer programming can be very challenging for low-income households, without regular care for children it can impact the ability for the primary caregiver to remain employed, or children who are old enough to stay home alone are left without the enrichment and engagement they may need to remain successful, stay out of trouble, and continue their growth.
Education and Employment

Educational Attainment

As shown in the table below, 8.2% of Rensselaer County residents have not received a high school diploma. Rensselaer County municipalities with a high percentage of residents without a high school diploma include the Cities of Troy (12.8%) and Rensselaer (10.7%), and the Towns of Petersburgh (13.8%) and Nassau (10.5%). The average annual household income for an individual with less than a High School Diploma in Rensselaer County is $21,459 and with a High School Diploma in the County is $35,046.15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Percent Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Percent Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population 18 to 24 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16,899</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>9,456</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>7,443</td>
<td>(X)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than high school graduate</td>
<td>1,325</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
<td>869</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school graduate (includes equivalency)</td>
<td>5,244</td>
<td>31.0%</td>
<td>3,342</td>
<td>35.3%</td>
<td>1,902</td>
<td>25.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college or associate's degree</td>
<td>7,965</td>
<td>47.1%</td>
<td>4,153</td>
<td>43.9%</td>
<td>3,812</td>
<td>51.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's degree or higher</td>
<td>2,365</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
<td>1,092</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>1,273</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population 25 years and over</td>
<td>110,822</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>52,985</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>57,837</td>
<td>(X)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 9th grade</td>
<td>2,720</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>1,445</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>1,275</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th to 12th grade, no diploma</td>
<td>6,401</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
<td>3,509</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
<td>2,892</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school graduate (includes equivalency)</td>
<td>31,980</td>
<td>28.9%</td>
<td>15,716</td>
<td>29.7%</td>
<td>16,264</td>
<td>28.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college, no degree</td>
<td>20,805</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
<td>9,501</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
<td>11,304</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate's degree</td>
<td>15,870</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>7,308</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
<td>8,562</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's degree</td>
<td>18,877</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
<td>9,185</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
<td>9,692</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate or professional degree</td>
<td>14,169</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
<td>6,321</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
<td>7,848</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent high school graduate or higher</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>91.8%</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>90.7%</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>92.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent bachelor's degree or higher</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>29.8%</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>29.3%</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>30.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF

15 https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF
English Language Arts (ELA) and Math Assessments

According to 2019 New York State Report Card Data for grades 3-8 in ELA and Math Assessments, overall rates for Rensselaer County schools are at 44% proficiency for ELA and 45% for Math, this is below the New York State average of 45% for ELA and 47% for Math. While the numbers are below the statewide average in both areas, they also reflect an increase from the 2018 School Report Card Data. The City of Rensselaer and City of Troy school districts reported the lowest proficiency rates of the Rensselaer County, with City of Rensselaer at 27% ELA and 19% Math proficiency, and the City of Troy with 29% ELA proficiency and 27% Math proficiency. 

Rensselaer County Economic Trends

Labor force, employment, and unemployment data for Rensselaer County is provided in the following table. The labor force in Rensselaer County, defined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics as the sum of employed and unemployed persons, is 80,291. In 2017, the labor force of the county was 80,855, representing roughly 51% of the total population. The number of employed residents in Rensselaer County outnumbers the number of unemployed residents by roughly 74,000. Overall, Rensselaer County experienced an average 3.5% percent unemployment rate in September 2019, which is lower compared to the unemployment rate for the State of New York at 4.2%.

Unemployment Rates

Unemployment change within Rensselaer County from August 2015 to August 2019 is shown in the table below. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, unemployment for this five-year period fell from 4.44% to 3.91%. Customers surveyed noted the top two reasons for their unemployment as health related issues and providing care for a child.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Total Labor Force</th>
<th>Number of Employed Residents</th>
<th>Number of Unemployed Residents</th>
<th>Unemployment Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rensselaer County, NY</td>
<td>80,291</td>
<td>77,150</td>
<td>3,141</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>9,536,915</td>
<td>9,137,643</td>
<td>399,272</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


---

Five Year Unemployment Rate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rensselaer County, NY</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Troy, NY</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Rensselaer, NY</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Wage and Hours

Of the customers who completed the Community Needs Assessment Customer Survey, 85% reported a household income of less than $30,000. In New York, the new minimum wage, effective 12/31/2019 is $11.80/hr. According to the United Way ALICE Report for the Capital District, (ALICE: Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) for a single individual to meet the Household Survival bare minimum budget standard they would have to earn $11.84/hr., which includes no savings or purchases other than basic needs and leaves no room for emergencies. For a household of 2 adults, 1 infant, and 1 preschooler, they would have to earn $36.18/hr. to meet the same household survival budget.17

As the New York State minimum wage continues to increase, while the Federal minimum wage remains $7.25 as it has been since 2009, there is an additional impact on local individuals and families’ eligibility for various types of assistance that are determined by Federal Poverty Guidelines as mandated by many grants received. The Community Needs Assessment Survey and focus groups highlighted the need for the households to gain skills and training, and receive assistance in obtaining a job that pays a higher wage that can support the household’s basic needs.

