HEART OF ILLINOIS UNITED WAY
2017 PEORIA AREA COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT
LIVE UNITED
The Heart of Illinois United Way is at work every day in our community ensuring the people of central Illinois, now and into the future, can obtain a quality education, maintain financial stability, and have access to quality healthcare. By working side by side with the public, private and nonprofit sectors, we tackle complex community issues and drive sustainable, positive change.

As the largest non-governmental funder of local health and human care programs, it is critical that we invest in programs and initiatives that produce tangible results and provide an exceptional return on the charitable investments made to Heart of Illinois United Way. Our 2017 Peoria Area Community Assessment is a vital resource that helps us prioritize community needs, identify collaborative opportunities, and highlights the issues concerning the six counties we serve.

The statistics and facts within the Peoria Area Community Assessment create a picture of where we need to focus our efforts. Education is the cornerstone of individual and community success. Hard-working families face obstacles that prevent them from maintaining financial stability. And, quality healthcare is vital to keeping our entire community healthy.

In July 2016, we assumed the administrative responsibilities of the Heart of Illinois Homeless Continuum of Care. A united coalition of community systems, including nonprofit and government organizations, the Continuum of Care is focused on ending homelessness by ensuring access to permanent, safe and affordable housing that helps individuals and families maintain self-sufficiency and improve their quality of life. Local homelessness data and their contributing factors are included in this assessment.

By establishing and funding education, financial stability and health-related outcomes, the Heart of Illinois United Way continues to help thousands of local residents while advocating for a stronger, healthier region.
EDUCATION TRENDS

- More than 30 percent of area high schools had graduation rates below the state average of 86 percent. Overall, there were more than 600 high school seniors who did not graduate in 2016.
- More than 40 percent of third grade and eighth grade students were below the state average for English/Language PARCC test scores.
- Nearly half of third grade students and more than half of eighth grade students were below the state average for Math PARCC test scores.
- There were 30 area school districts with more than one third of its students considered low-income—a 25 percent increase since 2013 and a 58 percent increase since 2010.
- Chronic truancy for the region is at 6.9 percent—below the state average of 9.8 percent. However, four area school districts met or exceeded the state average.
- Continual student turnover can be academically and socially disruptive. While student mobility in the region is close to the state average, 18 school districts had higher rates.

FINANCIAL STABILITY TRENDS

- Median household income in the Peoria region shows significant disparity by race and gender. Black and Hispanic residents earn notably less than white or Asian households, while women—regardless of race or ethnicity—earn 30 percent less than men.
- Unemployment rates in the Peoria MSA have leveled out to approximately six percent. This follows several years of steady improvement after area unemployment peaked in 2009.
- Compared to households of married couples with children under the age of 18, poverty rates continue to be 40 percent higher for family households led by single mothers (or female guardians) with children under the age of 18.
- More than 24 percent of households in the region have what HUD refers to as disproportionate housing needs related to kitchen/plumbing facilities, overcrowding and housing cost burden.

HEALTH TRENDS

- A significant percentage of the Peoria region’s population does not visit a doctor when needed due to cost. Nearly 40 percent of individuals did not get an annual checkup and nearly 20 percent do not have a primary care provider.
- Since 2012, the percentage of residents in the region with health insurance has increased and is higher than the state average. In addition, a larger number of area residents have public health insurance coverage compared to the state.
- Around 30 percent of adults in the Peoria region are obese, while upwards of 20 to 25 percent of teens in the tri-county area are overweight or obese.
- Teen substance usage rises dramatically between middle school and high school. Marijuana usage is increasingly perceived as having little to no risk.
- Rates of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) continue to be a significant health concern in the region, especially in Peoria County, where rates are much higher than the state average.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Heart of Illinois United Way’s 2017 Community Assessment highlights critical needs in the six-county Peoria region. Key issues and trends focus on the areas of population, education, financial stability and health.

Why Education, Financial Stability and Health?

Education, financial stability and health are vital for building safe and stable lives. But for too many individuals and families in central Illinois, these fundamentals are out of reach.

- **Quality education** is essential to earning a livable wage.
- Improving **financial stability** leads to increased independence.
- Access to **healthcare** promotes wellness for all ages.

Through the Community Assessment, the Heart of Illinois United Way examines the most critical community needs and then collaborates with a wide variety of community partners to support the education, financial stability and health of everyone in central Illinois.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2017 Community Assessment is focused on continuing the Heart of Illinois United Way’s effectiveness at identifying, assessing and supporting key areas of social concern integral to the Peoria region.

Founded in 1921, the Heart of Illinois United Way brings together individuals from business, labor, government, health and human services to address our community’s needs. Money raised through the Heart of Illinois United Way campaign stays in our community, funding programs and services in Marshall, Peoria, Putnam, Stark, Tazewell and Woodford counties.

