

# Community Needs Assessment



## FOR JOHNSON CITY, JONESBOROUGH AND WASHINGTON COUNTY, TN

From Data Provided by 47 Community Agencies

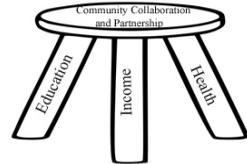
at the Community Needs Assessment Forum July 11, 2013

### Executive Summary:

The United Way of Washington County TN continues to help coordinate the “community services process” to assist the community in the development of a fourth Community Needs Assessment Report to be used by the United Way Board and the Johnson City/Jonesborough/Washington County community in looking at future resource allocations.

This community services process began with a look at the population groups as well as focus areas that are being served throughout Johnson City, Jonesborough and all of Washington County with support services provided by United Way of Washington County TN’s Partner Agencies and other diverse broad-based community service agencies. This year’s assessment focuses on aspects of a healthy community coordinating and implementing community partnerships in a three legged community services stool. They are as follows:

- Education:** Helping children and youth achieve their potential.
- Income:** Promoting financial stability and independence.
- Health:** Improving the health of youth and adults.
- Community Collaboration and Partnership:** Bringing all service opportunities together to make lasting improvements in our community.



Through a community-wide forum hosted by the United Way of Washington County TN on Thursday, July 11, 2013, at the Holiday Inn in Johnson City, a diverse group of community service agencies, concerned citizens, local government representatives and members of the faith community met to discuss and prioritize needs in the community, resources to help meet those needs, gaps in current services, and to discuss ideas for a better community structure through which the identified needs could be met.

Out of the initial community needs forum, a group of volunteers met on July 31, 2013 from each primary sub-group: **Education; Income; Health; Community Collaboration and Partnership** to review information summarized from the July 11, 2013 meeting. A Needs Assessment Report Committee was formed with these volunteers to develop and assemble an updated needs assessment document to help guide future resource allocation decisions made by community service funding entities throughout the Washington County area.

The Needs Assessment Report Committee met in August 2013 and discussed the findings of the input that was compiled at the Community Needs Assessment Forum. The committee made a suggestion that since some important community service entities

would not be able to attend the Community Needs Assessment Forum on July 11, 2013 a survey should be sent out. Prior to the assessment a survey was conducted with community leaders in the focus areas.

The United Way coordinated the survey which was conducted in mid-August 2013. The results of the survey were then compiled by the United Way and were presented to the Committee in September 2013. (Summarized results are in the appendix of this document)

The Community Needs Assessment Report Committee met again in early September 2013 to complete their work on the report and will deliver it later this fall to the United Way of Washington County TN and the public, a document which is both concise and clear as to the needs that exist among these population segments in Johnson City/Jonesborough/Washington County. The priority of the community needs have been determined by population segment, service gaps, needed resources and lack of available resources. The need for greater community collaboration among community service agencies, along with the re-structuring of the process used to provide information on the services available, and the needed services in our local community to those with the greatest need have been identified as top priorities through this needs assessment. The results will also be presented to local governing bodies, civic organizations and other community entities.

### Needs Assessment Priority Methodology

The top priorities for the needs assessment were determined through a four-step process.

The **first step** in the process involved small group discussion sessions at the community forum July 11, 2013. Representatives from community service agencies who provide diverse direct services and information to those in need in the community, were joined by concerned citizens, local government representatives and the members of the faith community for these sessions. Each session was divided into the four focus areas for discussions, those being: **Education; Income; Health; Community Collaboration and Partnership.**

The group participants were asked to discuss the following need components: **identify area needs (existing & new); prioritize gaps; identify agencies that can fill gaps; identify funding sources; and duplication of services.** After the individual groups discussed the different need components, they were asked to rank them in priority order. Those priorities would then be reported to the whole group attending the community forum.

The **second step** was to bring all of the forum attendees together where each of the four focus area groups presented their findings and priority rankings. The entire group then set the overall priorities for each of the focus areas.

The **third step** was to send out a priority needs survey form electronically to community agencies, many of whom were unable to attend the Community Needs Assessment Forum in July 2013. The results of the survey were tabulated by the United Way and included in the information used by the Community Needs Assessment Report Committee to formulate their report.

The **fourth step** was to form a Community Needs Assessment Report Committee with volunteers from the overall community services forum groups. Using all of the comments and data from the community forum, this team prioritized the perceived and stated overall community needs and drafted a Community Needs Assessment document.

The Community Needs Assessment document drafted by the Community Needs Assessment Forum Team was turned over to the Community Needs Assessment Report Committee for review and to put into final report form. Additional key data from the ETSU/Tri-Cities Labor Market Report, the ARCH Point in Time Study on Homelessness, CoverTN update information, and other pertinent data were reviewed and used in the development of this report. The following are the five overall priorities.