Apprenticeship and Training

According to the New York State Association of Training and Employment Professionals (NYATEP) State of the Workforce Report, between 2018-2019 new Apprenticeship programs were developed to be offered in New York State, these include; Software Developer, Electro-Mechanical Technician, Airframe and Powerplant Mechanic, Data Analyst, Hospital Coder (Medical), and Industrial Manufacturing Technician.18

17 https://www.unitedforalice.org/new-york
https://www.nyatep.org/state-of-the-workforce
Top Rensselaer County Industries and Jobs in Demand

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the largest industries in Rensselaer County are **Health Care & Social Assistance** (12,360 people), **Educational Services** (9,303 people), and **Public Administration** (8,535 people), and the highest paying industries are **Management of Companies & Enterprises** ($72,167), **Utilities** ($69,583), and **Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services** ($63,237). ¹⁹

According to the New York State Department of Labor, for the Capital District some of the occupations with the highest expected hiring are; Automobile Technician, Construction Worker (including various specialties), Customer Service, Home Health Aide, Retail Sales and Front-Line Supervisor, Assembler, Human Resource Specialist, and Janitorial Worker.²⁰ Each of these jobs may require credentials, including various levels of degrees that a job seeker may need training and support to obtain.

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¹⁹ U.S Census American Fact Finder Five Year Estimates
²⁰ [https://www.labor.ny.gov/stats/reos.asp](https://www.labor.ny.gov/stats/reos.asp)
Safe and Affordable Housing

Housing Affordability

There are several ways to determine if housing is generally affordable in a community. Since the adoption of the Urban and Rural Recovery Act of 1983, the 30% Rule has been the Federal standard for determining housing affordability. In other words, housing is generally considered to be affordable if no more than 30% of a household’s monthly income is spent on housing-related expenses. Housing-related expenses include not only rent, but also utilities paid by the tenant such as heat, electricity, and water and sewer charges. Some additional typical expenses such as telephone and cable television are also not included.

The National Low-Income Housing Coalition publishes housing wage figures annually in a document entitled, Out of Reach. As shown in the Table below, according to Out of Reach 2019 the fair market rent in Rensselaer County for a two-bedroom apartment is $1,115. In order to afford this level of rent and utilities, without paying more than 30% of income on housing, a household must earn $44,600 annually, or $3,716 per month. Assuming a 40-hour work week, 52 weeks per year, this level of income translates into a Housing Wage of $21.44. Currently, a minimum-wage worker in Rensselaer County earns an hourly wage of $11.80. In order to afford the FMR for a two-bedroom apartment, a minimum-wage earner must work 77 hours per week, 52 weeks per year.

Affordable Housing Wage Data for New York State vs. Rensselaer County 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>New York</th>
<th>Rensselaer County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Households</td>
<td>7,302,710</td>
<td>64,456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renter</td>
<td>3,360,227</td>
<td>23,578</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Renter</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Wage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zero-Bedroom</td>
<td>$24.96</td>
<td>$14.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-Bedroom</td>
<td>$26.34</td>
<td>$17.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-Bedroom</td>
<td>$30.76</td>
<td>$21.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three-Bedroom</td>
<td>$39.10</td>
<td>$26.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four Bedroom</td>
<td>$42.23</td>
<td>$28.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019 Fair Market Rent (FMR)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apartment Size</td>
<td>Gross Rent/2016</td>
<td>Net Rent/2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zero-Bedroom</td>
<td>$1,298</td>
<td>$768</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-Bedroom</td>
<td>$1,370</td>
<td>$904</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-Bedroom</td>
<td>$1,599</td>
<td>$1,115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three-Bedroom</td>
<td>$2,033</td>
<td>$1,397</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four-Bedroom</td>
<td>$2,196</td>
<td>$1,507</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zero-Bedroom</td>
<td>$51,910</td>
<td>$30,720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-Bedroom</td>
<td>$54,798</td>
<td>$36,160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-Bedroom</td>
<td>$63,976</td>
<td>$44,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three-Bedroom</td>
<td>$81,329</td>
<td>$55,880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four-Bedroom</td>
<td>$87,832</td>
<td>$60,280</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Work Hours/Week at Minimum Wage**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Apartment Size</th>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Weeks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zero-Bedroom</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-Bedroom</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-Bedroom</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three-Bedroom</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four-Bedroom</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** National Low Income Housing Coalition, Out of Reach 2016, [http://nlihc.org/oor/new-york](http://nlihc.org/oor/new-york)