Our Mission: To increase the organized capacity of the people in central Illinois to care for one another.

Our Vision: To create a strong, safe and healthy community while providing the best return for the community’s charitable investment.

HEART OF ILLINOIS UNITED WAY COMMUNITY IMPACT FUND

As the largest non-governmental funder of local health and human care programs, the Heart of Illinois United Way’s Community Impact Fund positions our organization as the leader in addressing the health and human care needs of central Illinois.

Each year, approximately 100 local volunteers evaluate the education, financial stability and health programs that receive funding from the Heart of Illinois United Way’s Community Impact Fund to ensure these programs meet outcomes identified by our Peoria Area Community Assessment.

By funding established outcomes—which are specific changes in knowledge, attitudes, skills, behaviors or conditions—the Heart of Illinois United Way ensures donor contributions are invested in quality programs and initiatives that address the critical needs of our community.

How does the Heart of Illinois United Way address the critical needs expressed through the data within this assessment?

- **EDUCATION.** Factors addressed include early childhood learning, reading and math scores, graduation rates and truancy issues.
- **FINANCIAL STABILITY.** Factors addressed include poverty, employment, homelessness and persons with disabilities.
- **HEALTH.** Factors addressed include healthy behaviors, screenings, mental health and sexually transmitted infections.

HEART OF ILLINOIS UNITED WAY INITIATIVES

In addition to funding programs that address education, financial stability and health, the Heart of Illinois United Way’s Community Impact Fund collaborates with local schools and nonprofit organizations to support three special initiatives that are making a positive impact on lives in central Illinois:

**SUCCESS BY 6**

provides reading, math and social-emotional resources to preschool students, teachers and parents.

**SUPPORTING STUDENT SUCCESS**

supports social-emotional and education-based programs focused on in-school prevention, intervention and counseling.

**HEART OF ILLINOIS 2-1-1,**
an information and referral service, connects people to critical health and human care services by calling 211 or visiting 211hoi.org. 2-1-1 is available 24/7 in collaboration with Advanced Medical Transport of Central Illinois.
According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the six-county Peoria region had an estimated population of 385,769 in 2015, a slight decrease from 2012. The large majority of residents in both the Peoria region and the State of Illinois remained in the same residence during 2015, indicating low mobility at both the local and state levels.

The tri-county Peoria area encompasses the population of Peoria, Tazewell and Woodford counties.

The six-county Peoria region encompasses the population of Peoria, Tazewell, Woodford, Marshall, Stark and Putnam counties.

### Peoria Region, 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peoria</td>
<td>187,112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tazewell</td>
<td>135,697</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodford</td>
<td>39,106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marshall</td>
<td>12,173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stark</td>
<td>5,859</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Putnam</td>
<td>5,822</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Population:** 385,769
POPULATION

Slightly less than half of households in the Peoria MSA are married-couple families; nearly one third live alone. While the region as a whole declined slightly in population from 2012 to 2015, the City of Peoria experienced an increase during the same period.

TYPES OF HOUSEHOLDS

In the Peoria MSA...

- **64%** of people live in families, averaging 2-3 people.
- **48%** live in married-couple families.
- **16%** live in single-parent families.
- **31%** live alone.
- **5%** live in households with unrelated persons.

These numbers are similar to state averages. However, between 2012 and 2015, there was a 2.5 percent decrease in the number of married-couple families in the Peoria MSA, compared to a 0.3 percent decline for the state. Meanwhile, the Peoria MSA experienced a larger increase in the percentage of people living alone compared to the state.

CHANGE IN POPULATION

2012 to 2015

While the Peoria region declined in population from 2012 to 2015, the City of Peoria increased in population.
Given a supportive environment, all children have the potential to succeed and make a positive contribution to society. Investing in youth provides greater long-term returns and is less costly than interventions later in life.
EDUCATION

Quality education provides children, youth and adults with the knowledge and skills needed to achieve success in all stages of life. When a community invests in education, it contributes directly to the reduction of poverty. Furthermore, a well-educated population leads to a higher level of community-wide wellness and builds a sustainable, lifelong focus on learning from preschool to high school and beyond.

READY TO LEARN

But for many, the path to academic success is not a straight line, as factors outside of the classroom can inhibit learning even more than an understanding of the material. From basic needs to social-emotional issues, addressing these factors is essential to ensure children and adults are ready to learn when they take a seat at the desk.

- **Basic Needs.** Low-income individuals may have household situations that impact their level of engagement. When a child comes to school hungry and cannot concentrate, or when a single mother cannot find childcare so she can take a night class, the lack of resources to meet basic needs hinders their participation in learning.

