

Wayne Action Group for Economic Solvency, Inc.

# WAGES Agency Community Assessment

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2016

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# WAGES Agency Community Assessment

2016

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# **I. COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT GOALS AND PROCEDURES**



# WAGES Agency Community Assessment

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### Community Assessment Goals

The goal of the Wayne Action Group for Economic Solvency Inc. (WAGES) Agency Community Assessment is to identify the needs and resources in the agency's service areas which align with its mission. As stated in its mission statement, "WAGES is dedicated to helping people improve their quality of life and health and to gain independence. WAGES will:

- Advocate for the disadvantaged;
- Encourage people to raise their self-esteem through education;
- Provide service and opportunities for service; and
- Mobilize community, public and private resources.

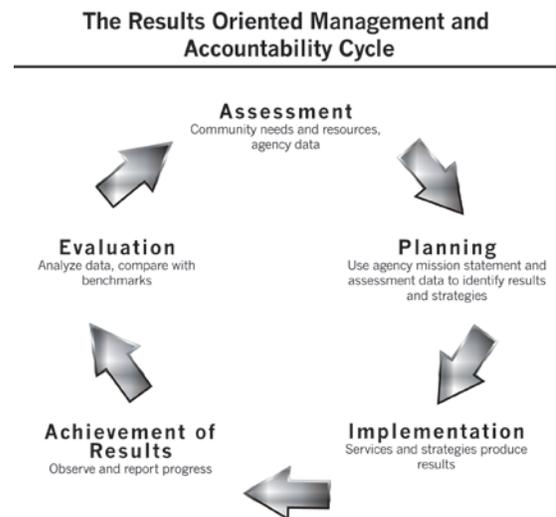
The criterion for an agency-wide Community Assessment is defined in the CSBG Organizational Standards. Standards related to the completion of a Community Assessment include:

- **Standard 1.2**  
The organization analyzes information collected directly from low-income individuals as part of the community assessment.
- **Standard 2.2**  
The organization utilizes information gathered from key sectors of the community in assessing needs and resources, during the community assessment process or other times. These sectors would include at minimum: community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, private sector, public sector, and educational institutions.
- **Standard 3.1**  
The organization conducted a community assessment and issued a report within the past 3 years.
- **Standard 3.2**  
As part of the community assessment, the organization collects and includes current data specific to poverty and its prevalence related to gender, age, and race/ethnicity for their service area(s).
- **Standard 3.3**  
The organization collects and analyzes both qualitative and quantitative data on its geographic service area(s) in the community assessment.

- **Standard 3.4**  
The community assessment includes key findings on the causes and conditions of poverty and the needs of the communities assessed.
- **Standard 3.5**  
The governing board formally accepts the completed community assessment.

**Community Assessment Procedures**

WAGES Community Action Agency understands that on-going assessment is essential to providing quality services. As stated in the Association of Nationally Certified ROMA Trainers website (<http://www.roma-nptp.org>), the need to implement a performance-based management system among Community Action Agencies receiving Community Service Block Grant (CSBG) funds has been recognized by Office of Community Service and the CSBG Network since the early 1990's. Efforts to adopt such a system were given impetus by the



Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) of 1993. In 1998 the CSBG Act was amended, mandating the implementation of a comprehensive performance-based management system across the entire Community Services Network. The system identified to meet this goal is the "Results-Oriented Management and Accountability," or ROMA. The ROMA cycle provides a model for assessing, planning, implementing and evaluating agency needs.

WAGES uses various tools in the assessment process. One such tool is the Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment (CCNA) Report Tool published by Community Commons in collaboration with the Community

Action Partnership ([www.communitycommons.org](http://www.communitycommons.org)). The CCNA Tool and Mapping Hub is an online tool with multiple features that allow for the efficient use of data and mapping as part of a larger Community Needs Assessment process.

To obtain feedback, a survey was distributed to participants, staff and to the community. The survey consisted of six questions regarding needs and services of the community. It was administered in English and Spanish. The results of the 370 surveys were tabulated in two groups: Older Adults and Families. This information is highlighted in the Individual and Community Needs section of this Community Assessment. The data was used to help identify Wayne County's strengths and the most pressing needs not currently being addressed as well as to target populations in need of services.

The process for conducting the Community Assessments is an agency and community effort. Program participants, community residents, parents, community partners, agency boards and advisory councils, and staff provide information regarding community needs, concerns, and services through the completion of surveys, focus groups, and general feedback regarding each program's needs. This information is an important component in identifying services available and needs that are not being addressed through the local human services agencies.

Information from among the following agencies and sources was utilized in the data collection and completion of the WAGES Agency Community Assessment:

- Community residents, program participants, community partners, agency boards and advisory councils and staff
- Information from the 2000 and 2010 United States Census
- 2014 American Factfinder Estimates United States Census Bureau

- Center for Aging Research and Educational Services, Jordan Institute for Families, UNC Chapel Hill School of Social Work
- Corporation for Community and National Service
- Department of Health and Human Services
- Economic Policy Institute
- Frank Porter Graham
- Goldsboro News Argus
- House of Fordham in Wayne County
- Management Assistance for Child Welfare, Work First and Food and Nutrition Services in North Carolina
- National Coalition for Homeless
- North Carolina Bureau of Labor Statistics
- North Carolina Council for Women
- North Carolina Division of Child Development
- North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
- North Carolina Budget and Tax Center
- North Carolina Department of Human Resources/Division of Social Services
- North Carolina Division of Aging and Older Adults Services
- North Carolina State Data Center
- Office of Economic Opportunity
- Partnership for Children of Wayne County
- Poverty US
- Salvation Army of Wayne County

- United States Department of Housing and Urban Development
- United Way of Wayne County
- United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Services
- Wayne.gov website
- Wayne County Chamber of Commerce
- Wayne County Department of Public Health
- Wayne County Department of Social Services
- Wayne County Economic Development Commission
- Wayne County Public Schools
- Wayne Uplift Resource Association
- Weatherization Assistance Program/ NC Department of Environmental Quality
- Review of community assessments completed by other community agencies and programs
- Reviews of existing available community resources.

WAGES Children and Families Division completed a *Community Assessment* in January 2016. Annual updates generally occur every January. The updates allow the program to assess the current state of the community, its strengths and needs. The Community Assessment also provides WAGES with valuable and current information as it relates to the number of available children, community resources and services. Data from this Community Assessment and the Children and Families Annual Report are the basis for this agency assessment.

General assessment data required by grant funders from all WAGES programs is reflected in the Agency Community Assessment. However, each WAGES program maintains program



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specific information including individual grant requirements, identified needs, program goals and outcomes data. This information can be accessed at the program level.

## **II. AGENCY PROFILE AND PROGRAMS**



### **WAGES Community Action Agency Profile**

During the State of the Union address on January 8, 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson declared unconditional “War on Poverty” leading to Congress to pass the Economic Opportunity Act. This legislation established and funded Community Action Agencies and Programs. In response, Wayne Action Group for Economic Solvency Inc. (WAGES) was founded as a Community Action Agency dedicated to mobilizing resources to combat poverty.

Wayne Action Group for Economic Solvency Inc. (WAGES) is a private non-profit agency that serves Wayne County, North Carolina. The Weatherization Assistance Program also serves Lenoir, Greene and Wilson Counties. WAGES, chartered by a resolution of the Wayne County Commissioners on November 15, 1965, opened its first office at 306 N. William Street on May 1, 1966 under the leadership of Executive Director, Bryan Sutton. Dr. Marlee Ray followed Mr. Sutton as Executive Director in January 2008.

The agency held its first Board of Directors meeting on November 19, 1965 where officers were elected and a constitution and by-laws were adopted. The agency continues to be governed by a Board of Directors which is composed of one-third public officials, one-third representatives of low income individuals and families, and one-third private community groups and organizations.

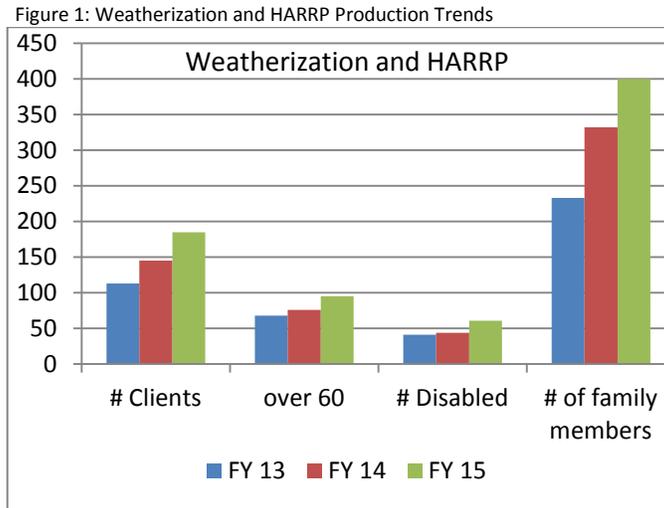
WAGES programs and services are divided into three administrative areas: Support Services Division, Children and Families Division, and Older Adult Services Division. Dr. Marlee Ray is the Executive Director of the agency; Brenda Ipock is the Administrator of the Support Services Division; Patricia Beier is the Administrator for the Children and Families Division; and Isabelle Doss is the Administrator of the Older Adult Services Division. WAGES administers multiple programs under each Division serving the youngest to the oldest in the community.