**Housing Conditions and Vacancy**

There are 72,852 Housing Units in Rensselaer County, with the median year built being 1958. Before 1970, aluminum wiring and lead paint were used in homes, posing serious safety and health risks to residents. In addition, the discovery of asbestos in these older homes also puts residents in danger. The City of Troy, City of Rensselaer, Town of Hoosick; and the Villages of Valley Falls, Schaghticoke, Castleton-On-Hudson and Hoosick Falls account for much of the older housing stock in the County. Such stock is likely to be substandard and less affordable, due to high energy costs. Not only are they typically expensive to maintain, but homes built prior to 1970 are also more likely to pose health and safety risks, such as lead poisoning in children, for residents due to deteriorating, substandard conditions.

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21 [https://cap.engagementnetwork.org/assessment-tool](https://cap.engagementnetwork.org/assessment-tool)
According to the Community Action Network Needs Assessment data specific to Rensselaer County, there were 4,070 vacant residential addresses, and 592 vacant businesses. Vacancies can increase challenges such as deterioration, vandalism, crime, and decreased habitability.

**Homelessness Prevention and Emergency Housing**

Being at-risk of homelessness or being homeless is a regular challenge for the low-income population in Rensselaer County. Between October 1, 2018-September 30,2019 a total of 2,023 individuals were reported as experiencing, or at risk of experiencing homelessness. There is a large population that fluctuates at any one time between stable housing and at-risk status. CEO is an active member of the Rensselaer County Continuum of Care, which works collaboratively on the County 10-year Plan to End Homelessness.

There are some available resources to assist individuals and households facing homelessness, the primary organizations that provide homeless services are Josephs House, St. Paul’s Center, YWCA, Unity House, and Rensselaer County DSS. The 2019 Annual Point in Time Count (PIT) conducted by the Continuum of Care noted 171 individuals in shelter on the day of the count, which was an increase from 135 in 2018.

Youth Homelessness continues to be a challenge in Rensselaer County, with limited resources for youth shelter, and nearly 90% of the youth served in CEO’s Youth Build program noting that they were homeless over the course of their programming, primarily “couch-surfing” or needing to be placed in shelter outside of Rensselaer County.

**Energy Efficiency**

35% of survey respondents also noted their inability to pay their heating or electric bills. There continues to be limited resources to assist with utility emergencies, with the primary assistance being provided through Rensselaer County HEAP programming. One of the primary avenues for households to gain assistance with energy affordability it through receiving energy efficiency measures in their residence. Energy efficiency services can significantly reduce the energy burden on a household, therefore reducing

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23 [https://caresny.org/continuum-of-care/reports/#512_RCHSC](https://caresny.org/continuum-of-care/reports/#512_RCHSC)
the cost of their heating and utility services. Weatherization and New York State Empower services are available through CEO for Rensselaer and Washington Counties.

**Rural Needs**

Throughout the data collection for the 2020 CEO Community Needs Assessment it is worth noting that the needs notated in the rural areas of Rensselaer County differed from the needs notated in the more Urban settings.

The primary need notated by the rural areas of Hoosick Falls and Schodack was transportation and access to services. There are no mass transportation options available to those who live in these areas. Many households also report a concern in traveling to the larger cities within the County for service, primarily needing assistance in navigating these services and ensuring that the services could be available if they did find a way to be transported for the service.

Many of the rural areas lack the services that are available in the larger urban areas, this can cause an increase in the need for health and nutrition services, childcare and youth services, safe and affordable housing, and employment and training for the low-income population in those areas. Any available option for resources to be brought into these communities would have a positive impact. Residents report that there are very limited employment options, and additionally a minimal amount of child care options. There are also limited Adult Education options, such as budgeting, nutrition, and parenting.

Some of the rural areas reported higher instances of substance abuse, including opioid abuse in both their youth and adult populations.

The Village of Hoosick Falls and its nearby areas continue to face major challenges in regards to the contamination of their drinking water with Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA). The contamination has brought major health risks and impacts to residents of the community. In addition, the PFOA contamination has impacted the ability to sell property in that area, leaving residents with unsafe homes that homeowners are unable sell.
Community Member Needs Survey

1. What is your age __________

2. What is your gender?
   - [ ] Male
   - [ ] Female
   - [ ] Transgender
   - [ ] Prefer not to answer

3. What is your ethnicity:  
   - [ ] Hispanic/Latino
   - [ ] Non-Hispanic/Latino

4. What is your race?
   - [ ] Black/African American
   - [ ] Asian
   - [ ] White
   - [ ] Multi-racial
   - [ ] American Indian or Alaska Native
   - [ ] Other: __________________________________

5. Do you have children under the age of 18 in your household?
   - [ ] yes
   - [ ] no

   If YES, are the children (check all that apply):
   - [ ] 0-12 months
   - [ ] 1-5 years old
   - [ ] 6-12 years old
   - [ ] 13-15 years old
   - [ ] 16-18 years old

