



Leading Indicators for Excellence  
Fox Cities

## Study Summary

### Study Partners



### Research Partner

Community Research Partners, a nonprofit research, evaluation and data center in Columbus, Ohio, collected, analyzed and visualized the data.

### What is the LIFE Study?

- The Fox Cities Leading Indicators for Excellence (LIFE) Study that was released in 2016 is an evolution and extension of earlier community needs assessments conducted in 2001, 2006 and 2011. The Study provides a snapshot of socio-economic conditions in the Fox Cities area to show strengths and opportunities for improvement.
- This data-focused look at the quality of life in the Fox Cities area is available on an interactive, easy-to-use website, [FoxCitiesLifeStudy.org](http://FoxCitiesLifeStudy.org).
- The LIFE Study is an evolving resource that is designed to spark data-driven conversations within all areas of the community, leading to action and transformative change. Data will be updated on the website on an ongoing basis on our *What's New* section as important new data becomes available.





## What kind of data is included?

More than 200 indicators related to demographic, economic, social and health aspects of community life in the Fox Cities are presented, including benchmarking against select counties, Wisconsin, and the nation, with trending information.

Data is organized in eight categories of Fox Cities' community life. Key data are highlighted within 22 themes.

When the LIFE Study was released in 2016, data was used to determine priorities for community action. These priorities were determined by a cross-section of more than 200 members of the Fox Cities' community that gathered on June 20, 2016, to hear about the key themes that emerged from the data, and weigh in on choosing top community priorities for change; it is important not to lose sight of the other key themes.

## Community Priorities

- Poverty
- Youth Health
- Student Performance
- Youth Safety

## What can I do?

- Dig into the study data to understand what it means in your personal and professional life.
- Share the study data and community priorities for action with your friends, family, co-workers, board of directors, government leaders, etc.
- Consider how you and others can get involved and collaborate to better understand and develop action plans that address the highlighted themes, based on the study data.

## Who can I contact with questions or requests for a presentation about the study?

Please contact Nanci Micke, Vice President of Marketing and Communications at United Way Fox Cities at [nanci.micke@unitedwayfoxcities.org](mailto:nanci.micke@unitedwayfoxcities.org) or 920-954-7215.



## LIFE Study Key Data Points and Community Priorities

### Key:



Indicators and themes marked with the NEW symbol have been added in August of 2017. All other indicators were released in June of 2016.



Themes marked with the priority symbol were chosen by a cross-section of 200 community members who attended a LIFE Study Dive-In Day in June 2016.

### Category: Demographics

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#### Theme: Population Growth

##### Key Data Points:

- From 2006 to 2014, the populations of Fox Cities' three core counties, Calumet, Outagamie and Winnebago grew in proportion to statewide and national trends.
- Based on 2010 to 2040 population estimates for the region, Calumet, Outagamie and Winnebago's populations are expected to increase by 31%, 21.8% and 15.7% respectively.

#### Theme: Aging

##### Key Data Point:

- Between 2006 and 2014, there was an increase in the percentage of the population age 45 and older. While at the same time, all three counties saw a small decrease in the percentage of the population under age 45.

#### Theme: Diversity

##### Key Data Points:

- Wisconsin is comparatively less diverse than the United States as a whole, with minority populations making up 17.8% of the total population, compared to 37.9% nationwide.
- Diversity, however, is on the increase in the Fox Cities region. The percentage of minority populations in the Calumet, Outagamie and Winnebago all grew a by a little over 2 percentage points in eight years and the number of different nationalities represented in the Fox Cities region is also increasing slightly.



## Category: Economy

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### Theme: Industry Trends

#### Key Data Points:

- The majority of the Fox Cities' 25 largest employers are manufacturers. The 10-year trend in the area saw a reduction in the manufacturing jobs, which is in line with state and national trends.
- Between 2005 and 2014, there was incremental growth in per capita income, alongside a small increase in median household income, which are both in line with national trends.

### Theme: Cost of Living

#### Key Data Point:

- The Housing and Transportation Affordability (H&T) Index data shows that around 7 out of 10 households can afford housing and transportation. This overall combination of factors indicates an affordable cost of living for most households, but the bottom 30% of households are struggling.

### Theme: Unemployment and Job Creation

#### Key Data Point:

- Data on the creation of new businesses per 1,000 establishments shows encouraging growth of 2.5% which is slightly above the national trends.

**Conclusion:** Employment in the Fox Cities' region as well as wages are on the rise. Transportation costs appear to be the major hurdle to more affordable living in the Fox Cities.

New

### Theme: Workforce Participation

#### Key Data Points:

- The workforce participation rate (ages 16 to 64) is higher than the national average in all three counties; Calumet and Outagamie Counties have rates higher than the state average.
- The same pattern is reflected in rates of workforce participation for all adults (ages 16 to 99) working full- or part-time.
- The workforce participation rate for adults age 18 to 64 decreased slightly in Calumet, Outagamie and Winnebago from 2005-2009 to 2010-2014 alongside an increase in the actual number of employees and a drop in the unemployment rate.



## Category: Basic Needs

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Priority

### Theme: Poverty

#### Key Data Points:

- While there appears to be no significant climb in child and overall poverty rates in the past three years, there has been a steady increase in Wisconsin Works (W-2) program participants, alongside an increase in the percentage of the population receiving food stamps.
- Slow growth in household income alongside an increase in median gross rent in the Fox Cities' counties, which suggests an increase in working poor who may be marginally above the poverty threshold but are susceptible to food insecurity.
- The poverty rate for single women raising children was approximately eight times higher than the rate for married couples with children across the Fox Cities counties from 2010 to 2014.

