

Traverse County Community Indicators

Minnesota Community Action Association

What are Community Indicators?

Community indicators are useful ways for analyzing a wide array of information. Community indicators have historically been used to assess a community's quality of life, a community's needs, or to provide current information for grant writing purposes. For our purposes, we chose to select specific indicators relating to low-income families. Like most indicator reports, we utilize data from the Census Bureau, the State of Minnesota, and other widely respected agencies in order to ensure the integrity of our reporting.

Our mission, "...to enhance the well-being, economic independence and growth of low-income people, and to foster community empowerment and development," supports the efforts of reporting county by county data. The purpose of our community indicators reporting is to inform local residents, policy makers, and service providers so they can ask important questions and make important decisions. This type of reporting is one step in creating a true sense of ownership in one's community, no matter stature or preference.

Community Profile

Community profiles offer an initial look at the demographics of a community. Important measures of population and household growth, race and income breakdowns, and a geographical representation are needed to initially understand the community.

Further Profile Analysis

Population declined 7.4% from 1990-2000.

Minorities made up 3.6% of the population.

Traverse's per capita income was \$6,820 less than Minnesota's.

Traverse's median household income was \$16,494 less than Minnesota's.

14.3% of Traverse families (161) had incomes less than \$14,999 per year.

2.4% of families (27) in Traverse had incomes \$150,000 and above.

	1990 Census	2000 Census
Population	4,463	4,134
Households	1,778	1,717
Race (%)	Traverse	MN
White	96.4	89.4
African American	0.0	3.5
Native American	2.8	1.1
Asian American	0.3	2.9
Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	0.1	0.0
Two or More Races	0.4	1.7
Other	0.0	1.3
Hispanic/ Latino (% any race) ¹	1.2	2.9
Per Capita Income (1999)	\$ 16,378	\$ 23,198
Median Household Income (1999)	\$ 30,617	\$ 47,111
Traverse Family Incomes (1999)	Families	Percent
Less than \$10,000	73	6.5
\$10,000 to \$14,999	88	7.8
\$15,000 to \$24,999	151	13.4
\$25,000 to \$34,999	188	16.7
\$35,000 to \$49,999	264	23.4
\$50,000 to \$74,999	226	20.1
\$75,000 to \$99,999	66	5.9
\$100,000 to \$149,999	43	3.8
\$150,000 to \$199,999	8	0.7
\$200,000 or more	19	1.7
Median Family Income (1999)	\$ 39,655	(X)

¹ Hispanic/ Latino is not calculated with racial demographics, rather as an ethnicity.

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000
<http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/BasicFactsServlet>

Your local Community Action is:

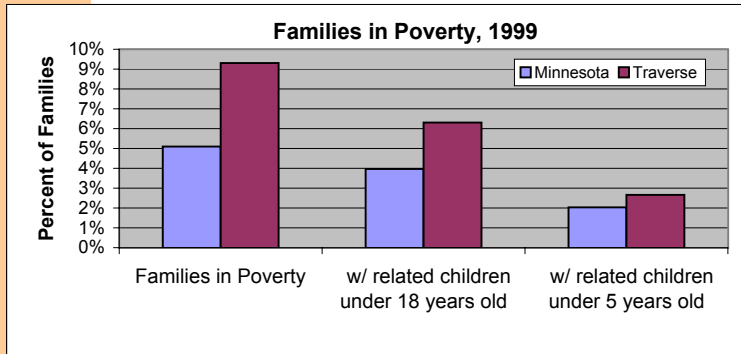
West Central Minnesota Communities Action, Inc.
 (serving Douglas, Grant, Pope, Stevens, and Traverse counties)

411 Industrial Park Blvd.
 PO Box 956
 Elbow Lake, Minnesota 56531-0956
 (218) 685-4486
 (800) 492-4805

Poverty and Employment Indicators

Average annual unemployment rates (upper-right) are calculated by the State of Minnesota. This measure is adjusted for age, and is estimated by place of residence.