6. How many adults (ages 18+) reside in your household: __________

7. Where do you live? Please enter the name of your CITY, TOWN or VILLAGE:
   - City: __________
   - Town: ________________
   - Village: ________________

8. Please rate your household’s top FIVE needs within the past 12 months (1 is the highest need, 5 is the lowest need):
### Appendix A

- Adult education
- Child care
- Domestic violence assistance
- Emergency/Crisis Assistance
- Dental care
- Financial assistance
- Nutrition or Food
- Health care
- Heating/utility assistance
- Job skills/employment training
- Mental health services
- Parenting education
- Safe, affordable housing
- Safety/crime prevention
- Senior citizen services
- Substance abuse assistance
- Transportation
- Summer recreation programs
- Legal Assistance
- Youth services
- None of the above

Other: ________________________________

10. Please rate what you believe to be your communities top FIVE needs in the past year (1 indicates highest need, 5 is the lowest need):

- Adult education
- Child care
- Domestic violence assistance
- Emergency/Crisis Assistance
- Dental care
- Financial assistance
- Nutrition or Food
- Health care
- Heating/utility assistance
- Job skills/employment training
- Mental health services
- Parenting education
- Safe, affordable housing
- Safety/crime prevention
- Senior citizen services
- Substance abuse assistance
- Transportation
- Summer recreation programs
- Legal Assistance
- Youth services
- None of the above

☐ Other: ________________________________

11. Have you or anyone you know had a problem obtaining services designed to meet those needs?

☐ yes    ☐ no

If YES, which of the following issues did you or someone you know experience? Check all that apply:

☐ Didn’t know what’s available    ☐ Didn’t know where to go
☐ Didn’t have a way to get there    ☐ Income was too high to qualify
☐ Didn’t think help was needed    ☐ Didn’t want to ask for help
☐ The process was too complicated    ☐ There was no service to meet the need
 Couldn’t afford the cost of service  The hours of service didn’t meet my need
Appendix A

12. What is your primary mode of transportation?

- Bicycle
- Bus
- Car
- Car pool/ride share
- Motorcycle
- Taxi
- Walking
- Ride with family/friends
- Other: ____________________________________________

13. In the past 12 months, has transportation been a problem for your household?

- Yes
- No

14. In the past 12 months, has anyone in your household experienced any of the following challenges with transportation?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Does not apply</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inability to afford gas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inability to afford car repairs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No access to a car</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No car insurance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No driver’s license or license is suspended</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unable to use the public bus system</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public transportation is not near where I live</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public transportation is too expensive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15. How many people in your home are employed? _______

16. For the adults (18 years or older) in your household who are NOT currently working, please indicate why. Check all that apply:

- Caring for children
- Caring for elderly relatives
- Criminal history
- Drug/alcohol problems
- Lack of job skills
- Does not speak English
- Mental health problems
- Physical disability/illness
- No high school diploma/GED/HSE
- Retired
- Currently a student
- Transportation problems
- Does not apply
- Other: ____________________________________________

17. In the last 12 months, what was your estimated annual household income? (Please include all sources of income from the previous question.)

- $0 - $10,000
- $10,001 - $20,000
- $20,001 - $30,000
- $30,001 - $40,000
- $40,001 - $50,000
- $50,001 - $60,000
Appendix A

☐ $60,001 - $70,000  ☐ $70,001 - $80,000  ☐ More than $80,000

18. Do you or does anyone in your household need the following? Check all that apply:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Help finding a job</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Help finding a better job</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job training</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistance with resume-writing or interviewing skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tools/clothing/ or equipment for work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Equivalency (HSE) or Job Specific Certification</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

19. In the past 12 months, have you or has anyone in your household experienced any of the following financial situations? Check all that apply:

☐ Borrowed money to pay bills  ☐ Could not pay child care bills
☐ Fell behind on rent or mortgage payments  ☐ Didn’t make enough to pay all bills
☐ Had property (car, appliance, furniture) repossessed  ☐ Pawned or sold valuables to pay bills
☐ Bills in collections  ☐ over drafted bank account
☐ Defaulted on Student Loan  ☐ could not purchase basic need items
(i.e. diapers, food, hygiene items)
☐ Used rent-to-own services
☐ Had a utility shut off notice or utility shut off
☐ None of the above

20. What is your housing status?

☐ I own a home  ☐ I rent  ☐ I live in subsidized housing
☐ I live with friends  ☐ I live in senior housing  ☐ I live with parents or other family
☐ I am homeless (staying in shelter or couch surfing)  ☐ I am homeless (no place to stay)
☐ I live in military housing  ☐ Other: _____________________________

21. Which of the following best describes your home?

☐ Apartment  ☐ Single-family home  ☐ Multi-family home
☐ Trailer/mobile home  ☐ Single room occupancy  ☐ Transitional group housing
☐ Boarding house  ☐ Hotel/motel  ☐ Shelter
Appendix A

☐ Other: ________________________________

22. Which of the following best describes the condition of your home? Check all that apply:

☐ It is in good shape, no repairs needed
☐ It needs minor repairs
☐ It is in such poor condition that it is unsafe
☐ It needs major repairs
☐ It needs weatherization measures (insulation, weather strip, caulk, etc.)
☐ It needs disability access improvements (wheelchair ramp, wider doorways, etc.)