- **Adverse Childhood Experiences.** There are three categories of Adverse Childhood Experiences—emotional/physical abuse; neglect; and family/household challenges, such as observing domestic violence, a parent with mental illness, substance abuse, divorce or incarceration. These experiences happen across all socio-economic backgrounds, and are not left at the door when the student enters the classroom. As a community, it is fundamental that we are aware of the effects of trauma on learning, and work collaboratively to address these critical needs within the schools and through increased parental involvement.

### ENROLLMENT DIVERSITY

**Peoria Region, 2016**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Peoria Region</th>
<th>State of Illinois</th>
<th>Peoria Public Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White (non-hispanic)</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Enrollment diversity in the state and the region has remained very consistent for nearly two decades. While the student population in the Peoria region is disproportionately white, Peoria Public Schools is disproportionately black. Hispanic student enrollment in the region is much lower than the state average.

### TOTAL ENROLLMENT

By County

- **Peoria:** 27,827
- **Tazewell:** 15,655
- **Woodford:** 6,839
- **Putnam:** 906
- **Marshall:** 1,306
- **Stark:** 930

In 2016, 53,463 students were enrolled in Peoria-region schools.
FOUR-YEAR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATES
Peoria Region, 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Graduation Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brimfield</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunlap</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elmwood</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmington</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois Valley Central</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limestone</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peoria Heights</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peoria Public Schools</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deer Creek/McKissock</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Peoria</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morton</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pekin</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peoria Heights</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Paso-Calder Creek</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fieldcrest</td>
<td>90%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lowpoint-Washburn</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metamora</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roanoke-Benson</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry-Seminary</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midland</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Putnam</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stark</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STATE AVERAGE 86%

In the 2015-2016 school year, more than 30 percent of area high schools had graduation rates below the state average of 86 percent. Overall, this represents more than 600 high school seniors who did not graduate in 2015-2016 within the Peoria region (more than half of these seniors resided in Peoria County).

FOUR-YEAR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATES
Peoria Public Schools, 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Graduation Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manual Academy</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peoria High School</td>
<td>59%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quest Charter Academy</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richwoods High School</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peoria Public Schools</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STATE AVERAGE 86%

BENCHMARK FOR SUCCESS

Not only is the ACT test a benchmark for determining if students are ready to enter college, it’s an overall indicator of future success. In 2015, students in Tazewell County had the highest overall composite score (21.3), while Peoria County scored 20.7 and all other counties scored slightly less (20.4). In Spring 2017, the Illinois State Board of Education transitioned from the ACT to the SAT exam.

POST-SECONDARY ENROLLMENT

Young adults who earn college credit have higher employment rates and are more likely to stay employed. In Illinois, 71 percent of seniors in the Class of 2014 enrolled in college within 16 months of graduation. In the Peoria region:

- 12 graduating classes (40%) exceeded the state average.
- 6 graduating classes (20%) met the state average.
- 12 graduating classes (40%) were below the state average.
EDUCATION
Two of the most reliable predictors of academic achievement are whether or not a child can read at a third-grade level by the end of third grade and if the child has successfully completed algebra by the start of tenth grade.

PARENTAL SUPPORT
Because parents are a child’s first and most important teachers, future academic success begins at home. By actively participating in their child’s early education, parents can increase their child’s performance, growth and academic skills.

PARCC TESTING
The PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers) system measures student performance in English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics against rigorous standards. Illinois began administering PARCC testing in the 2014-2015 school year, replacing the Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT).

LOW-INCOME STUDENTS
The Illinois State Board of Education reports that students are considered low-income if they live in households that receive public aid (SNAP/TANF) and/or meet USDA income guidelines to receive free or reduced-price meals; or are classified as homeless, migrant, runaway or foster children.

In 2015-2016, 30 primary and secondary school districts in the Peoria region reported that 33 percent or more of their students were low-income—a 25-percent increase since 2013.

44.4 percent of schools in the Peoria region are at or below the state average for third-grade English/Language Arts scores.

44.4 percent of schools in the Peoria region are at or below the state average for eighth-grade English/Language Arts scores.

*More than 33 percent of students in this district were reported as low-income.
46.7 percent of schools in the Peoria region are at or below the state average for third-grade math scores.

51.1 percent of schools in the Peoria region are at or below the state average for eighth-grade math scores.

EIGHT GRADE MATH LEVELS
Peoria Region, 2015-2016

STATE AVERAGE
32%

THIRD GRADE MATH LEVELS
Peoria Region, 2015-2016

STATE AVERAGE
40%

EDUCATION
An understanding of mathematics is vital for success in today’s technology-driven society—and it’s a strong predictor of a child’s overall academic success, regardless of family income.