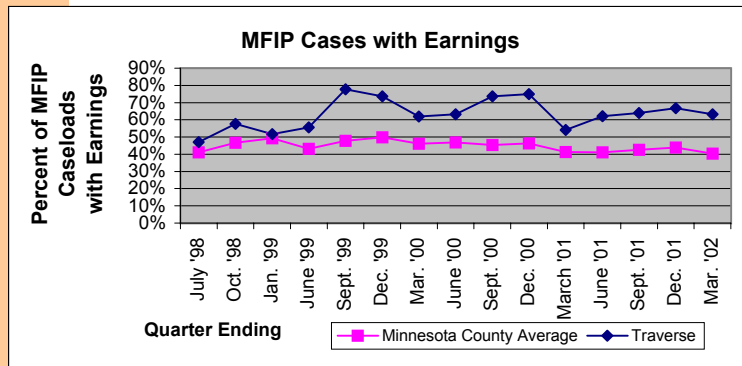
Families in poverty (below) are defined as 100% of 1999 Federal Poverty Guidelines. FPG's are calculated by family size and income, and are woefully under-representative of families in poverty.



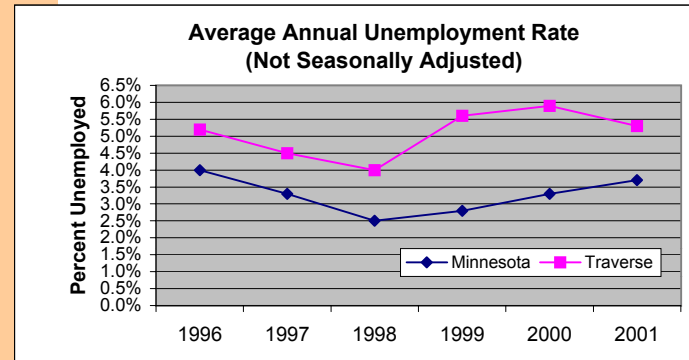
Source: US Census Bureau, 2000
<http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/BasicFactsServlet>

Annual average of weekly wages (middle-right) is calculated from MN's Department of Economic Security's monthly data on weekly wages.

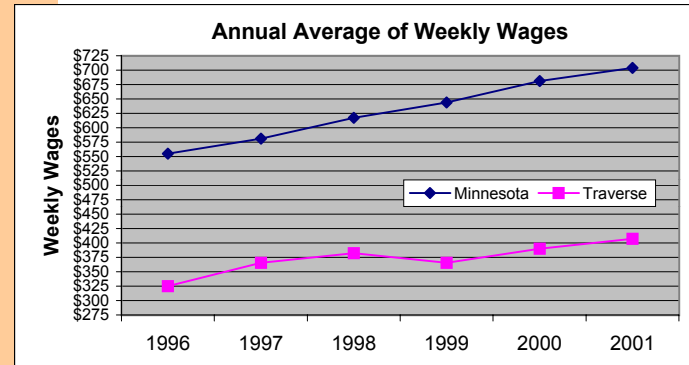
Minnesota Family Investment Program cases with earnings (below) and placement wages (lower-right) are collected by MN's Department of Human Resources' County Performance Measures, and are reported quarterly.



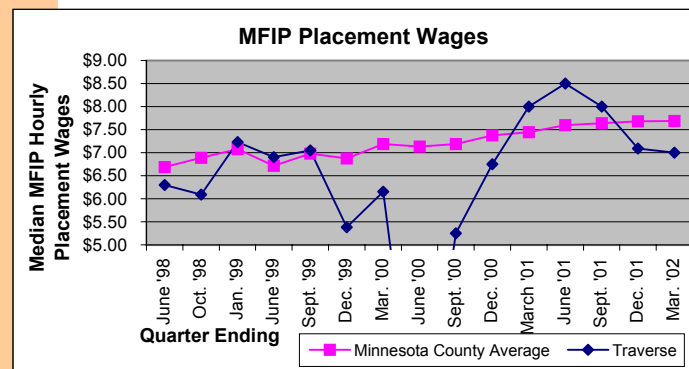
Source: MN Department of Human Services
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Source: MN Department of Economic Security



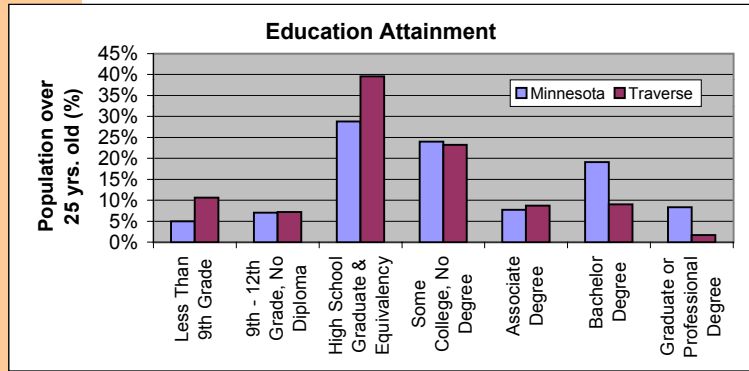
Source: MN Department of Economic Security
<http://www.mnwfc.org/>



Source: MN Department of Human Services
 *no web link available **Incomplete data.

