

AIDS Services of Austin
A New Entry Inc.
Any Baby Can
Arc of the Capital Area
Austin Stand Down

Austin/Travis County Mental
Health Mental Retardation

Austin Tenants Council

Austin/Travis County Health &
Human Services Department

Capital Area Food Bank

Caritas of Austin

Catholic Charities of Central TX

Community Action Network

Communities in Schools

Eastside Community Connection

Episcopal Church of the Good
Shepherd

Family Connections

Family Eldercare

Foundation Communities

Foundation for the Homeless

Front Steps

Goodwill Industries of Central
Texas

Housing Authority of the City of
Austin

Lifeworks

Marywood Children and Family
Services

Meals on Wheels and More

Micah 6

Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic
Church

SafePlace

Salvation Army

St. Louis Parish Social Ministries

Sustainable Food Center

TX Dept. of Family and Protective
Services

TX Interagency Interfaith
Disaster Response

TX Rio Grande Legal Aid

The Care Communities

The Wright House Wellness
Center

Travis County Health & Human
Services and Veterans Service

Travis County Re-entry
Roundtable

Trinity Center

United Way Capital Area & 2-1-1
TX

Volunteer Legal Services of
Central TX

The Basic Needs Coalition of Central Texas

Poverty

Did You Know...?

- The 2007 Federal Poverty Income Guideline is \$20,650 a year for a family of four. (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services)
- In 2006, an estimated 15.2% of Travis County residents were living below the federal poverty level. The Travis County poverty rate is higher than the U.S. rate (13.3%) but lower than the Texas rate (16.9%). (2006 American Community Survey)
- The Center for Public Policy Priorities estimates that in order to afford to live in the Austin/Round Rock MSA, a family of two parents and two children needs a household income of \$53,080 to cover basic expenses, a figure more than double the federal guideline. This means 40% of families live below the "Central Texas Security Index" suggesting that any major change in their family income or expenses threatens their ability to make ends meet. (CPPP, Sustainable Indicators 2006)
- The United Way Capital Area centralized referral and information system, 2-1-1 Texas, reports that requests for basic needs assistance spiked 34% in 2006 to the highest degree experienced during the last 5 years. (2-1-1 Texas)
- The Housing Authority of the City of Austin (HACA) has 5,451 people on the wait list for one of their 1,928 units of public housing and 5,111 on the wait list for Section 8 vouchers. (HACA, January, 2008)
- An analysis of food providers for low-income individuals and families by zip code showed that 13 of the 24 Travis County zip codes with high poverty levels do not have a food pantry or hot meal services. (BNC Travis County Food Provider Survey Results, 2007)
- The percentage of Travis County married couple families living below poverty is 6.3% compared to 26% of families headed by a single female. (2006 American Community Survey)
- In Travis County, 12.7% of families with children under the age of five had an income below the poverty level. This rate jumps to 38.6% of households headed by unmarried women with children under five living in poverty. (2006 American Community Survey)
- An estimated 7.3% of the senior population (ages 65 years and older) in Travis County have incomes at or below the poverty level. (2006 American Community Survey)
- Many people with disabilities survive at the economic and social margins of American society. In Travis County, people with a physical disability are 1.5 times more likely than the general population to live in poverty. Residents with a mental disability live in poverty at almost twice the general rate. (2006 American Community Survey)
- Education is generally seen as a path to success and people in poverty are less likely to attain an adequate level. In Travis County, 45,853 people over the age of 25 have less than a 9th grade education. An additional 39,165 went to high school but did not earn a diploma. (2006 American Community Survey)

Family Budget Estimator Austin/Round Rock MSA www.cppp.org/fbe/msa_3.php	Two Parents Two Children
Housing	\$836
Food	\$491
Child Care	\$841
Medical Insurance	\$943
Medical Out-of-pocket	\$118
Transportation	\$482
Other Necessities	\$334
Monthly Tax Payments and Credits	\$379
Necessary Monthly Income	\$4,423
Annual	\$53,080
% of 2007 Federal Poverty Level	257%

Poverty

What Causes Poverty? *Experts in social policy cite numerous factors that contribute to poverty:*

LOW WAGES & LACK OF BENEFITS/UNEMPLOYMENT/UNDEREMPLOYMENT

In 2006, 30.1% of Texas workers earned “poverty wages” defined as \$9.91/hour or less. This puts Texas well above the national average, as only two other states have a higher percentage of workers earning poverty wages. (Center for Public Policy Priorities, 2007) Much of employment is in service jobs that pay low wages and have few, if any, benefits. Employment is related to low education and skill levels.

VERY YOUNG OR VERY OLD AGE

Children, especially the very young, are completely dependent on their parents to meet their basic needs. Likewise, although many are healthy and stable, the elderly are at risk of increased dependency. They may also suffer from illness, physical disability or mental impairment.

MENTAL ILLNESS

Mental illness includes a vast number of functional and non-functional conditions. Because it is identified through behavior, mental illness is often understood as a social problem, prohibiting people from living successfully in their communities.

DISABILITY

People with disabilities have very different physical and learning challenges, but lifestyle limitations are common. The disabled tend to have low incomes and, at the same time, special needs. They are also at risk of isolation due to social stigma.

SOCIAL EXCLUSION

Exclusion happens when people are not part of ordinary life networks. The homeless, ex-prisoners, people with AIDS, people with disabilities and for whom language is a barrier often suffer from exclusion. People who are excluded can be deprived of resources, lack social protection and have to fight social stigma.

TO LEARN MORE, VISIT...

- Poverty USA, www.povertyusa.org
- Economic Policy Institute, www.epinet.org
- Joint Center for Poverty Research, www.jcpr.org
- National Center for Children in Poverty, www.nccp.org
- “Introduction to Public Policy”, www2.rgu.ac.uk/publicpolicy/introduction/needf.htm
- Central Texas Sustainability Indicators Project, <http://www.centex-indicators.org/>
- 2005 American Community Survey Analysis:
http://www.co.travis.tx.us/health_human_services/research_planning/pdfs/ACS_2005.pdf
- 2006 American Community Survey,
http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/ADPGeoSearchByListServlet?ds_name=ACS_2006_EST_G00_&_lang=en&_ts=210165678589
- Community Action Network, www.caction.org

How Can You Make a Difference?

- Agencies in the Basic Needs Coalition provide much needed services to people living in poverty such as clothing, food, rent, and utility assistance. Find donation and volunteer opportunities by visiting www.basicneeds-ctx.org.
- Support public policy initiatives that create real solutions for adequate healthcare, childcare, living wages, education and disability assistance. Visit www.cppp.org for information on how to help.
- United Way Capital Area provides a referral hotline for basic needs assistance. Dial 2-1-1 or visit www.handsoncentraltexas.org for volunteer and donation opportunities.