SUCCESS BY 6
This early childhood education initiative provided by the Heart of Illinois United Way is focused on early learning and pre-literacy skill development. Success by 6 strives to guarantee that at-risk children ages birth to six are healthy, safe, nurtured and ready to succeed. Specific goals include:
- Increasing early childhood literacy
- Providing daily learning activities
- Building mathematical thinking skills
- Improving social and emotional skills

STEM EDUCATION
STEM education (science, technology, engineering and math) creates critical thinkers and enables the next generation of innovators, which leads to new products and processes that build and sustain our economy. The expansion of STEM education is a top priority for the nation’s short- and long-term future.

JOBS OF THE FUTURE
Today’s fastest-growing occupations require significant preparation in math or science. While jobs in the manufacturing sector have declined since 2000, manufacturing jobs in the 21st century are increasingly high-tech and high-wage—and STEM education is the key to acquiring the expertise needed to fill them.

*More than 33 percent of students in this district were reported as low-income.
**EDUCATION**

Chronic truancy has been linked to serious delinquent activity in youth and to significant negative behavior and characteristics in adults. In addition, continual student turnover and increased mobility have the potential to be academically and socially disruptive to both ongoing and transferring students.

**SUPPORTING STUDENT SUCCESS**

S3 (Supporting Student Success) is an in-school initiative provided by the Heart of Illinois United Way that offers students, teachers and families social-emotional support through education, intervention, prevention and counseling.

In 2016-2017, S3 grants were awarded to 20 schools and districts based upon a rubric score and demographics, including number of low-income students, truancy rates, student mobility and academic proficiency. In 2015-2016, schools receiving S3 grants reported improved academic achievement and attendance, as well as fewer discipline referrals, suspension rates, behavioral interventions, fights and aggressive behaviors.

**CAUSES OF TRUANCY**

The causes of truancy vary with the age of children. Truancy in elementary school often results from the decisions and actions of the child’s parents or caregivers, while in middle and high school, students are more likely to be truant as a result of their own behavior and choices.

**CHRONIC TRUANCY**

**Peoria Region, 2016**

Chronic truancy is defined as the percentage of students who miss five percent or more school days due to unexcused absence. With 180 days in the typical academic year, that is an average of nine days.

**STUDENT MOBILITY**

**Peoria Region, 2016**

Student mobility is defined as the percentage of students who transfer in and out of schools between the first school day of October and the last school day of the year, not including graduates.
FINANCIAL STABILITY

The ability of families and individuals to fulfill basic needs such as food, housing and childcare is an important step in building a stronger, more sustainable community. By helping families become more self-reliant, they can reach long-term financial stability.
### FINANCIAL STABILITY

Families and individuals who are financially stable have sufficient income and financial resources to afford basic needs such as housing, food, clothing, childcare and transportation—and are still able to save for the future.

### A PATH TO STABILITY

Low to moderate-income individuals and families have many obstacles to achieving financial economic. Faced with lower wages, a higher housing cost burden, the inability to consistently pay for utilities or food, and often, a disconnect from conventional financial services, these households lack economic resources and life skills.

Households lacking sufficient assets are forced to live from paycheck to paycheck. For many of these individuals and families, a hospitalization or the breakdown of the family car could become a setback that leads to even larger issues, such as homelessness.

However, the lack of adequate assets is not limited to low to moderate-income levels. Nationally, more than 40 percent of households do not have enough savings or assets to cover basic expenses for three months in case of an emergency or layoff, nor do they have enough assets to make a down payment on a home, invest in college or plan for retirement.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development defines low to moderate income as individuals or families whose household income does not exceed 115 percent of the median income for the area when adjusted for family size.

### HOUSEHOLD INCOME

**Peoria MSA vs. State of Illinois, 2015**

Compared to the State of Illinois, the Peoria MSA has a significantly higher rate of families and individuals who earn between $35,000 to $99,999. Looking back at household income reported in 2012, the Peoria MSA has seen a decline in the number of people earning $10,000 to $34,999.

### MEDIAN INCOME BY RACE AND GENDER

**Peoria MSA, 2015**

In 2015, significant income disparity existed in the Peoria MSA, with black and Hispanic residents earning significantly less than white and Asian households, and women (regardless of race or ethnicity) earning 30 percent less than men.
Higher levels of education lead to better prospects for earnings and employment, regardless of industry or career path. The vast majority of new and emerging jobs, both locally and nationally, require advanced skills and education beyond high school—with emphasis on math, science, technology, critical thinking and creativity.

Since 2000, there has been an obvious decline in the manufacturing sector and an increase in business/professional services as the transformation from a manufacturing-based economy to a service economy continues. Employment in the healthcare industry—the region’s largest employer—has generally increased since 2000, although current employment has yet to return to its 2013 peak.