### Support Services Division

In 1966, the Economic Opportunity Act established WAGES as a Community Action Agency designed to oversee multiple programs which provided service and support to help local citizens become self-sufficient. This legislation led to the development of the Community Services Block Grant Self-Sufficiency (CSBG) Program which is designed to move low-income Wayne County families above the North Carolina poverty guidelines to self-sufficiency through comprehensive case management services. These services include but are not limited to: education and job training, employment and career counseling, parenting skills, budgeting and money management, basic life skills, child care assistance, and crisis intervention. The CSBG Program is funded through the Office of Economic Opportunity under NC Health and Human Services. The CSBG Self-Sufficiency program is currently serving 80 low-income individuals in the three year grant cycle with the goal of having 42 individuals rising above the poverty guideline.

The Weatherization Assistance Program was founded in 1976 as an energy conservation program to weatherize homes of low-income citizens in Wayne County. Over the years, the Weatherization Assistance Program expanded to include Lenoir, Greene and Wilson counties. After meeting income guidelines, priority is given to serving the elderly, people with disabilities, and families with young children. This program includes the Weatherization program and Heating Air Repair and Replacement Program (HARRP) and is funded through the Federal Department of Energy (DOE) and NC Department of Environment Quality (DEQ). Figure 1 shows that last year the program weatherized 118 homes by installing such measures as air sealing, insulating, and health and safety measures. The HARRP program repaired or replaced HVAC systems for 67 clients. Figure 1 also demonstrates that funding for

Weatherization and HARRP has been inconsistent over the years. This variation in funding impacts the agency’s ability to effectively plan and schedule work.



**Children and Families Division**

The first Head Start program in Goldsboro and Wayne County was a summer program operated in 1965. In April 1966, a proposal to fund the program year-round was approved and funded. The superintendents of the three school systems at that time-- Goldsboro City, Wayne County, and Fremont-- served as a steering committee to advise and guide the project in the early years. During those years, two separate programs were operated--one during the school year and one during the summer.

WAGES Head Start and Early Head Start programs are funded by the United States Department of Health and Human Services to serve low-income infants, toddlers and pre-school aged children in Wayne County. The program is one of the largest single county Head Start programs in the state and, as seen in

Figure 2: WAGES Children and Families Program Enrollment

<b>WAGES Programs</b>	<b># Funded Enrollment</b>	<b># Actual Enrollment (as of 04/2016)</b>
Head Start	354	345
Early Head Start	204	205
North Carolina PK	72	72
<b>Total</b>	<b>630</b>	<b>622</b>

Figure 2, currently serves a combined total of 622 children with 513 children on the waiting list. Of those currently served, approximately 11 receive extended day services. Currently, the Head

Start program operates on a full day, full school year basis providing regular programming and extended day child care during the school year and full day child care during the summer.

WAGES serves some children through collaborations with the Wayne County Public Schools and the Partnership for Children of Wayne County. It is also a partner in the statewide NC Pre- K program. Additionally, WAGES is one of ten sites in North Carolina receiving the grant to implement the Child Care Partnership Program. WAGES Head Start is partnering with Antioch Missionary Baptist Church Daycare and Preschool, Joyful Play Two, and Trinity Child Care to promote and enhance child care and educational services at the local level.

WAGES Head Start provides comprehensive child development services to children with disabilities as mandated by the Head Start Performance Standards and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Services include screening, referrals, Individual Education Plan (IEP) development, follow-up therapy and related family services and transition to the public schools. Figure 3 displays a breakdown of the number of children diagnosed with at least one disability who were enrolled in Head Start during the 2015-2016 schoolyear.

Figure 3: Children with Disabilities Served by WAGES Head Start 2016

Type of Disability	Number Served
Health Impairment	1
Emotional/Behavioral Disorder	0
Speech/Language Impairment	18
Mental Retardation (PDA)	0
Hearing Impairment	1
Orthopedic Impairment	1
Visual Impairment	0
Learning Disabilities	0
Autism	12
Traumatic Brain Injury	0
Non Categorical/Developmental Delay	44
Multiple disabilities, including deaf-blind	0
Total	76
% of Funded Enrollment	11.6%

Another program under the Children and Families division is Wayne County First Steps. This program was initiated in 1975 by a consortium of local agencies and individuals who are committed to the principle that every child deserves the best possible start in life in the care of a nurturing family. The program features voluntary in-home visits by trained social workers to new parents in the service area. It aims to positively enhance parent-child interaction and assist

families in connecting with other community resources during the first three years of their child's life. Wayne County First Steps and EHS Home Visitation currently serve 28 children age's birth to three and 26 parents.

### **Older Adults Division**

The Older Adults Services Division is composed of three programs: Foster Grandparents, Senior Companions, and the Nutrition Program for the Elderly. The Foster Grandparent Program is a program for income eligible individuals ages 55 and over who provide one-on-one assistance to special needs children in daycare centers, head start centers and elementary schools. These seniors serve as mentors and tutors to children who have disabilities. Foster Grandparents serve 20 hours a week and receive a modest tax-free stipend and other benefits. Currently, 103 Foster Grandparents serve 225 children with special needs in volunteer stations throughout Wayne County.

The Senior Companion Program is also for income-eligible people 55 years of age or over and provides individualized care and assistance to other adults, especially the elderly. Their services help the homebound achieve and maintain their highest level of independent living. Senior Companions also receive a modest tax-free stipend and other benefits. A rising need provided by the Senior Companion is that of respite care for the caregivers. Currently, 63 older adults give companionship to 89 families in Wayne County through the Senior Companion Program.

The Nutrition Program for the Elderly currently serves over 500 senior citizens each month. This program consists of two different components: Congregate Nutrition and Meals on Wheels. Congregate Nutrition promotes the health and well-being of individuals 60 years and older through nutritious meals and by offering education on an array of topics, social,

recreational, and other community activities. WAGES operates two congregate meal sites serving 250 unduplicated clients each month with an average of 150 on a daily basis. The congregate sites are the Senior Centers in Goldsboro and Mount Olive. There have been over 1,500 new clients registered with Wayne County Services on Aging for various activities at the Peggy Seegars' Senior Center in Goldsboro since it opened in November 2012.

Through the Meals on Wheels program, WAGES serves approximately 350 meals daily to impaired, homebound individuals who cannot prepare meals for themselves nor have anyone who can. Both Wayne County and the City of Goldsboro support the Nutrition Program. Support from United Way and other local funds allowed meals to be provided to homebound individuals under the age of 60. Aside from nutritious meals, this program provides social contact and a check-in reporting system to the community it serves. It is currently supported by a rotating group of over 1200 volunteers.

### **Agency-wide Budget Information**

Information on the Agency-wide budget including sources of funding, spending and use of funding is on the following pages. Figure 4 shows the sources of funding for WAGES during the 2014-15 year. Figure 5 indicates the agency's spending for the past for fiscal years inclusive of 2011 through 2015. Figure 6 shows the 2014-2015 use of funding for the agency. The agency also has an A133 Audit conducted yearly. The 2015 Audit was completed by Markham, Mitchell & Stroud PLLC. An Unqualified Audit was issued for the 2015 year which means that the audit was issued with no findings or concerns. The audit was presented to the WAGES Board of Directors by Steve Mitchell, auditor, in November 2015 and was again submitted and approved by the Board in February 2016. All of this information shows that the agency is fiscally sound at both the program and agency levels.