23. If you indicated your home needs repair what prevents you from getting the repairs completed?

☐ I don’t have enough money
☐ my landlord refuses to fix
☐ Afraid to report needed repairs
☐ there are no services available to help
☐ I am moving soon
☐ The repairs are being done
☐ Other: ________________________________

24. Have you experienced any of the following problems related to housing in the past 12 months? Check all that apply:

☐ I have bad credit
☐ I cannot afford the electric bill
☐ I cannot afford needed repairs
☐ I was evicted
☐ I cannot afford the heat bill
☐ I cannot find affordable housing
☐ I am homeless
☐ My house was foreclosed
☐ I live in a condemned house
☐ I lost my job
☐ I moved to another place
☐ I was threatened with eviction
☐ I need a place with more bedrooms
☐ None of the above

25. In the past 12 months, have you or has anyone in your household skipped or cut the size of a meal because there was not enough food?

☐ Yes
☐ No
Appendix A

26. If yes, how often have you or has anyone in your household skipped or cut the size of a meal because there was not enough food?

☐ Daily ☐ Weekly ☐ Monthly
☐ Does not apply

27. In the past 12 months, have you or has anyone in your household used any of the following food assistance services? Check all that apply:

☐ Backpack Program ☐ SNAP (Food Stamps) ☐ Food pantry
☐ Free or Reduced school lunch ☐ Meals on Wheels ☐ SNAP (food stamps)
☐ Soup Kitchen/Meal Program ☐ WIC ☐ Summer meals for kids
☐ None of the above ☐ Other: ________________________________

28. In the past 12 months, have you or has anyone in your household had to choose between buying food and paying a bill to meet other basic needs (housing, heat, etc.)?

☐ Yes ☐ No

29. Does everyone in your household have health insurance?

☐ Yes ☐ No

30. In the past 12 months, have you or has anyone in your household been unable to get needed medical, dental or mental health care; or prescription medications?

Please specify:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Does not apply</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medical care</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental care</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental health care</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prescription drugs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

31. If you or your family members did not get the care you needed, please indicate the main reasons.

Check all that apply:

☐ It costs too much ☐ Have no insurance ☐ Nervous/afraid to go
☐ Not sure where to go ☐ Could not get child care ☐ Religious reasons
Appendix A

☐ Cannot afford prescriptions  ☐ No transportation

☐ Have not found a doctor to treat the need

☐ It takes too long to get an appointment

☐ The doctor does not accept my insurance

☐ Cannot return to doctor due to missed appointments

☐ Does not apply  ☐ Other: ________________________________

If you do not have at least one child under the age of 18 living in your household, please skip to the “Open-Ended Question” on Page 9. Please check the appropriate statement below:

☐ I DO NOT have children under the age of 18 living in my household

☐ I DO have children under the age of 18 living in my household

32. What do you currently use to meet your child care needs? Check all that apply:

☐ After-school program  ☐ Children are old enough to be left on their own

☐ Day care center  ☐ Head Start/Early Head Start

☐ Informal/unregistered provider/babysitter  ☐ Parent, family friends, or neighbors

☐ Prekindergarten or preschool  ☐ Home Daycare provider

☐ I am a stay at home parent and do not have child care needs

33. What time of day do you need child care? Check all that apply:

☐ Daytime  ☐ Before/after school  ☐ Evening

☐ Weekends  ☐ Does not apply

34. How do you meet the cost of your child care?

☐ Subsidy  ☐ Self-pay  ☐ It is free  ☐ Other: ________________________________
Appendix A

35. Have any of the following been an issue or concern for the youth (under 18) in your household in the past 12 months? Check all that apply:

☐ Alcohol/Drug abuse ☐ Bullying ☐ Criminal activity
☐ Poor Grades/Missing School ☐ Eating disorders ☐ Mental Health
☐ Gang Activity ☐ Sexual activity ☐ Running away from home
☐ Sexual assault ☐ Smoking ☐ Teenage pregnancy
☐ Domestic Violence ☐ Physical Health/Nutrition
☐ None of the above ☐ Other: ____________________________