### Theme: Child Care

#### Key Data Point:

- As costs increase, there appears to be a growing need for affordable, quality child care, especially for single-parent households which make up around 1 in 10 of all households in the Fox Cities region.

### Theme: Older Populations

#### Key Data Point:

- The number of seniors has increased from 2006 to 2014 across the Fox Cities region, yet the 5-year poverty rate for seniors has decreased slightly from the previous 5-year rate.



## Category: Health and Wellness

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### Theme: Infant Health

#### Key Data Points:

- The Fox Cities region sees a lower percentage of births paid for by Medicaid or BadgerCare than the state Medicaid average and a higher percentage of births with prenatal care in the first trimester.
- The percentage of children without health insurance in Winnebago decreased from 2012 to 2014, alongside state and national trends. However, Outagamie saw a contrasting rise in uninsured children between 2013 and 2014.

**Conclusion:** The infant health data sets highlight the socioeconomic risks for low birth weight babies and teenage pregnancies.

### Theme: Diabetes

#### Key Data Point:

- Both Calumet and Outagamie saw an increase in adult obesity between 2007 and 2011 as the prevalence of type 1 and 2 diabetes also increased, falling slightly in 2015.

**Conclusion:** The consultants also noted that increased prevention efforts, including increased health care coverage and increased screening vigilance may positively impact health outcomes, such as obesity and diabetes.

Priority

### Theme: Youth Health

#### Key Data Points:

- The region saw a reduction in alcohol consumption and binge drinking among high schoolers between 2009 and 2015.
- Rates for considering and attempting suicide are higher among students who identify as racial and ethnic minorities, especially among American Indians and Hawaiian or Pacific Islanders.
- Of students who identified as gay, lesbian, or bisexual, over 45% have considered suicide compared to 13% heterosexual students. Rates of attempting suicide are significantly higher for these groups as well.

**Conclusion:** The suicide data points indicate that both ethnicity and sexual orientation may play a role in the students either considering or attempting suicide.




## Category: Education & Learning

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### Theme: Student Attendance


#### Key Data Points:

- Fox Cities schools have good attendance compared to state levels, relatively low truancy rates, and a solid graduation rate.
-  • Over a six-year period, graduation rates declined for all groups except the two-or-more races and the Black/African American student groups.

### Theme: Student Performance

#### Key Data Points:

- Scores on standardized tests are above the state average despite growing economic challenges as measured by free and reduced lunch.
- Currently 40% reading proficiency and just over 50% math proficiency for third graders.
-  • Third grade reading proficiency increased between 2012 and 2015, particularly among Hispanic students, though a significant gap remains between white students and all other racial and ethnic groups.
-  • The gap is closing between economically disadvantaged and non-economically disadvantaged students in two of the three counties, however the gap remains significant.

 **Conclusion:** The number of students eligible for free and reduced lunch, correlated with academic performance, is significantly higher for all racial and ethnic groups compared to white student population.

### Theme: Investment in Education

#### Key Data Points:

- Educational Cost Per Student is below the state average in all three counties.
- The total cost is rising slightly over time in two of the three counties.



## Category: Safety

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Priority

### Theme: Youth Safety

#### Key Data Points:

- 27% of high schoolers face bullying at school and 18% have experienced electronic bullying. Both rates are higher than the state and national averages.
- While child abuse and neglect rates decreased, they exceed the state average in Outagamie and Winnebago County. Calumet County is well below the state average.
- Over 1/3 of American Indian and Hawaiian or Pacific Islander students report in-school and online bullying compared to 1/4 of White and Black/African American students.
- In-school and online bullying rates for bisexual and gay or lesbian students (over 40%) is nearly double that of their heterosexual peers.

New

New

**Conclusion:** The consultants noted that bullying rates may be even more important when considered alongside rates of depression and suicide for youth.

### Theme: Crime

#### Key Data Point:

- Violent crime increased locally but declined nationally. The rise in violent crime was influenced by an increase in aggravated assaults in the Fox Cities area.

### Theme: Drugs

#### Key Data Point:

- There were fewer drug arrests between 2012 and 2014. The majority of drug arrests locally and statewide are for marijuana possession.





## Category: Environment

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### Theme: Air

#### Key Data Point:

- From 2012 to 2014, annual Air Quality Index (AQI) data shows the Appleton metropolitan area as having good air quality 72% of the time, with moderate air quality 27% of the time.

### Theme: Water

#### Key Data Point:

- The percentage of the population exposed to health-related risks through contaminated drinking water is a consistently low figure.

### Theme: Green Living

#### Key Data Points:

- Renewable energy currently accounts for around 6% of the energy generated in the Fox Cities area. The highest proportion of renewable energy generating power in the Fox Cities region is hydroelectric power.
- Calumet, Outagamie and Winnebago counties all saw a slightly higher carbon footprint than the state and national averages in 2013. The two main areas of carbon consumption that are causing the average household carbon footprint to be higher are transportation and housing.

**Conclusion:** Environmental infrastructure impacting quality of life, such as water quality management, non-vehicular travel patterns, trails and parks should be evaluated in terms of economic and health benefits.



## Category: Culture & Belonging

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### Theme: The Arts

#### Key Data Points:

- Fox Cities' creative economy lags behind the US and is not growing as quickly as the creative economy of the state.
- Increases in wages, as well as the overall growth in the percentage of arts-related jobs in the state, suggest there is potential to grow the local creative economy.

### Theme: Voter Participation

#### Key Data Point:

- Voter participation is quite high, and the state was second highest in the country.

New

### Theme: Diversity and Inclusion

#### Key Data Point:

- The LIFE Study recognizes the importance of identity in all aspects – age, race/ethnicity, and sexual orientation, to name a few. Data specific to various segments of the population are included throughout, with specific emphasis in the categories of Health & Wellness, Education & Learning, and Safety.