Figure 4: WAGES Sources of Funding

WAGES Fiscal Year 2014-2015 Sources of Funding (all amounts in \$'000)								
Program	Federal	State of NC	In-Kind	Program Income	Local Funds	Matching Funds	Other resources	Total
Head Start/ EHS	\$6,139	\$3	\$1,587			\$28	\$41	\$7,798
USDA	\$467							\$467
CSBG	\$277							\$277
Nutrition	\$380		\$17	\$21	\$139			\$557
Foster Grandparents	\$442		\$34	\$0	\$29			\$505
Senior Companions	\$321		\$22	\$0	\$16			\$358
Weatherization (DOE)	\$151							\$151
Weatherization (HARRP)	\$277							\$277
Weatherization (LIHEAP)	\$580							\$580
EHS Childcare Collab.	\$269		\$1					\$270
NC-PK		\$236						\$236
	<b>\$9,303</b>	<b>\$239</b>	<b>\$1,661</b>	<b>\$21</b>	<b>\$184</b>	<b>\$28</b>	<b>\$41</b>	<b>\$11,477</b>

Figure 5: Last Four Fiscal Years' Agency Spending

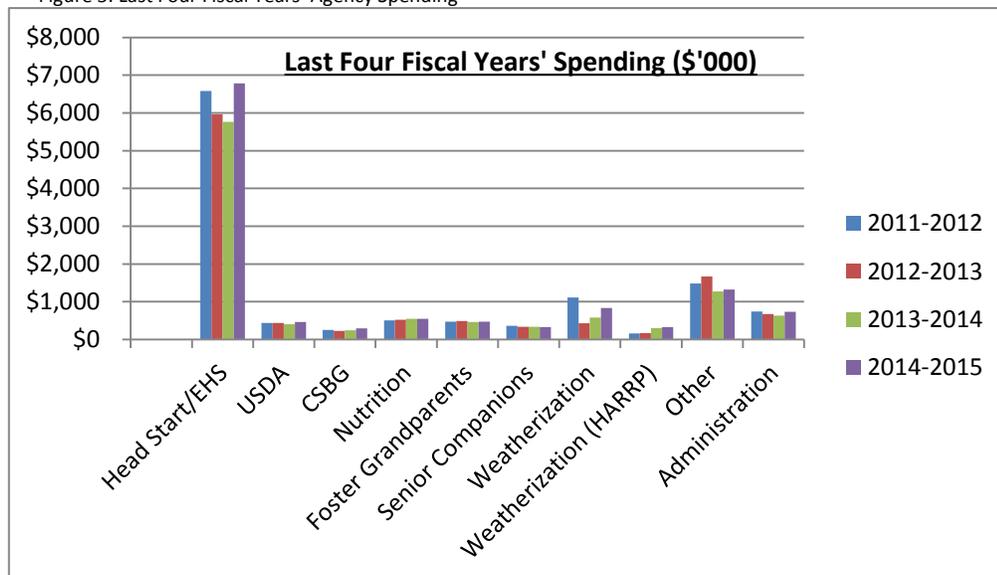
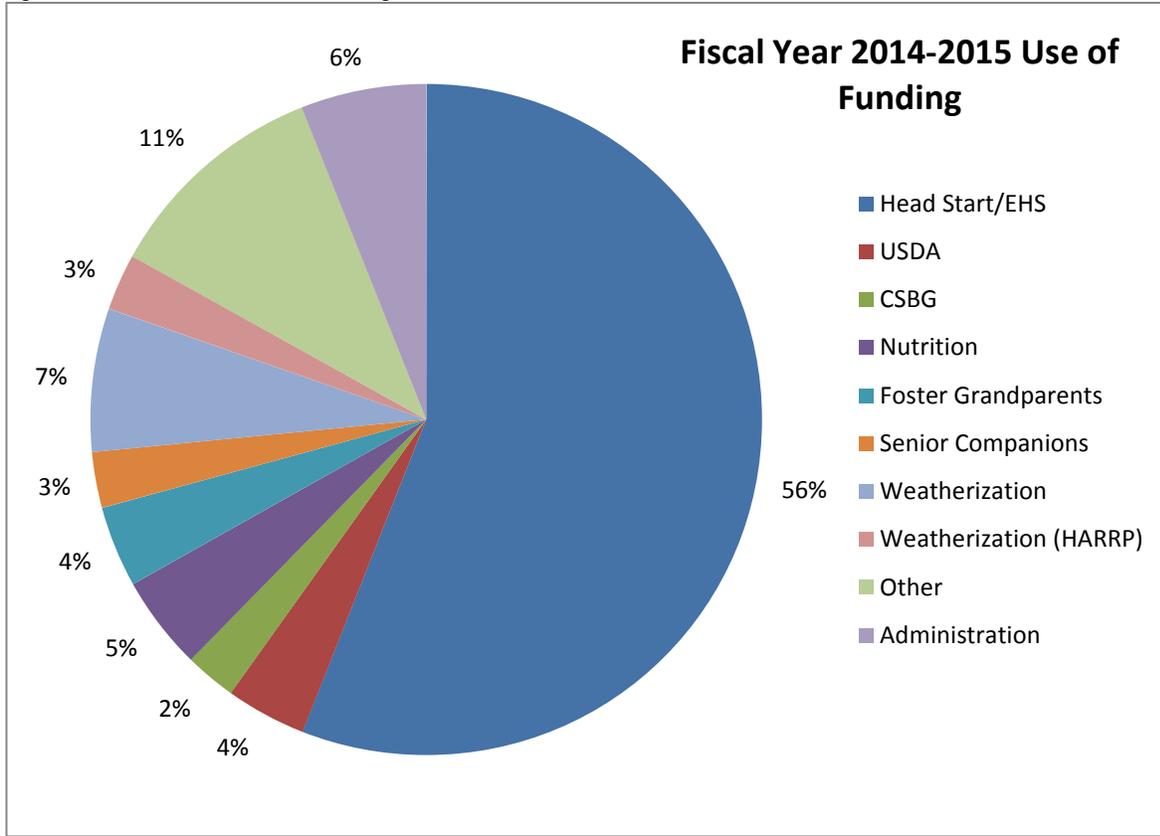


Figure 6: Fiscal Year 2014-15 Use of Funding



### **III. OVERVIEW OF SERVICE AREA**



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**Environment and Population**

Wayne County is located in the rural eastern section of North Carolina. It is 50 miles east of the state capital of Raleigh and 90 miles west of the port city of Wilmington. The climate is mild but the area is prone to tornadoes and hurricanes. Wayne County is the home of Seymour Johnson Air Force Base which houses the 4<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing and the 916<sup>th</sup> Air Refueling Wing. The county has a diversified industrial base of over 60 companies. Agriculture has a significant impact on the economy of Wayne County as it ranks 3rd in the state in turkey production and 4th in hog production.

Census Data from 2014 shows that the total population of Wayne County is 124,093. As shown in Figure 7, the 2014 population is predominantly white with the next largest group being Black. In 2014 Hispanics accounted for 10.5% of the population in Wayne County.

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Wayne County</b>
Total Population- Race	124,093
% White	59.3%
% Black	33%
% Asian	2.0%
% American Indian	0.8%
% Other	8.3%
Ethnicity-Hispanic	10.5%
Number of Families	32,019
Number of Children Under Age 5	8,574
% Persons below poverty level	22.5%
% Families below poverty level	16.7%
% Children under age 5 below poverty level	31.9%
Unemployment Rate	12.8%

According to the 2014 American FactFinder Census (annual estimates), the population of the city of Goldsboro, the largest city and county seat, is 36,306. Mount Olive, the second largest city in Wayne County, sits at the southern end of the county with a population of 4,740. Significant to the

population of Mount Olive and the agencies serving this area is the current influx in its population with an estimated 3,000 Haitians relocating to this area in recent years.

In Wayne County, there are an estimated 53,074 families and 8,574 children under the age of five. As shown in Figure 8, this age group represents 6.9% of the population. Similarly, persons 65 and over represent almost 13.6% of the total population. Wayne County statistical estimates of the 2014 population reveal that there are 16,957 residents age 65 and older.

Population projections suggest that within the next decade and a half, this age group will account for 17% of the county’s population which accounts for a 72.8% increase. (Center for Aging Research and Educational Services, Jordan Institute for Families, UNC Chapel Hill School of Social Work). In Wayne County, 44.7% of women and 46% of the men in the non-