36. Are you a grandparent or other relative raising children other than your own?

☐ Yes ☐ No

37. If yes, please indicate the primary reason for care:

☐ Death ☐ Illness ☐ Job loss
☐ Child Protective/Court Ordered ☐ Mental illness ☐ Substance abuse
☐ Someone is in jail or prison ☐ Does not apply ☐ Other: ____________________________

38. Do you believe there are any needs in your community that were not included. If Yes, please share:

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

39. Is there anything additional you would like to share about how to best meet the needs of your community:

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

Thank you for taking our survey. Your response is very important to us
### Types of Participating Organizations

- 95% of the organizations participating in this survey currently partner with CEO

![CEOs by Type](image)

### Reported Positions

- Over half of the survey participants (63.64%; 14) occupied management positions
- Followed by: Direct Service (13.64%; 3), Executive Director (9.09%, 2), Planning/Development (9.09%, 2), and Legal Services (4.54%; 1)

### Services Offered by Partner Organizations

- The top five most reported services offered by partner organizations:
  1. Youth-Based Services
  2. Nutrition-Based Services
  3. Education-Based Services
  4. Housing-Based Services
  5. Financial Services
- One organization reported housing services specifically for homeless women & women with children
Appendix B

Service under the “Other” category
1. CoC support, HUD Regulation Guidance, Program Oversight
2. Adult Education & Literacy services
3. Clothing Thrift Store, Free Tax Prep, Holiday Programs
4. “Support CBOs in demonstrating their value to MCOs and providing innovation funds to reduce the burden of social determinants of health on the population served while increasing access to preventive health services.”

Top Reported Needs

CEO Community Partner Survey
Partner Reported Top Needs in Rensselaer County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assistance(Financial/Heating/Utility/Emergency/Crisis)</td>
<td>17.27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe, Affordable housing</td>
<td>16.36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Care/Youth Services/Summer Rec</td>
<td>14.55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult Education &amp; Job Skills/Employment Training</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Care (General, Mental &amp; Dental)</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>8.18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutrition or Food</td>
<td>4.55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance Abuse Assistance</td>
<td>2.73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Assistance</td>
<td>2.73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety/Crime Prevention</td>
<td>1.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Violence Assistance</td>
<td>1.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parenting Education</td>
<td>1.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Services</td>
<td>1.82%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Top Reported Unmet Needs

Question: Which needs are not being met in Rensselaer County, either due to limited resources or services?

![Financial Assistance](image1)
![Housing/Safe, Affordable Housing](image2)
![Mental Health](image3)
![Childcare](image4)
![Homelessness](image5)
![Safety/Crime Prevention](image6)
Appendix B

**Top Reported Low-Income Challenges**

- Question: What are the most challenging community issues that low-income households in Rensselaer County will face in the next 3 years?

**Reported Reasons Behind Challenges**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affordable Housing</th>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Knowledge &amp; Funding</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Government Support</td>
<td>Low Wages</td>
<td>Poor marketing for services</td>
<td>Lack of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient Options</td>
<td>Lack of Employment Opportunities</td>
<td>Poor are unaware of resources</td>
<td>Lack of job &amp; opportunity for youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landlords (Neglect, Absent, Do Not Take DSS)</td>
<td>As part of system disparity</td>
<td>Limited/Cut Funding</td>
<td>Lack of Home Health Aide Service (Low Wage, Transportation, Little Respect)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B

**Reported Solutions to Challenges**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collaboration</th>
<th>Safe/Affordable Housing</th>
<th>Education &amp; Funding</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Cross Reference for unmet needs</td>
<td>• Support Development</td>
<td>• Education for consumers when service ends (empowerment)</td>
<td>• Policy changes &amp; provider networks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Partnerships that utilize best practices</td>
<td>• Rehabilitate</td>
<td>• Educate community members</td>
<td>• Youth Programs &amp; Job Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Share &amp; Provide resources for DSS denied families</td>
<td>• Prevention services for 'envictees'</td>
<td>• Advocate for and obtain more funding for services</td>
<td>• Transportation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Improve code enforcement</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Nutrition: Access to food pantries/food in rural areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Work with local housing courts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Provide subsidies for housing companies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Knowledge of Service Availability**

- **Question:** Do you feel that the community is knowledgeable of services available to meet their needs?

- **Question:** How do you feel that service availability can be best communicated to households?