### General Recommendations

The general recommendations presented in the needs assessment update are the direct result of the input and discussions that came from the Community Needs Assessment Forum held on July 11, 2013. Further discussion on recommendations has come from the deliberations of the **Education; Income; Health; Community Collaboration and Partnership** focus area groups that have comprised the Community Needs Assessment Report Committee. These recommendations relate directly to the consensus of thought that came from the Community Needs Assessment update process. These recommendations are intended to help guide the community to create the needed framework through which better networking of service providers can occur; more resources can be identified and used more effectively; and the priority community needs identified through the assessment can better be met in the future.

The United Way of Washington County TN, Inc. as a leading community services coordinator and as an empowerment entity in the community must play a significant and vital role in helping to create the framework to help the community more effectively respond to the priority needs identified in this assessment. However, this role of coordinator agency involves helping to bring other needed community service leader agencies into a network to help shoulder this significant responsibility.

The United Way of Washington County TN is committed to help in providing the leadership to create the community partnerships that are needed to build the necessary community services network supported with adequate resources to ensure that the priority community service needs that have been identified for the community are met.

## Overall Recommendations

The Community Needs Assessment is intended to be a “living document”, with continued evaluations of changing community populations and needs. As one of the community service leaders, the United Way of Washington County TN organization is committed to continue using this and future Community Needs Assessments in the allocations process with existing Partner Agencies, as well as in the grants process and in the addition of any new Partner Agencies.

However, for the community to benefit from this process, other community organizations – including non-profit agencies as well as local governments – need to partner in this effort, and use the Community Needs Assessment in their strategic planning to ensure that programs, staff, volunteers and resources are used to meet identified community needs and to avoid unnecessary duplication of services. **(Specific service area recommendations can be found under the four service area sections of this document.)**

**Coordinate** a pre-needs assessment forum survey to send out to community service agencies and others that want to participate in the needs assessment process and share the information from the survey at the Community Needs Assessment Forum.

**Host** a community services summit to allow providers to meet on an annual basis beginning in 2014 (probably in the spring) to share information, update the community on the status of community services and to identify and set priority community service initiatives for implementation in the community.

**Partner** with the Chamber of Commerce’s Non-Profit Business Development Council, the Workforce Education Council and Summit Leadership Foundation to expand the community services network with taskforces: Education; Income; Health; Community Collaboration and Partnership that will meet on a regular basis (suggested quarterly) to share information on community services needs and look at opportunities for collaborative community initiatives.

**Encourage** more direct involvement of our locally elected officials in the needs assessment process.

**Involve** representatives from key community entities such as: ETSU, Mountain Home V.A. Medical Center, Mountain States Health Alliance, Wellmont Health System and the Washington County and Johnson City School Systems and others in the needs assessment process.

**Promote** more involvement of community agency’s volunteer boards in the needs assessment process.

**Link** local needs assessment efforts with the efforts in Kingsport and Bristol in order to get regional input.

**Increase** our outreach to faith-based organizations.

**Use** the needs assessment process to fund grants for new community service programs providing new or expanded priority services in the community.

**Sponsor** and participate in community service events where information can be disseminated and key important community services contacts can be made by those who most need the services.

## Top Overall Priorities

- **Access to Affordable Healthcare**
- **Web-Based Resources for Parents and Caregivers on Educational Services Available in the Community**
- **Better Employment Opportunities**
- **Create a Comprehensive, Inclusive and Updatable Community Services Database**
- **Expanded Transportation Opportunities**

Although there are programs for all of these items, the committee felt there were large service gaps that needed to be addressed. Lack of funding is also a stated need in all four focus areas.

## Top Five Priorities by Focus Area Group

### EDUCATION



1. Resources for Parents
2. Displaced (*highly mobile children*) foster care, homeless
3. Transportation to Services (*funds*)
4. Community Outreach Agency (*network*)
5. Educational Programs
  - a. Mentoring
  - b. Tutoring
  - c. Life Skills

} Strengthen and Build

### INCOME

1. Better Paying Jobs
  - Supported by affordable child care and adequate transportation
  - Repurposing resources (*church vans, vacant buildings, under-utilized vehicles and facilities*)
2. Financial Literacy
  - Supporting through mentoring and job placement
  - Awareness and implementation
3. Economic Development



### HEALTH

1. (a.) Access to Healthcare
1. (b.) Dental Needs
2. Education of Health Needs (*risk and resources*)
3. Mental Health/Substance Abuse (*including school-based*)
4. Nutrition/Obesity/Exercise



### COMMUNITY COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIP

1. Database
  - a. What services are available?
  - b. Where can I volunteer?
  - c. Talk with Kingsport United Way – what do they do?
2. Expand Community Needs Assessment Forum
  - a. Include business community/CEOs
  - b. Include agency boards
3. Housing – emergency/transitional/affordable
4. Marketing and education
5. Transportation
  - a. Extended hours opportunities? Funding?
  - b. Child care
  - c. Expand current transportation council