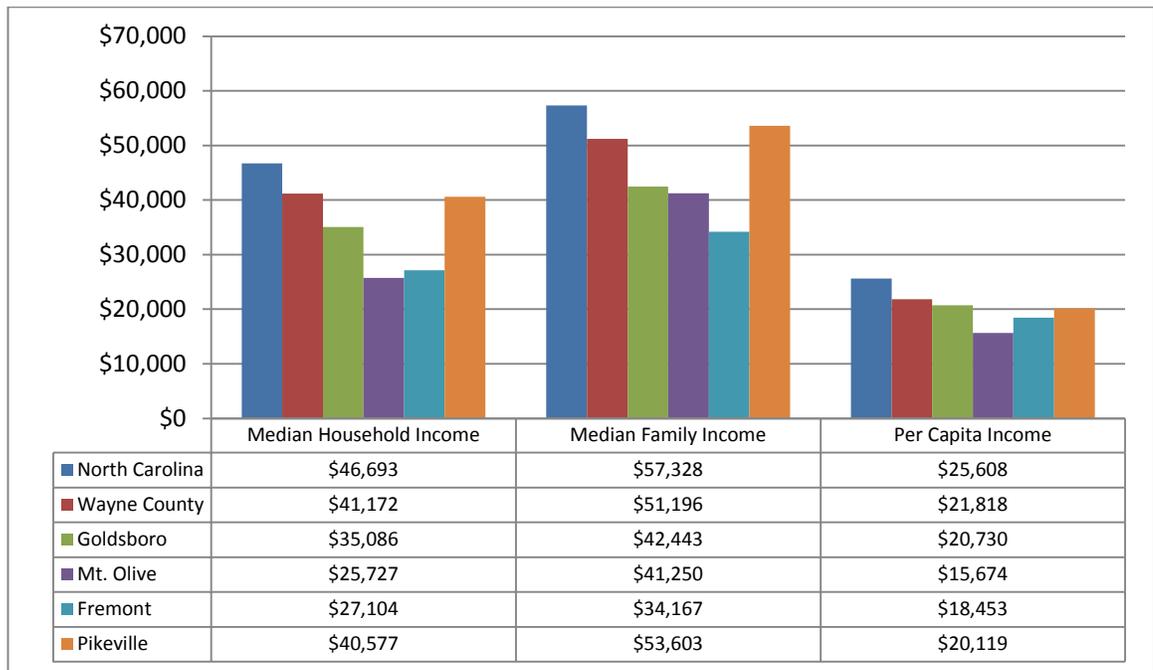
Figure 8: Population by Age  
2014 Annual Estimates U.S Census

Age	Percentage
Under 5 years	6.9%
5-9 years	7.3%
10-14 years	6.2%
15 to 19 years	6.5%
20-24 years	7.7%
25-34 years	13.2%
35-44 years	12.4%
45-54 years	13.7%
55-59 years	6.8%
60-64 years	5.6%
65-74 years	7.8%
75-84 years	4.2%
85 years and over	1.6%

institutionalized civilian population age 65 and older are reported to have at least one disability. Disability is defined by the Census as “a long physical, mental, or emotional condition. This condition can make tasks such as walking climbing stairs, dressing, bathing, learning or remembering difficult. This condition can also impede a person from being able to go outside the home alone” (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).

## Income and Employment

Figure 9: Median Household Income, Median Family Income, Per Capita Income 2014



Wayne County ranks significantly below the state in median income per household, median income per family, and per capita income. The median household income in 2014 was estimated to be \$41,172 while the state median was \$46,693. Similarly, the median income per family and the per capita income in Wayne County were \$51,196 and \$21,818 respectively and the state figures were \$57,328 and \$25,608. As evident in Figure 9, the greatest disparity exists between the State estimates and those of the city of Goldsboro and the town of Mt. Olive. A smaller but still significant number of low-income at risk families also exist in the northern part of the county (Pikeville and Fremont areas) as well.

Income data indicates how difficult it is for these families to afford monthly necessities. Most of the families in North Carolina fall below the basic income standard which is defined as the total estimated cost of seven different categories: housing, food, child care, transportation, taxes, health insurance and other necessities which include entertainment, clothes, school supplies, and other unexpected expenses normally experienced by families. These figures, unlike the national poverty threshold, are compiled from different regions of the country and take into account the fluctuating cost of living within each region (Economic Policy Institute, 2008).

According to the US Census website, Wayne County had an unemployment rate of 12.8% in 2014. The county unemployment rate is higher than the North Carolina unemployment rate of 10.5%. As seen in Figure 10, individuals between the ages of 16 and 44 have the highest unemployment rates in the county. Furthermore, it can be seen that educational attainment and unemployment rates have an inverse relationship; the higher the educational attainment, the lower the unemployment rate. Moreover, unemployment rates among individuals with any disability, females with children under the age of six, and among those

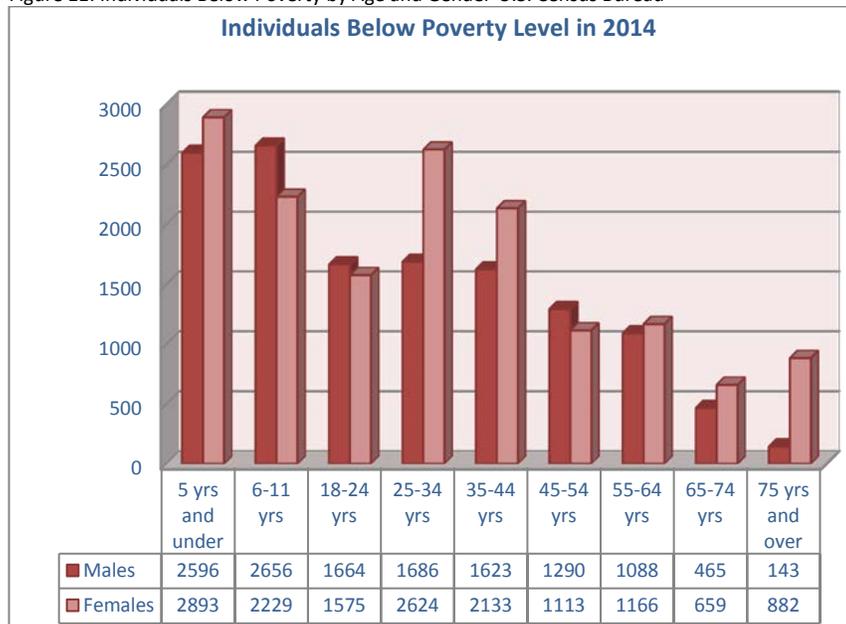
individuals below poverty level are significantly higher. As a result of unemployment, a large number of individuals continue to fall below poverty level.

In Wayne County, a very large number of women fall below poverty level. In fact, 24.8% of the female population lives in poverty, whereas 20% of males do. Although females represent 51% of the total population, they represent 52% of those in poverty. As evident in Figure 11, there are age periods in which this difference is more apparent.

Figure 10: Unemployment Rate by Age, Education and Other Demographics 2014 U.S Census

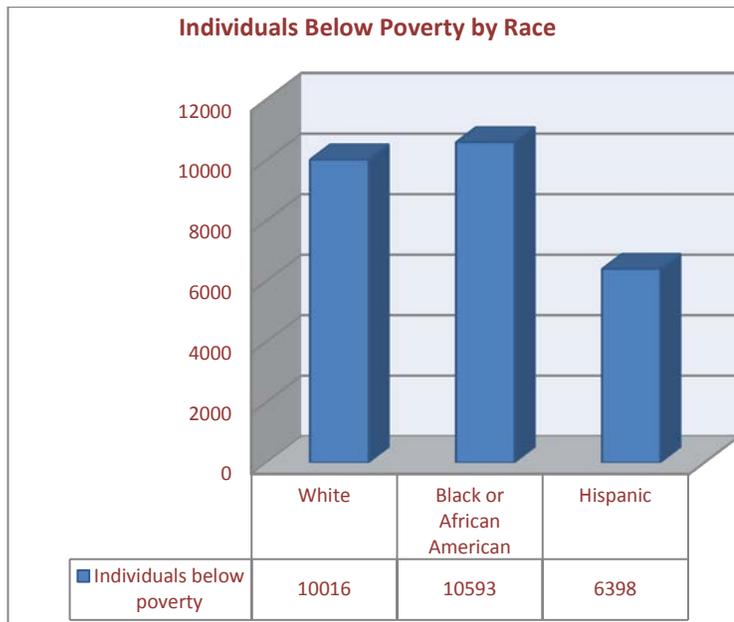
Population	Unemployment Rate
NC rate	10.5%
Wayne County rate	12.8%
16 to 19 years	44.2.1%
20 to 24 years	18%
25 to 44 years	13.6%
45 to 54 years	7.6%
55 to 64 years	6.4%
65 to 74 years	5.7%
75 years and over	4.8%
Less than high school graduate	14.5%
High school graduate or GED	11.2%
Some college or associate's degree	11.1%
Bachelor's degree or higher	5.7%
Females with children under 6	24.7%
With any disability	18.7%
Below poverty level	22.5%

Figure 11: Individuals Below Poverty by Age and Gender-U.S. Census Bureau



Similarly, when analyzing these figures by race, (see Figure 12) it is evident that African Americans are the race with the highest number of individuals below poverty level. A total of 22.5% of this population falls below said guidelines whereas 14.6% of Whites do. Although the total number of Hispanics in poverty is less than other races, an estimated 49.80% of the total population lives in poverty.

Figure 12: Individuals Below Poverty by Race 2014 U.S. Census



The unemployment rate for Wayne County has declined more than 2% over the last three years. As of November 2016 the unemployment rate had dropped to 2.7%. However, the median household income continues to only marginally increase and thus, the number of families living in poverty increases.