**CEO Community Partner Survey**

*Partner Response:*

- Yes: 37%
- No: 23%

**Reported Tools to Communicate Service Availability**

- More resource sharing amongst partners: 10%
- Word of mouth: 5%
- Resource Guide: 16%
- Events/fundraising: 16%
- Social Media: 16%
- Referrals: 16%
1. What do you see as the greatest needs in Rensselaer County?
   - Safe, affordable housing
   - Employment
   - Transportation (especially in rural areas)
   - After School care
   - Not enough homeless shelters
   - Access to resources
   - Collaboration with Public Transportation
   - Mental Health services
   - Health Insurance for families
   - Diapers and formula, personal care products
   - Daycare assistance
   - Affordable summer activities
   - Parenting classes
   - Summer food programs
   - Lack of mentorship and positive role model opportunities
   - Addiction issues (especially youth in rural areas)
   - Culinary/nutrition education
   - Special service providers
   - Financial Literacy
   - Community Development
   - Diversity

2. What program/resources would help to address those needs?
   - Money/Grants
   - Boys & Girls Club
   - CEO Trauma Team & collaborative partners
   - Centralized communication
   - Financial Literacy
   - Youth Summer Programs or After School
   - Giving parents resources for understanding IEPs/special services
Collaborations perhaps with YB, MC and HS (culinary)
More mental health/special service providers
Creating a volunteer network for transportation
Working with property developers for more affordable housing
Develop community groups to provide insight to people facing challenges
Knowing what programs local church has
Knowing what is out there and how to access those services
Strengthen interagency and outside agency collaborations

3. What current resources and/or providers exist to meet those needs currently?
- Rensselaer County Mental Health
- Unity House
- YouthBuild has bus passes
- All of our community partners
- Boys & Girls Club
- START Center
- EOC
- YouthBuild students could become mentors
- DSS
- TRIP
- Workforce Development
- Hope 7
- Colleges for student volunteers

4. What are some of the potential barriers to meeting the needs?
- Money/Funding
- Participation of people
- Collaboration challenges, not always on the same page
- Knowledge/Education
- Programs providing services to rural areas
- Availability
- Opportunity
- Sustainability
- Staff turnover
- Affordable Health Care
- Transportation
- Language
- Politics
- Qualified/Competent staff
- Finding the gaps among service providers – there may be several providers with needed services but those services may not reach all populations needing those services
- Awareness
1. What do you believe are the greatest needs in Rensselaer County?
   - Get “unstuck” from peoples’ current status (people don’t know how to get to the next level
   - Generational Poverty
   - Education is direct link to employment
   - Healthcare
   - Addiction
   - Lack of Public Transportation (especially rural)
   - Food Desert (in City of Troy)
   - Resource Education
   - Continuing Education
   - Underemployment
   - Lack of skilled resources for employers
   - Undiversified workforce
   - Mental Health
   - Transition Services for offenders
   - Senior Services/Nutrition

2. What program/resources would help to alleviate those needs?
   - Create a Culture of Success
   - Affordable Childcare – while in a training program
   - Affordable Childcare – once employment is obtained
   - Walkable Communities
   - Access to Food
   - Rural Access to needed services
   - Expanded Transportation
   - Social Services benefits
Affordable and Comprehensive Healthcare
- Trusted Resource Navigator to Educate customers of available services
- Adult Education programs/Certificate programs
- Positive Role Models, especially for at-risk youth
- Services targeted for 12-15 year olds
- Mentoring Programs
- Increased Literacy programs
- Identify Motivators

3. **What current resources and/or providers exist to meet those needs?**
   - RSVP Program
   - Big Brothers/Big Sisters (not very successful)
   - Sponsor a Scholar (donation funded)
   - GE Arts in Education (no longer funded)
   - Outdated Resource Guide

4. **What are some of the potential barriers to meeting the needs?**
   - Reliable data unavailable
   - Access in rural communities (services, transportation, etc.)
   - Re-entry post incarceration
   - Mental Health Issues
   - Home Isolation
   - Disabilities (physical and learning)
   - Addiction
   - The “word on the street” stigma of they’ll take all your services away if you have a job
   - Non-profits being territorial and not working collaboratively
Direct-Line Staff Focus Group

September 20, 2019

Present: Jennifer Livingston, YouthBuild; Kara Gamble, WIC; Lindsey Jackson, Family Advocate; Kristin Gormalley, Family Advocate; Taylor Hicks, Family Advocate; Nicole Montanino, CHP; and Vivian Sanchez, FGP.

1. What do you believe are the greatest needs in Rensselaer County?
   - Transportation
   - Safer communities
   - Affordable Housing
   - Livable Wages
   - Access to Mental Health services
   - Rehab Services for substance abuse (heroin)
   - Infant and child needs: diapers, formula, clothing, car seats, potty training seats, first aid kits

2. What do you feel are the root causes of these needs? Why do they exist?
   - Mental Health stigma
   - Generational poverty
   - Self-learned helplessness
   - Complacency/fear of change
   - Red tape, lack of services, lack of empathy of front-line staff

3. What are some of the potential barriers to meeting the needs?
   - Lack of access in rural communities (services, transportation, etc.)
   - Mental Health waiting list
   - Addiction
   - Lack of advocacy
   - Lack of education
   - Gangs/neighborhood violence