An individual’s annual income is directly correlated to the level of education he or she has attained.
Family composition and poverty are significantly related, with two-parent families much less likely to be affected by poverty than single-parent families. Poverty rates continue to be dramatically higher for family households led by single mothers (or female guardians) with children under the age of 18. There is a large gap between what a married couple with children earns compared to families with a single head of household, whether headed by a male or female. This illustrates the economic burden of single-parent households, as well as the fact that single mothers/guardians are more likely to live in poverty.

2015 POVERTY GUIDELINES

U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Persons in Household</th>
<th>Poverty Guideline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$11,770</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$15,930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>$20,090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>$24,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>$28,410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>$32,570</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>$36,730</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>$40,890</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For households with more than 8 persons, add $4,160 for each additional person.

2015 Poverty Guidelines are used to coincide with the year of the data reported.

POVERTY AND FAMILY COMPOSITION
Peoria MSA, 2015

Family composition and poverty are significantly related, with two-parent families much less likely to be affected by poverty than single-parent families. Poverty rates continue to be dramatically higher for family households led by single mothers (or female guardians) with children under the age of 18.

MEDIAN INCOME BY FAMILY COMPOSITION
Peoria Tri-County Area, 2015

EITC: FIGHTING POVERTY

One of the nation’s largest antipoverty programs, the federal earned income tax credit (EITC) supplements the earnings of low- to moderate-income households—particularly those with children. The amount awarded is based on a recipient’s income, marital status and number of children. Because EITC grows with household earnings, it creates an incentive for low-wage workers to increase work hours or seek better employment while lessening dependence on public assistance.

The average EITC boosts household wages by about $250 per month. It is generally used to pay for necessities, repair homes, maintain vehicles needed to commute to work, and in some cases, obtain additional education. In the Peoria six-county region:
- 16.5% of tax returns received the EITC in 2014.
- Nearly 70 percent of recipients earned less than $25,000.
- The average EITC received was $2,377.45.

Moving out of poverty is particularly important for young children. Increasing the income of low-income households when a child is young tends to improve that child’s immediate health and well-being, and is associated with higher earnings in adulthood.
The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) can greatly improve the ability of low-income families to purchase the food they need. A family of four earning the full-time minimum wage can increase their income to the poverty line by utilizing a combination of salary, SNAP benefits and the earned income tax credit.

In a typical month, SNAP helps one in four U.S. children, while more than half of SNAP benefits support families with infants, toddlers and preschool children—forming a critical foundation for their health and well-being. Research suggests that SNAP participation can lead to gains in reading and math skills and increase a child’s academic success because basic needs are being met.

Households Receiving SNAP Assistance

Peoria MSA, 2012 vs. 2015

Twelve to 13 percent of the population in the Peoria region is considered food-insecure. The USDA defines food insecurity as reduced access to quality and variety of foods, often resulting in disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake.

Households Receiving LIHEAP Assistance

Peoria Region, 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Households Below Poverty Level</th>
<th>Households Receiving LIHEAP Benefits</th>
<th>Total Benefit Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peoria</td>
<td>31,194</td>
<td>7,025</td>
<td>$4,281,461</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tazewell</td>
<td>11,559</td>
<td>3,413</td>
<td>$1,809,856</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodford</td>
<td>3,105</td>
<td>516</td>
<td>$278,712</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marshall</td>
<td>1,201</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>$122,575</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stark</td>
<td>684</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>$59,557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Putnam</td>
<td>691</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>$45,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peoria Region</td>
<td>48,434</td>
<td>11,395</td>
<td>$6,597,911</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

89% of LIHEAP payment assistance in the Peoria region is distributed to seniors, persons with disabilities, and homes with children under age five.

Low-income households spend a much larger percentage of their income on energy bills than higher-income households in the same metropolitan area. This often causes them to cut back on other necessities, such as food and medicine. Households receiving energy and food assistance may be able to avoid food insecurity and the necessity to limit other household expenditures.

Households Receiving SNAP Assistance

Peoria MSA, 2012 vs. 2015

The data collected by 2-1-1 provides information that can be used to anticipate demand for health and human care services and identify emerging social trends. Of 9,037 calls in 2016, the most common needs in the Peoria region were:

1. Housing (2,776)
2. Utility assistance (2,240)
3. Food/meals (1,193)
4. Individual, family and community support (981)
5. Clothing/personal/household needs (872)

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) provides assistance to manage costs associated with home energy bills and minor energy-related home repairs. Funded by the federal government and the State of Illinois, LIHEAP also reduces the risk of health and safety problems that arise from unsafe heating and cooling practices.

In Illinois, households at 150 percent of the federal poverty level are eligible for LIHEAP assistance. However, in the Peoria region, only 23.5 percent of households below the poverty level actually receive LIHEAP assistance—illustrating the gap between the need and available resources.
Low-income households experience the largest gap in housing availability—including both the absence of affordable units and competition from higher-income households looking for lower-cost units.