## **IV. INDIVIDUAL AND COMMUNITY NEEDS**



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### Needs as Defined through Agency Groups

Agency staff worked with participants, community partners, advisory councils and boards to identify community needs. Surveys, focus groups and discussions with these groups provided an overview of needs. The following categories are the Target Areas identified as having the highest need and have therefore been designated to be addressed by the agency.

- Employment
  - Increased Job Opportunities in the community;
  - Access to more jobs with employment benefits- insurance;
  - More job training and educational opportunities;
    - Adult GED classes,
    - Soft skill training and coaching,
    - Specific skill training for employers.
- Housing/ Homelessness
  - Increased access to Standardized Housing;
  - Increased affordable Housing;
  - Access to family Homeless Shelter that will accept wife, husband and children;
  - Increased options for Weatherization of substandard homes;
    - Resources to repair homes that are deferred from Weatherization,
    - Ability to return to homes weatherized under older guidelines,
  - Continued partnerships with Habitat for Humanity and other housing agencies.
- Transportation
  - Increased Public Transportation Routes;
  - Options for 24 hour Transportation Resources;

- Increased funding for gas vouchers.
- Children and Family Development
  - Expansion of early childcare services through Early Head Start;
  - More options for high quality child care for infants and toddlers and child care assistance programs;
  - Address low literacy level of young children;
    - Collaborate with Community Initiatives,
    - Increase after-school programs with reading coaches,
    - Continue/ increase Foster Grandparent relationships,
  - Broadened community cultural opportunities for young children;
    - Summer Programming/ Summer Camp,
    - Fine Arts Programming,
  - Parent Training.
- Mental Health
  - Additional battered women support services;
  - Community Support Group contact information;
- Older Adults
  - Additional assistance options for home-bound elderly;
    - Assistance ranging from medical to light assistance such as transportation, shopping and going to appointments,
    - Affordable services to assist elderly remain independent in their own homes,
  - Increased nutritional services for growing elderly population;

- Expansion of Meals on Wheels and Congregate Meals,
- Increased opportunities for engagement of elderly in community;
- Volunteer opportunities.

### **Needs as Defined through Community Data**

The WAGES Children and Families Division coordinated a *2015 Community Assessment Survey*. The survey was distributed to program participants and community members. The results were divided into two categories, Older Adults and Families. The survey focused on identifying individual needs and community needs as well as the resources available to meet those needs. A total of 370 surveys were tabulated; 141 Older Adults and 229 Families. Figures 13-18 identify the most pressing needs facing families as indicated by responses to the following questions: What are the most pressing needs facing your family now? What are the most important issue facing Wayne County today? Do you have the necessary resources to meet the needs of your family? If not, what resources are needed? Is there a significant male role model in your child's life? What community agencies /resources does your family use? Finally, what do you feel are the strengths in your community?

Figure 13: Most Pressing issues facing families.2015 Community Needs Assessment Survey

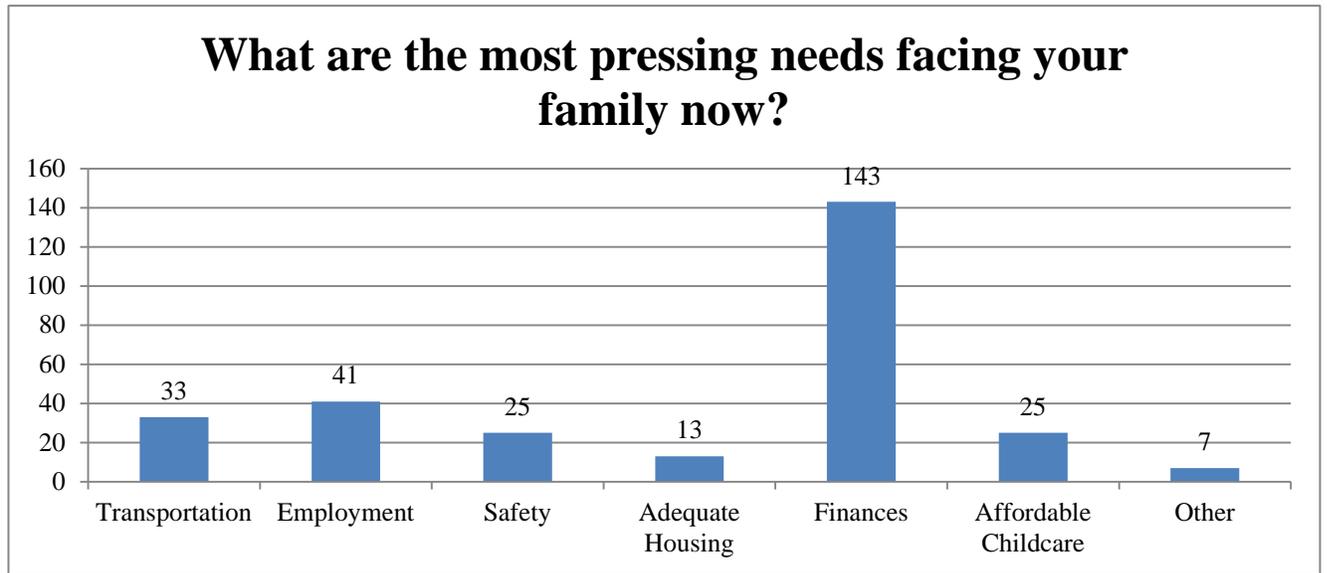


Figure 14: Most important issue facing Wayne County. 2015 Community Needs Assessment Survey

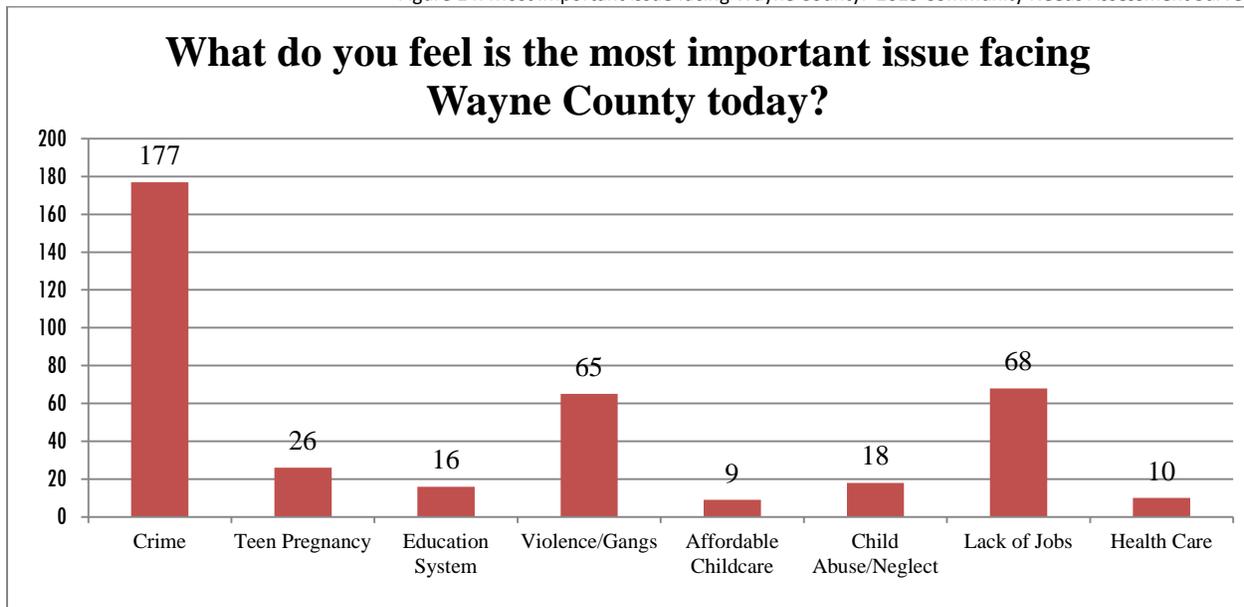


Figure 15: What Resources are needed to Meet Family's Needs 2015 Community Needs Assessment Survey