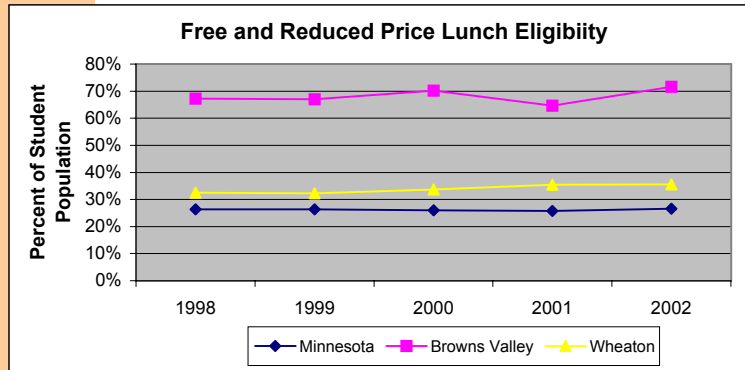
Education and Health Indicators

Educational attainment (below) is correlated to community involvement, voter participation, and volunteerism. Education is also a significant factor in an individual's self-confidence and self-sufficiency. The data was collected by the US Census Bureau's 2000 Census.



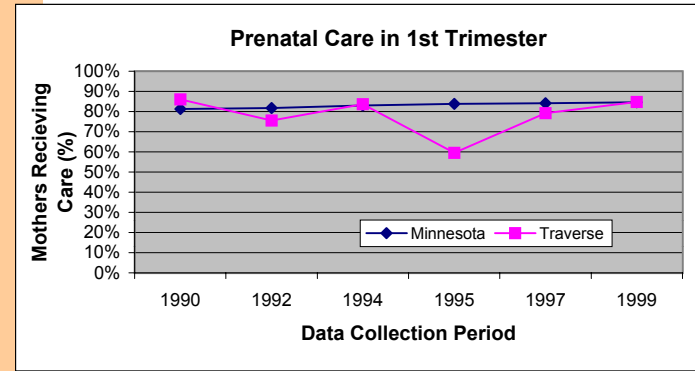
Source: US Census Bureau, 2000
<http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/BasicFactsServlet>

Free and reduced price lunch trends, collected by the Minnesota Department of Children, Families, and Learning, show how much school age children depend on public programs to supplement their nutritional needs. This eligibility measure signifies the demand for such programs, and the need to supplement low-income family diets.



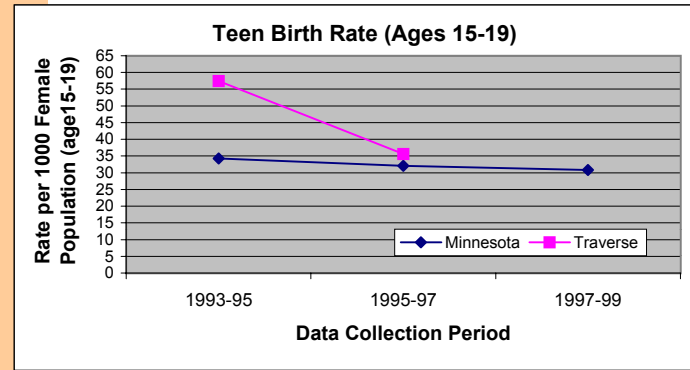
Source: MN Department of Children, Families and Learning
<http://cfl.state.mn.us/>

The prenatal care in the first trimester measure gives information about healthcare accessibility. This data is collected by the MN Department of Health's Center for Health Statistics every two years. Minnesota Health Partners have set a goal for 90% of expecting mothers to receive prenatal care in the first trimester.