Housing cost burden—defined as having to pay 30 percent or more of a family’s income for housing—is significantly less for individuals in the Peoria MSA than in the State of Illinois. Overall, it is highest among renters and lowest for homeowners without a mortgage.

Low-income households and renters have a much higher rate of housing problems versus homeowners or middle/upper-income households. Peoria County has a significantly higher percentage of households with housing problems than surrounding communities.

In the Peoria MSA, renters comprise 29 percent of the population. Renters, after paying for housing and utilities, often cannot afford basic needs, such as food, child care, transportation and medical care. For minimum-wage workers, the cost of living exceeds a full-time income.

* Illinois ranks 16th in the nation as one of the most expensive states to rent a home. In the Peoria MSA, renters comprise 29 percent of the population.*
Households with high housing costs and high levels of debt lack the ability to save for the future or plan for emergencies, leading to cutbacks in consumption and impacting the local economy. Understanding how to meet the needs for affordable housing requires an understanding of the disparities in income and wealth. For middle to low-income families, housing costs are their largest monthly expenditures.

While credit reports and scores are used for borrowing money, they can also affect other areas of an individual’s or family’s finances:

- Insurance companies review credit reports to determine coverage and rates.
- Utility companies can use credit reports to determine security deposits.
- 47 percent of employers nationwide use credit checks in the hiring process to gauge financial responsibility and reduce theft.
- Landlords use credit reports to screen applicants and determine deposits.

### Measures of Credit Stress

Peoria MSA, 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>0%</th>
<th>5%</th>
<th>10%</th>
<th>15%</th>
<th>20%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peoria</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tazewell</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodford</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stark</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marshall</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An individual’s credit behavior affects not only their personal situation, but that of their community. To describe the credit behaviors of a community, the Federal Reserve Bank of New York created a five-tier scale measuring the severity of community credit stress based on payment histories of county residents, 18 years or older, with a credit file and credit score.

### 16.6% Underbanked, Peoria MSA

Underbanked households have a checking and/or savings account, but still use alternative and often costly financial services, including non-bank money orders and check cashing services, for basic transactions and credit needs. These households:
- spend a significant amount on services for which most people pay little to nothing
- are more likely to experience loss or theft
- have difficulty building credit and achieving financial security

### Annual Cost of Basic Needs

Peoria MSA, 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Type</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Adult, No Children</td>
<td>$17,632</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Adult, 1 Child</td>
<td>$39,004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Adult, 2 Children</td>
<td>$51,118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Working Adult, 1 Stay-At-Home Adult, 1 Child</td>
<td>$36,982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Working Adult, 1 Stay-At-Home Adult, 2 Children</td>
<td>$41,342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Working Adults, 1 Child</td>
<td>$44,487</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Working Adults, 2 Children</td>
<td>$55,680</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Basic needs consist of food, child care, medical expenses, housing and utilities, transportation costs, clothing, personal hygiene, etc.
Living with disabilities significantly impacts the degree of self-sufficiency among individuals. With changing demographics due to the aging of baby boomers, communities will experience an increase in the number of elderly individuals living with disabilities.

People with disabilities typically have lower incomes, higher unemployment and fewer housing options. They encounter structural and financial barriers—such as transportation options and affordable insurance—that can limit their access to healthcare. Disabilities can also affect a range of health issues, including excess weight, reduced physical activity and increased stress, while those with mobility impairments experience health concerns associated with aging much earlier in life.

However, when assistance is provided to help them achieve a maximum level of sustainable independence, individuals with disabilities make great contributions to the community. When a new skill is developed and impediments are removed, individuals with disabilities can develop a sense of optimism and self-efficacy that allows them to sustain independence and recognize opportunities rather than barriers.

Disabilities by Type
Peoria MSA, 2015

Disabilities by Age
Peoria MSA vs. State of Illinois, 2015

Disability rates are significantly greater among individuals 65 years and older, both in the Peoria MSA and the State of Illinois. Nearly half of individuals 75 years and older struggle with some type of disability.
HEALTH

All people in the Peoria region should have access to healthcare, dental care and medications. It is imperative to provide opportunities for all residents to achieve optimal physical and mental health while promoting healthy lifestyles and healthy communities.
HEALTH

The World Health Organization and U.S. Department of Health & Human Services have studied and confirmed the impact of education and income on an individual’s overall health. Factors such as where one lives, genetics, income and education have an even greater impact on health than traditional factors like the use of healthcare services.

LINKS BETWEEN HEALTH, EDUCATION AND INCOME

Education and income levels are not only leading predictors of financial stability, but also of health and well-being. Education enables the attainment of economic resources through employment—including wages, benefits and health insurance coverage—which in turn has a significant impact on health. In addition, basic literacy and numeracy skills are critical to understanding diagnoses, taking medications, communicating with healthcare providers and reading nutrition labels.