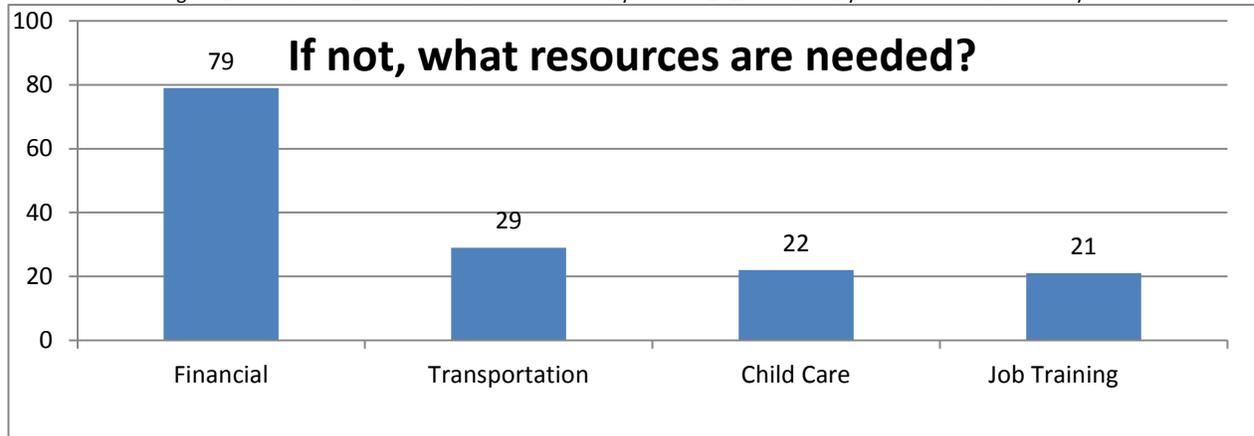


Figure 16: Is There a Significant Male Role Model in Your Child's Life? 2015 Community Needs Survey

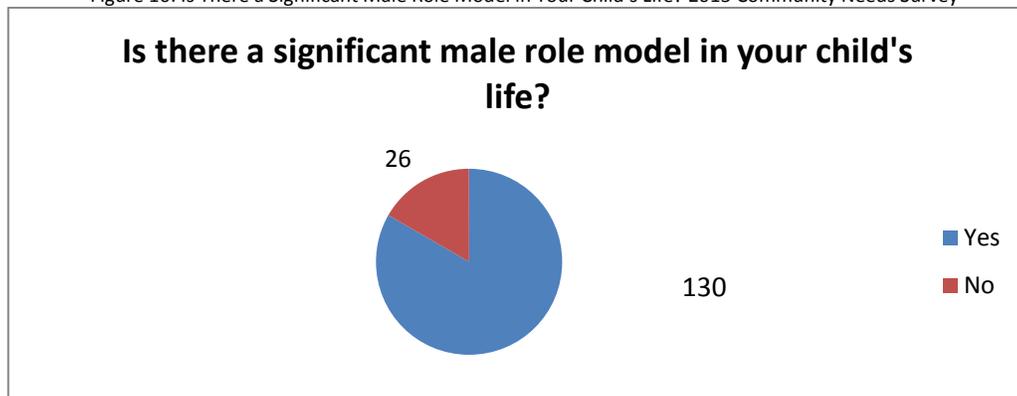


Figure 17: What do you feel are the strengths are your community per respondents? 2015 Community Needs Assessment Survey

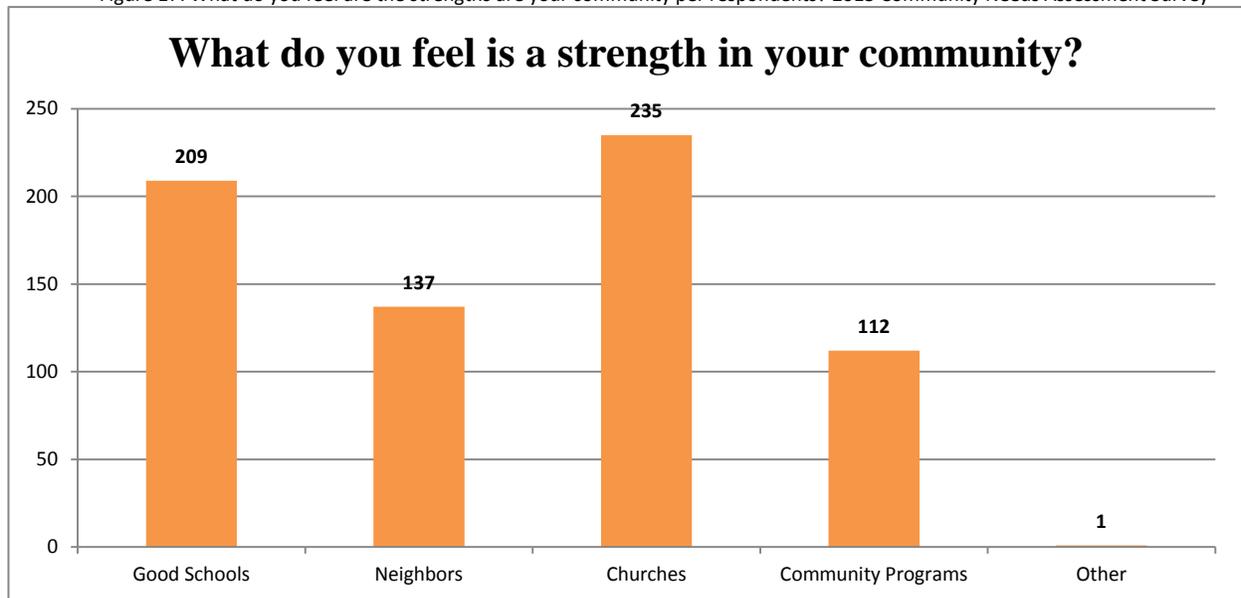
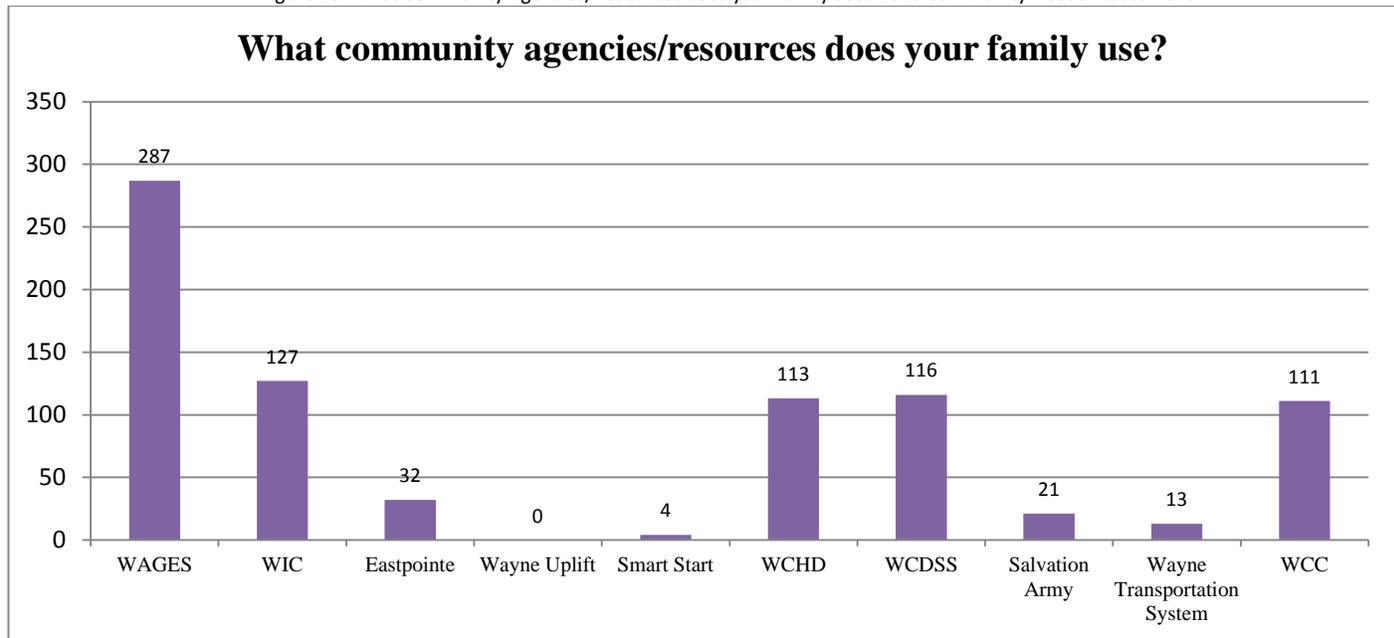


Figure 18: What Community Agencies/Resources does your family use? 2015 Community Needs Assessment



The majority of respondents identified Finances to be the most pressing issue facing families (39%) and employment as the second (11%). In addition, Crime (48%) was identified as the most pressing issue facing the county. Most of the respondents indicated having access to the resources necessary to meet the needs of their families but also identified an array of needed resources. The most commonly mentioned resources needed were Financial Resources, Transportation and Job Training. A large number of the respondents stated that area churches, good schools, community resources, and agencies such as WAGES were sources of community strength. Data from this survey provided information in determining Agency Target Areas.