Source: Minnesota Planning

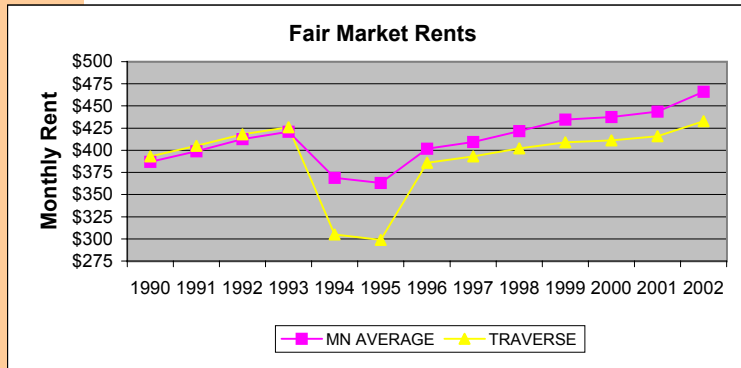
Teen birth rates are reported for populations of age 15 to 19 as a rate per 1,000. The data is collected by the Minnesota Department of Health's Center for Health Statistics over a three year period. This measure is important for assessing the need for social support networks or family planning programs.



Source: Minnesota Planning
<http://www.mnplan.state.mn.us/datanetweb/index.htm>

Housing Indicators

Fair market rent data is collected by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. FMR's are calculated using the price of a two-bedroom apartment, and the 40th percentile of rents in the area. Affordable housing measures are often calculated using this measure, largely since the data is available for counties, regions, and states throughout the nation.



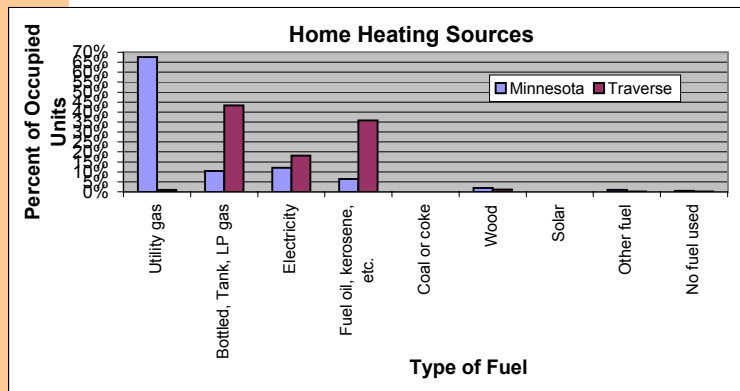
Source: US Department of Housing & Urban Development, 2002
<http://www.huduser.org/datasets/fmr.html>

Home ownership rates are useful for assessing housing trends (right).

Home Ownership	2000	1990
Minnesota	74.6%	71.8%
Traverse	80.5%	79.0%

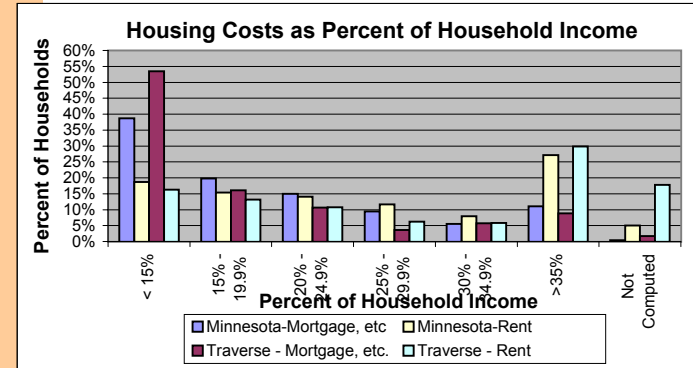
Source: US Census Bureau, 2000
<http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/BasicFactsServlet>

Home heating sources are costs often not included in affordability measures. Here, we intend to show the complexity of the energy assistance issue.



Source: US Census Bureau, 2000
<http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/BasicFactsServlet>

Affordable housing measures also use rental and home ownership costs as a percent of income. Typically, housing costs greater than 30% of household income is *not* considered affordable. Census 2000 data shown below compares rental and home ownership costs at the state and county level.



Source: US Census Bureau, 2000

The indicators presented in this report attempt to frame policy discussions relating to low-income families and individuals. Understanding that trade-offs exist between data quality and the timeliness of data availability is critical. Using Federal data sources for county-level statistics is typically already "out dated" by two or more years. What's more, Federal poverty guidelines are often criticized for under-representing low-income populations. At least one thing is certain, low-income populations need this type of information to compare themselves to the larger community.



Questions? Contact:
 Nate Dorr, Research Specialist
MCAA
 2324 University Ave. W., Suite 100
 St. Paul, Minnesota 55114
 Phone: (651) 645-7425
 Fax: (651) 645-7399
natedorr@mncaa.org