THE CASCADE EFFECT

Low-income individuals and families often experience a cascade effect when it comes to better health because they are unable to purchase healthier foods, have less time for physical activity due to longer work hours, and have increased financial burdens related to housing and transportation. Combined, these factors can lead to decreased preventative care, increased hospitalizations and emergency care, and chronic stress.

TOTAL BIRTHS

By County, 2012-2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peoria</td>
<td>2,690</td>
<td>2,666</td>
<td>2,770</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tazewell</td>
<td>1,643</td>
<td>1,591</td>
<td>1,601</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodford</td>
<td>432</td>
<td>468</td>
<td>418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marshall</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stark</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Putnam</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peoria Region</td>
<td>4,985</td>
<td>4,970</td>
<td>5,023</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to total births by county, the Illinois Department of Public Health tracks various characteristics of births and birth mothers. In the Peoria region, 41.3 percent of total births in 2014 were to single mothers, 7.5 percent were to mothers age 20 or older without a high school degree, and 8.0 percent of babies born had a low birth weight of less than 5.5 pounds. Low birth weight can lead to higher rates of diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure and obesity later in life.

MORTALITY RATES

Causes of Death by County, 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Total Deaths</th>
<th>Heart Disease</th>
<th>Cancer</th>
<th>Stroke</th>
<th>Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease</th>
<th>Accidents</th>
<th>Alzheimer’s Disease</th>
<th>Diabetes</th>
<th>Influenza/ Pneumonia</th>
<th>Septicemia</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peoria</td>
<td>1,887</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tazewell</td>
<td>1,498</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodford</td>
<td>412</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marshall</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stark</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Putnam</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peoria Region</td>
<td>4,109</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Heart disease and cancer are the two leading causes of death, both regionally and nationally. These figures remain relatively stable from year to year.
Routine medical exams are critical to identifying and treating health concerns before they become more serious and costly. People who are uninsured or underinsured are less likely to access preventative care and go without early treatment, which exacerbates symptoms and leads to missed work or school.

The Peoria region continues to have a higher percentage of its population with healthcare coverage than the state, although the gap has narrowed slightly since 2012. Beginning in 2014, the Affordable Care Act expanded coverage to millions of previously uninsured people, particularly among low-income individuals and families.

**HEALTH CARE UTILIZATION**

Peoria Region, 2013

- Did not visit a doctor due to cost: 12.5%
- Did not get an annual routine checkup: 38.4%
- Does not have a primary healthcare provider: 18.7%

A significant percentage of the population in the region does not visit a doctor when needed due to cost. Nearly 40 percent of individuals did not get an annual routine checkup and nearly 20 percent do not have a primary care provider.

**FLU SHOTS**

The percentage of people who had a flu shot from 2010 to 2014 was 31.7 percent in the Peoria region—substantially lower than the state average of 38.5 percent. Since 2009, the Peoria region has experienced a significant decline in the percentage of its population who have had a flu shot.

**DENTAL VISITS**

Oral health is also integral to overall health. In the Peoria region, 71.3 percent of the population visited a dentist within the last year, while the State of Illinois lagged behind at 66.9 percent. The percentage of population that has not visited a dentist in the last two years is significant in both the Peoria region (17.0%) and the State of Illinois (21.4%).
**HEALTH**

In the tri-county Peoria area, job opportunities ranked highest among community perceptions of issues impacting well-being, followed by safer neighborhoods and healthy food choices. Mental health was identified by nearly half of the population as the most significant health-related concern, followed by obesity, cancer and aging issues.

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**PERCEPTION VS. REALITY**

In the 2016 Community Health Needs Assessment (a collaboration among area hospitals, medical facilities, county health departments and the United Way), tri-county residents were asked to identify the most prevalent issues impacting well-being in the community, as well as health-specific issues. While the perceptions of the community were accurate in some cases, they were inaccurate in others.

It is no surprise that job opportunities ranked highest among the perceptions of issues impacting well-being, given unemployment rates in recent years. However, while cancer and obesity were correctly identified as significant health concerns, heart disease was rated relatively low despite being one of the leading causes of mortality in the tri-county region.