### Highlights of Children and Families Data

WAGES Children and Families Division identified and assessed a variety of areas and issues related to effectively serving young children and their families. Detailed information is outlined in the *WAGES Children and Families' Needs Assessment*. Health Needs show that poverty, lack of insurance, and the number of available physicians all have direct impact on the health care needs of Wayne County children and the population as a whole. In the area of

*Health Insurance* statistics indicate that in 2009, 65.8% of the total live births in Wayne County were Medicaid births which is much higher than the state estimate of 57.3%. A review of Infant Mortality shows that there have been a total of 90 infant deaths (under the age of one) in Wayne County since the year 2006. In 2011 there were 20 infant deaths. According to the Wayne County Health Department, in the area of Overweight Children, North Carolina ranks among the top eight states with obesity as a health issue. Child Abuse and Neglect is a final area of major focus for the Children and Families' Division. According to the Management Assistance for Child Welfare, Work First, and Food and Nutrition Services in North Carolina (CWWFFNS) there were 756 reports of abuse and neglect between July 2012 and June 2013 in Wayne County. Data from this assessment assisted in identifying the needs of children and families in Wayne County.

## **V. Agency Targets and Opportunities**



# WAGES Agency Community Assessment

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### **Agency Target Areas and Opportunities**

Based on the identified individual and community needs, WAGES pinpointed specific Target Areas to be addressed by the agency's programs. Additional data supporting Target Areas is documented at the program level. Target Areas are Employment, Affordable Housing/ Homelessness, Transportation, Children and Family Services, Mental Health/ Support of Domestic Violence Victims and Older Adults. Each Target Area is followed with an Agency Response. The Agency Response is an overview of strategies in place to address the Target Area. Specific strategies for meeting these Targets are incorporated into Program goals and plans. Projected needs are also addressed in the Agency Response to identify gaps in services and to plan future strategies for the agency.

#### **Target Area: Employment**

Employment is a major Target Area for WAGES. There is an identified need for increased job opportunities in Wayne County. There is also a need for more job training in order for persons in poverty to be able to access existing jobs. Job training consists of integrated services and community partnering with local Community Colleges as well as trainings offered at the local agency.

As a result of unemployment, a large number of individuals continue to fall below poverty level. As noted, Wayne County ranks significantly below the state in median income per household. The median household income in 2014 was estimated to be \$41,172 while the state median was \$46,693. To rise above poverty, families and individuals need consistent full time employment.

According to the 2014 Unemployment Census figures, the county had an unemployment rate of 12.8%. Unemployment rates among individuals with any disability, females with

children under the age of 6, and among those individuals below poverty level are significantly higher than other groups. Individuals between the ages of 16 and 44 have the highest unemployment rates in the county.

Training and increased educational opportunities are needed so that persons in poverty can access the jobs that are available. Educational attainment and unemployment rates have an inverse relationship; the higher the educational attainment, the lower the unemployment rate.

#### AGENCY RESPONSE:

- WAGES enrolls and supports individuals and families with job training and soft skill training needed for employment through case management and direct assistance.
- CSBG assists clients with goal setting related to education and employment by providing financial assistance as well as connections to community resources.
- Trainings are provided based on identified client need such as Skill Development, Employment Assessments, Employment Training, Motivational Interviewing, Budgeting, Resume Writing, Professional Dress Attire, Work Ethic Training, Job Readiness, Family Engagement, and Goal Planning Training;
- CSBG provides financial assistance to reduce barriers based on client need such as drug testing for employment, physical examinations, text books, gas vouchers, bus tickets, eyewear and uniforms.
- CSBG collaborates with NC Works Employment Office by sending referrals with highly trained and skilled participants.
- (CRC) Career Readiness Certification trainings are provided by community partners.
- Expand collaborative agreements with Wayne Community College to provide training and educational opportunities for both parents and staff.

- WAGES Early Head Start will continue to provide full-year classroom operations and services. WAGES Early Head Start offers full day summer child care services for parents who are working, attending school, in job training or affected by Work First welfare reform programs.

### **Target Area: Affordable Housing/ Homelessness**

There is a need for increased affordable housing in Wayne County. Homelessness in Wayne County is a direct result of the lack of affordable housing, decreasing government support, poverty and domestic violence. According to House of Fordham, there is an average of 20 homeless individuals who spend the night in their facility daily. Similarly, the Wayne Uplift Domestic Violence program currently provides shelter for five women and their dependent children who are homeless as a result of domestic violence or sexual assault. The Salvation Army on the other hand, provides shelter to an average of 12 individuals every night. These figures may not be indicative of the total number of homeless individuals in the county as there are many who spend the night on the streets, in vehicles, abandoned buildings, hotels, tents, and/or in temporary housing.

A 2013 report by the National Center on Family Homelessness ranks North Carolina 21<sup>st</sup>, with 50<sup>th</sup> being the worst, for the extent of child homelessness. The report indicates that children that are homeless are more likely to experience hunger, mental health issues, and chronic health problems, repeat a grade in school or drop out. Wayne County Public Schools is currently serving 225 homeless children. WAGES Head Start and Early Head Start programs served a total of 15 homeless children during the last school year. At this time Early Head Start serves five homeless children which represent 3% of those enrolled. Similarly, Head Start is currently serving 2% or 10 homeless children.

**AGENCY RESPONSE:**

- CSBG works with clients to obtain affordable housing;
- CSBG collaborates with the Housing Authority to place clients in housing;
- Collaborate and Support the Point-In-Time Count, that assists with linkage and supporting the homeless population secure housing.
- Weatherization reduces the energy burden and strives to bring homes to standard;
- All homeless children who apply for enrollment into the Head Start or Early Head Start program are categorically eligible as a result of the McKinney-Vento Act (Head Start Act of 2007).
- WAGES has representation on the Board of Wayne County Uplift which provides shelter to women and children victims of domestic violence.
- WAGES staff collaborate with the Salvation Army which provides shelter to males 18 years and older.

**Focus Area: Transportation**

There is a need for increased Public transportation in Wayne County. Participant surveys indicated that lack of transportation is a barrier for obtaining employment. Additionally, many families are unable to access childcare services due to the lack of transportation.

**AGENCY RESPONSE:**

- CSBG assists enrolled participants with bus tickets and/or gas vouchers so that education and employment goals can be met;
- WAGES is designated as a permanent stop on the GWTA line for Public transportation;
- To address the transportation issue, Head Start Centers are located in areas where transportation is not needed. The Chestnut Early Head Start/Head Start Center provides

services to families with eligible children living in the surrounding public housing communities of Lincoln Homes, Seymour Johnson, The Grand at Day Point and Elmwood Terrace. Royall Avenue and Bryan Sutton Center provide Head Start and Early Head Start services to eligible families with children living in the Woodcrest, Fairview, West Haven and Little Washington public housing communities and surrounding areas.

- To reduce the need of transportation WAGES has a cooperative agreement with Wayne County Public Schools allowing classroom slots to be made available to WAGES Head Start at School Street Elementary in Goldsboro.

### **Focus Area: Children and Family Development**

Quality affordable child care is in short supply in Wayne County resulting in a need in this area. This situation is highlighted by the data from the North Carolina's Work First Welfare Reform Act which results in more parents needing child care for their children. Current statistics show that there are 2,660 children ages 0-5 in regulated childcare in the county and 87 facilities (62 child care centers and 25 family day care homes) to serve them. In WAGES' service area there is a great need to expand services specifically for infant and toddlers.

Family members are severely limited in their ability to obtain an education, job training and viable employment if they cannot find quality and affordable child care. The Department of Social Services (DSS) mandates that all recipients of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) with children age 12 months and up work 35 hours per week. As of February 19, 2015, 42 children ages birth to five years of age were receiving these services. Similarly, Work First mandates that all Work First employment customers participate in a work or volunteer activity

for a total of 35 hours per week. These mandates significantly increase the number of families in need of quality childcare.

When faced with the high cost of child care in Wayne County, parents often must make complicated choices. Some parents may choose not to work and rely on public assistance; others seek low-priced and often times inadequate care. Inexpensive child care can be of poor quality, unreliable and unsafe for the child and may result in the parent missing work and thus jeopardizing the employment status of low-income families. According to the North Carolina Budget and Tax Center, the average one or two child family in North Carolina spends 16.5% to 28.6 % of their gross monthly income on child care. Childcare expenses are high and, without assistance, it is difficult for many families to meet the demand.

WAGES provides comprehensive family development services in order to identify and address the needs of families and individuals and enable them to achieve and maintain self-sufficiency. However, WAGES maintains an extensive waiting list for children less than three years of age. County growth estimates show an increase within these age groups (Office of State Management and Budget Website). The need for additional Early Childhood Care in WAGES’ service area for children age six weeks to three years old is reflective in the table below.