4. What programs/resources would help to alleviate those needs?
   - Bus passes
   - Curfew
- Remove the Mental Illness “stigma” – more services for both youth and adults
- Education: housing workshops, career workshops, financial education, parenting workshops, driver education
- Community Resource training
- Lower taxes
- Community Events
- Advocacy programs
- Increased police presence and getting to know their community
- Marketing of programs that are available
- Empathetic Interventions
1. What do you believe are the greatest needs in Rensselaer County, specifically Hoosick Falls?
   - Transportation – no license (can’t get to Troy to take tests), no vehicle, costly repairs.
   - Jobs – no place to work, no jobs available; lack of motivation, no transportation
   - Childcare – no day care centers, only home-based care
   - Clothing – seasonal – children need coats, mittens and boots
   - Adult Education – have to go to Bennington for GED, adults could use budgeting classes
   - Youth Programs – there aren’t any more available, they were too costly

2. What do you feel are the root causes of these needs? Why do they exist?
   - Rural
   - Always been like this – some people don’t feel the need to change
   - Businesses shutting down
   - PFOA – fear; housing values declined sharply
   - Greed (youth program operators wanted too much money)

3. What are some of the potential barriers to meeting the needs?
   - Small town “tunnel vision”
   - Small town mentality – fear of change
   - People don’t know what services are available
   - Lack of education

4. What programs/resources would help to alleviate those needs?
   - After school programs
   - Education: financial education, parenting workshops, driver education
   - Boys & Girls Club
   - Tourism lure for Hoosick Falls – everyone passes through to get to Bennington, but there’s nothing in Hoosick Falls
1. **What do you believe are the greatest needs in Rensselaer County, specifically Schodack/Nassau area?**
   - Transportation – limited public busses, no bussing for children to come to center, some families/households share 1 vehicle
   - Adult Education – CDA classes, HSE training, Parenting classes and Budgeting classes, Computer Training, Home Ownership Training
   - Childcare – not enough daycare centers for young children; not enough afterschool programs
   - Youth Programs – there should be more available
   - Affordable, Safe Housing – rent is too high, families are uneducated when applying for loans or how to maintain their homes/apartments

2. **What do you feel are the root causes of these needs? Why do they exist?**
   - Rural – distance between neighbors and jobs
   - Some people are skeptical about services (they have a hard time believing something is “free”)

3. **What are some of the potential barriers to meeting the needs?**
   - Need bus passes and/or more bus routes/make use of the Star Bus
   - People don’t know what services are available
   - Lack of education
   - CEO offers services, but people cannot see the building from the street
   - Not enough money/grants
   - Families and individuals say they “don’t have the time”
   - Not as many services here because there aren’t as many people

4. **What programs/resources would help to alleviate those needs?**
   - After school programs; partner with schools; offer child care subsidies
   - Adult Education: financial education, 1st time homebuyers’ classes, parenting workshops, HSE classes/partner with other facilities nearby (firehouses, library, community rooms) to use space to offer trainings
   - Sign on the main road pointing to SFRC/make SFRC more “community-centered”
- Having a satellite DSS office
- CEO attend more community events
- Raise poverty levels so more families and individuals can qualify for services
Question 1: What do you see as the greatest needs in Rensselaer County?
The five areas first identified by the One Troy community still exist:
Youth Services
Neighborhood Revitalization
Safety
Affordable Housing
Workforce Development
She added: There is a real need for a community center for all children, not just the Boys & Girls Club, and it should be open early in the morning until late at night. We need more services for seniors. Seniors are mostly on foot, and they fear for their safety with regard to traffic and their safety with regard to violence, both especially at night.

Question 2: Why do you feel this/these needs exist? What are their root causes?
There is a growing group of working poor who don’t realize there are services out there and they’re too proud to ask. The poverty guidelines are too low, there are financial benefits to not having an income which amounts to a lot of free time. Mental Health issues prevent people from being successful.

Question 3: What do you feel would help to alleviate the current needs?
Advocates for parents and families to teach them how to navigate the process of applying for services. Crisis intervention at all hours – hotline. Money and resources while still keeping accountability in mind. We need safer school bus stops, CDTA to run later, employment opportunities including on-the-job training. Parenting classes. Parents need access to doctor’s offices, and safe places for their children to go to during the winter months. Adult education classes or literacy classes. Bring successful adults from this area back to talk with students so they can identify with their success.
Question 4: What challenges are there to meeting those needs?
Barriers are, of course, lack of resources. There is an “us vs. them” feeling in the neighborhood. There are still racial issues. The schools need to reset the way they teach and adapt for all learning abilities. Young parents raising children without the proper skills and support.

One Troy is an Empire State Poverty Reduction Initiative (ESPRI) developed in 2015 to help alleviate poverty in the poorest areas in the city of Troy, Hillside and North Central.