

2009 Community Report

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www.communityaction.org

*Missourians to
End Poverty*

*Together we can create a
Missouri in which everyone
thrives!*



5 Pillars of Poverty

FOOD

Reality: Missouri food banks report an increase in demand from 20% to 44% in 2009. Most of that increase is the result of families visiting the food bank for the first time.

Vision: Hunger is eliminated. People have affordable, adequate, nutritious, local food.

Potential Outcomes:

- ❖ Community or regional plans are developed with all community stakeholders and implemented
- ❖ Food security education is increased at all levels
- ❖ Food Security funding is increased and coordinated. Eligibility guidelines are revised and increased addressing the current reality.

EDUCATION

Reality: Approximately 20,500 students did not graduate from Missouri's high schools in 2009. The lost lifetime earnings for that class of dropouts alone total more than \$5.3 billion.

Vision: There is quality education that supports life long learning for all members of the community.

Potential Outcomes:

- ❖ The drop-out rate is decreased.
- ❖ Job skills and career development options are increased.
- ❖ State and national policies support life-long, equitable educational opportunities.

HOUSING & ENERGY

Reality: Low income families pay an average of 46% of their income just for housing and energy.

Vision: People have affordable, energy-efficient, safe housing which supports family stability. Energy sustainability is supported by economically viable green technology and conservation efforts.

Potential Outcomes:

- ❖ Energy conservation education and activities are increased.
- ❖ Local efforts, state and national policies support affordable housing.

HEALTH

Reality: The number of uninsured people in Missouri rose to 739,000 in 2008.

Vision: People have accessible, adequate, affordable, quality, local health care. Prevention is the norm and the community is healthier and more productive.

Potential Outcomes:

- ❖ Preventive care options are increased.
- ❖ Health care education is increased.
- ❖ National and state policies support accessible, affordable health care services.

ECONOMIC & FAMILY SECURITY

Reality: Missouri lost 62,600 jobs in 2009. In addition, 781,842 Missourians live in poverty...263,484 of them are children.

Vision: Individuals are provided with fair pay by a Missouri economy that achieves economic security for everyone. For those unable to work, economic security is achieved via a mix of financial, personal, and social supports. The common good is supported statewide and results in stable families and individuals and safe, diverse communities.

Potential Outcomes:

- ❖ A continuum of transition services assisting households moving from welfare to stability is available.
- ❖ Life skills, job skills, financial literacy education is increased.
- ❖ State and national policy support economic and family stability.

Report to the Community

Missourians to End Poverty planned and hosted the Missouri Poverty Summit held on June 9, 2009. This report is a sample of the conversations that occurred that day and the next steps for maintaining urgency to reach the vision.

As 425 people from across the state came together they discussed **what the reality of poverty is for individuals and communities in the state** and how individuals and communities could develop creative solutions to the plaguing problem – **how do we end poverty in Missouri?**

Our Vision...

As Missourians, we envision a just society of shared responsibility by individuals, communities, business, and government in which all individuals are respected, have opportunities to reach their full potential and to participate in thriving, diverse, sustainable communities.

The Task Force identified five pillars which contribute to keeping poverty in place, and therefore, to reaching the vision. Each pillar has its own vision statement. Below each pillar are examples of outcomes resulting from Summit workgroup discussions. Each community or region will need to determine its own course of action.

I am struck by how intricately intertwined ALL these issues are in sustaining poverty and in envisioning an end to poverty. ”
Poverty Summit Participant

Missourians to End Poverty 2009 Summit Planning Group

AARP Missouri
Ameren U.E.
Catholic Charities of St. Louis
Catholic Charities of Kansas City - St. Joseph
Community Action Agency of St. Louis County
Community Action Agency of Greater St. Joseph
Social Concerns Office - Diocese of Jefferson City
Eileen Wallace Consulting
Faith Beyond Walls
Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City
Gardner Capital, Incorporated
Health Care Foundation of Greater Kansas City
Laclede Gas Company
Madsen & Wright Governmental Consultants
Missouri Association for Community Action
Missouri Association for Social Welfare
Missouri Budget Project
Missouri Career Center
Missouri Department of Mental Health
Missouri Department of Social Services, Family Service Division
Missouri Family Health Council
Missouri Gas Energy
Missouri Housing Development Commission
Missouri IMPACT
Missouri Public Service Commission
Northwest Workforce Investment Board
Ozarks Food Harvest
Primaris/CLAIM
Ready Aim Advocate!
Salvation Army
Treasures
United Way of Central Missouri

The Missourians to End Poverty Task Force continues to meeting regularly. For a complete list of members visit: www.communityaction.org.

The Missourians to End Poverty Task Force also developed and agreed upon statewide outcomes of its work to achieve the vision.

10 Year Outcomes

- A. By 2020 a cadre of 5000 leaders committed to ending poverty exists within Missouri communities.
- B. By 2020 a coalition of 50 organizations has established a network of advocates committed to ending poverty.
- C. By 2020 a statewide plan to end poverty is embedded and integrated within 50 Missouri communities or organizations.
- D. By 2020, Missouri will have adopted policies and established systems that provide an opportunity for people with limited resources to reach their full potential.

The Missouri Poverty Summit came out of the work of the Task Force over the past 10 months. The Task Force felt it was important for folks on a local level to determine the next steps - creative, local community solutions. In addition to local work, the Task Force is committed to advocacy and statewide public policy and legislative efforts that will change systems which keep poverty in place.

Feedback responses from Poverty Summit participants focused on **4** areas.

- ❖ The interconnectedness of both the causes of poverty AND the solutions to it.
- ❖ The need to raise community awareness and understanding of the impact of poverty.
- ❖ The roles communities play in developing and acting on creative community solutions.
- ❖ Concrete ideas about local and state solutions to ending poverty.

Next Steps

The Task Force continues to meet and plan how best to support local and regional activity across the state. All the ideas from the Poverty Summit are available to local or regional groups interested in moving the vision forward. Communication systems are being developed to keep everyone informed.

The Task Force continues to invite people from different sectors into its planning and is especially looking for business leaders to join the discussions.

If you are interested in joining this effort locally, regionally or on state level, please contact the Missouri Association for Community Action office at (573) 634-2969.

"Many of the individuals who attended the Poverty Summit work hard every day to help those living in poverty. It was spiritually uplifting to feel the energy generated by being with others who have the same purpose and passion."

Poverty Summit Participant



"At the very core of all these pillars is the need to have social revolution in our attitude toward poverty."

Poverty Summit Participant