Figure 19: Number of Infants and Toddlers Not Being Served in Wayne County

	# Children under One years old	# One year olds	# Two year olds	# Three year olds
Wayne County North Carolina	1711	1741	1752	1678
<b>Number of Infants and Toddlers not Being Served in Wayne County</b>				<b>2,227 Children</b>

**AGENCY RESPONSE:**

- WAGES Head Start/ Early Head Start will continue to provide full day, full year child care for families as a vehicle for moving them toward self-sufficiency

- WAGES will seek new grant opportunities to expand Early Head Start slots for children and families in order to reduce the waitlist.
- WAGES Head Start will implement and continue to develop Child Care Partnerships with local Child Care facilities to enhance quality and expand services.
- All families enrolled in the Head Start and Early Head Start programs will be assigned a Family Social Worker who assists with identifying strengths and needs, facilitates the formulation of a family goal plan, assists in accessing needed services and provides on-going family case management.
- WAGES Foster Grandparents will provide needed support for special needs children in Childcare Facilities, Head Start and Early Head Start classrooms. Foster Grandparents act as positive role models, give one-on-one attention to identified children and provide an intergenerational aspect to the classroom.
- Foster Grandparents will positively influence the growth and development of Pre-Elementary School children by increasing their reading proficiency and improving their potential of success in school and in life.
- WAGES will continue to be an active member of the community collaboration Read Wayne. The focus of this initiative is to promote early literacy across all spectrums of the community.
- There is an on-going goal to continually strengthen collaboration with Wayne County Public Schools to ensure effective transitional experiences for Head Start graduates.
- A target is to work with the community to provide more opportunities to serve Hispanic children in Wayne County.

**Focus Area: Mental Health Support of Domestic Violence Victims**

Wayne Uplift Domestic Violence Center is the only domestic violence program and abuser treatment program in Wayne County. Figures reported by the North Carolina Council for Women show 343 cases of domestic violence during the 2014-15 year. Of these, 27 were due to sexual assault and 111 resulted in a protection order which is an increase from the prior year. As evident in Figure 20, the majority of clients served are African American and individuals under the age of 25. Wayne Uplift provides an array of services including education, counseling, advocacy, transportation, shelter, and referrals to outside sources to both male and female victims and perpetrators. It is important to note that domestic violence cases are usually under reported; therefore, it is very possible that the number of cases of domestic violence in Wayne County is much higher than what is being reported.

Figure 20: Reported Cases of Domestic Violence by Age, Race and Gender.

North Carolina Council for Women

Demographic Characteristic	Number
<b>AGE</b>	
Under 25	50%
25-34	7%
35-44	11%
45-54	19%
55-64	7%
65 and Older	7%
<b>RACE/ETHNICITY</b>	
White	31%
Black	52%
Hispanic	6%
Other	.0%
<b>GENDER</b>	
Female	62%
Male	38%

There is a need for Community Support Groups in various mental health areas. A comprehensive list of support groups would allow WAGES staff to connect individuals and families with a different type of service model by linking them with individuals in similar circumstances.

**AGENCY RESPONSE**

- WAGES has representation on the Wayne Uplift Board. A major role of the Board is to seek new resources and options for battered women.
- WAGES collaborates with Wayne Uplift and makes referrals as needed.
- There is an increased number of resources to serve the community mental health needs with which WAGES partners to provide support. Community partners include

Eastpointe, Goldsboro Housing Authority, Salvation Army, DSS and East Carolina University.

- WAGES works directly with the Faith Community as a viable source of support to families and children within the community

### **Target Areas: Older Adults**

The older adult population is growing in Wayne County resulting in the need for increased and diversified services for this population. The Wayne 2010 population statistics reveal that there are 16,978 residents age 65 and older. In Wayne County, an estimated 64% of women are not married and over 39% live alone. On the other hand, 27% of men are not married, and only 18% live alone. Of Wayne County citizens age 65 and older, 8% percent live in poverty. Though this population is one of the nation's fastest growing, it is also one of the most underserved.

A growing need, as shown by requests for services, is respite care. Wayne County DSS, Services on Aging, Alzheimer's NC, Inc., and local home health agencies continue to have requests and waiting lists for respite services. With people living longer, older adult caregivers are expected to care for older and chronically ill family members. Having a time of respite from those caregiving duties helps relieve stress and allows for them to continue their caregiving for longer periods of time.

Research indicates that a sedentary life style increases the risk of chronic health problems. The 2008 Behavior Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) shows that 68.7 % of individuals 65 and older are participating in some sort of physical activity or exercise other than their jobs. According to the survey, 19.5 % of seniors reported their general health as fair and 11.5 % stated that their general health status is poor. Therefore, it is essential that meaningful

opportunities for senior involvement in the community be increased resulting in benefit to the senior population and the community as a whole.

AGENCY RESPONSE:

- Senior Companions will continue to be placed in individual homes with the frail elderly to assist with daily living tasks that will enable that disabled individual to remain independent at home for a longer length of time.
- Senior Companions will provide respite services to family caregivers taking care of loved ones with dementia/Alzheimer's type of illnesses in order to give them some much needed time off.
- Individuals served by WAGES Senior Companion Program indicate they have more social ties and support and are able to remain independent at home thus lowering their risk for more costly, less personal care, in part, due to the services provided by the Senior Companion- a goal which will continue to be emphasized.
- Seniors who serve as Foster Grandparents provide one-on-one tutoring to children who have been identified as needing assistance to improve reading skills. Foster Grandparents focus on reading and literacy skills, using games, worksheets, flash cards and writing assignments.
- Foster Grandparents, who are ages 55 and over, greatly benefit from the program by making life-long friends, positively impacting the lives of children and by achieving increased self-worth.
- WAGES Head Start services are provided in center-based classroom settings, as parental need dictates. Each classroom is staffed with a teacher and teacher assistant. Some

classrooms utilize Foster Grandparents as a part of their staff to assist children with special needs requiring more one-on-one services.

- Congregate Meals and Meals on Wheels through a Nutrition Program providing services five days a week. A daily visit from a local volunteer results in Meals on Wheels providing a meal and much, much more.

## **V. Summary and Conclusions**

### Summary and Conclusions

The goal of the Wayne Action Group for Economic Solvency Inc. (WAGES) Community Assessment is to identify the needs and resources in its service areas which align with the agency's mission. As stated in its mission statement, "WAGES is dedicated to helping people improve their quality of life and health and to gain independence. WAGES will:

- Advocate for the disadvantaged;
- Encourage people to raise their self-esteem through education;
- Provide service and opportunities for service; and
- Mobilize community, public and private resources.

WAGES Community Action Agency understands that on-going assessment is essential to providing quality services. One of the processes used to continually identify and address needs is the "Results-Oriented Management and Accountability" model or ROMA. The ROMA cycle provides a model for assessing, planning, implementing and evaluating agency needs.

The process for conducting the Community Assessment is an agency and community effort. Program participants, community residents, parents, community partners, agency boards and advisory councils, and staff provide information regarding community needs, concerns, and services through the completion of surveys, focus groups, and general feedback regarding each program's needs. This information is an important component in identifying services available and needs that are not being addressed through the local human services agencies.

As noted in the Agency Profile and Programs, Wayne Action Group for Economic Solvency Inc. (WAGES) was founded as a Community Action Agency dedicated to mobilizing resources to combat poverty. WAGES' programs and services are divided into three administrative areas: Support Services Division, Children and Families Division, and Older Adult Services Division.

A review of the agency financial status demonstrates that the agency is fiscally sound at both the program and agency levels.

An examination of the Environment and Population shows that Wayne County is located in the rural eastern section of North Carolina. Among other things, Wayne County is the home of Seymour Johnson Air Force Base which houses the 4<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing and the 916<sup>th</sup> Air Refueling Wing. Data from 2014 indicates that the total population of Wayne County was 124,093. According to the US Census website, Wayne County had an unemployment rate of 12.8% in 2014. A review of Income and Employment reveals that Wayne County ranks significantly below the state in median income per household, median income per family, and per capita income.

Agency staff worked with participants, community partners, advisory councils and boards to identify community needs and focus areas. The following categories are the Target Areas identified as having the highest need and have therefore been designated to be addressed by the agency: Employment, Housing/ Homelessness, Transportation, Children and Family Development, Mental Health, and Older Adults.

In conclusion, this WAGES Community Needs Assessment will guide staff and administrators when designing and redesigning programs, writing training plans and work plans, and seeking new funding. As WAGES moves forward, existing programs and new ideas will be constantly evaluated for their effectiveness in the meeting the needs of Wayne County's low income families. WAGES will continually collaborate and coordinate with other service providers in the area to ensure that duplication of services does not occur and that scarce resources are efficiently allocated. WAGES is committed to taking a leadership role in



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providing quality programs with measurable outcomes that move individuals, families and children toward wellness, independence and self-sufficiency.