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**PERCEPTION OF ISSUES THAT IMPACT WELL-BEING**

Tri-County Peoria Area, 2016 (Community Health Needs Assessment)

- Job opportunities: 47%
- Safer neighborhoods: 41%
- Healthy food choices: 37%
- Access to health: 28%
- Less violence: 25%
- Less poverty: 21%
- Less hatred: 20%
- Available child care: 17%
- Affordable housing: 16%
- Public transportation: 13%
- Better school attendance: 12%

*Percentages do not equal 100, as participants could select up to three issues*

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**PERCEPTION OF HEALTH ISSUES**

Tri-County Peoria Area, 2016 (Community Health Needs Assessment)

- Mental health: 47%
- Obesity/overweight: 41%
- Cancer: 37%
- Aging issues: 28%
- Diabetes: 22%
- Early sexual activity: 21%
- Heart disease: 17%
- Dental health: 15%
- Infectious diseases: 13%
- STIs: 12%
- Chronic pain: 8%
- Lung disease: 6%
- HIV/AIDS: 6%
- Stroke: 3%
- Injuries: 3%

*Percentages do not equal 100, as participants could select up to three issues*
According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, weight that is higher than what is considered healthy for a given height is described as overweight or obese. A Body Mass Index (BMI) of 25 to 30 falls within the overweight range; a BMI higher than 30 is considered obese.

Youth obesity is expressed relative to other children of the same age and sex, rather than the BMI categories used for adults. This is because children’s body composition varies as they age and by sex. Overweight is defined as a BMI at or above the 85th percentile and below the 95th percentile for children and teens of the same age and sex. Obese is defined as a BMI at or above the 95th percentile for children and teens of the same age and sex.

This figure measures the percentage of adults who live reasonably close to a location for physical activity. This includes local, state and national parks, as well as gyms, community centers, dance studios, pools and similar recreational facilities. Individuals are considered to have adequate access if they reside within a half-mile of a park, or within one mile of a recreational facility (in urban areas) or within three miles of a recreational facility (in rural areas).

Obesity is a significant contributor to many of the leading causes of death in the U.S. The percentage of people in the Peoria region who are overweight or obese is increasing, leading to a substantially less healthy population that will inevitably have more health problems and higher healthcare costs in the future.

LIMITED ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOODS

The percentage of the population that is low-income and does not live near a grocery store ranges from one to 10 percent. In rural areas, families living less than 10 miles from a grocery store are considered to have limited access to healthy foods; in non-rural areas, that threshold is less than one mile.

Food deserts are areas that lack access to affordable fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lowfat milk and other foods that make up the full range of a healthy diet. There is strong evidence that residing in a food desert is correlated with a high prevalence of obesity and premature death.

In the tri-county Peoria area, a significant percentage of high school students (20-40%) said they ate fruits or vegetables less than three times during the past seven days in 2016.
While drug overdoses are a leading cause of premature death, they are largely preventable. The U.S. is experiencing an epidemic of drug overdose deaths, which are up 137 percent since 2000. This includes a 200 percent increase in deaths involving opioids, which include prescription drugs such as oxycodone, morphine and fentanyl, as well as heroin.

Many people use prescription opioids to relieve pain, but these drugs can be addictive and can lead to inappropriate use, which increases the risk of overdose. In some cases, prescription opioid addiction can lead to the use of heroin, which is cheaper and more accessible.

In Illinois, more people died from an opioid drug overdose in 2014 than from homicide or motor vehicle accidents.

In the Peoria region, drug overdose deaths increased by 33 percent between 2013 and 2015, while opioid-related deaths alone jumped 50 percent. In addition, there are approximately 3,000 hospitalizations in the Peoria region each year related to non-medical drug abuse.

To remove the stigma around substance use and substance use disorders, as a community we can:

- Reduce opioid misuse and overprescribing
- Promote safe opioid prescribing guidelines
- Promote public health education campaigns and safe opioid drug disposal
- Promote screening and treatment of substance use disorders

Substance use rises dramatically from junior high/middle school to the high school level across every category. This correlates with increased perceptions that there is little to no risk associated with marijuana use, as well as perceptions that use of alcohol, marijuana and prescription drugs is only “a little bit wrong” or “not wrong at all.”
Preventative education can contribute to reducing STIs and teen births by increasing knowledge of healthier behaviors. In addition, the children of teenage mothers often have a delay in their development, not because of the mother’s age at birth, but related to confounding influences associated with poverty, low levels of education and single marital status.

While the overall trend in teen births in both the Peoria region and the State of Illinois is declining, Marshall and Peoria counties had higher rates than the state each year between 2012 and 2014, while rates in Tazewell and Woodford counties were lower than the state all three years.

### CHLAMYDIA RATES PER 100,000 POPULATION

Peoria Region, 2012-2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peoria</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tazewell</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodford</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marshall</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stark</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Putnam</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State of Illinois</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While chlamydia and gonorrhea can be easily cured with antibiotics, most people do not experience symptoms, so infections are often undiagnosed and untreated. Left untreated, chlamydia and gonorrhea can cause pelvic inflammatory disease, leading to infertility and tubal pregnancies, while chlamydia increases the risk of HIV infection. Screening and testing is critical to reducing the risk of further complications and passing the infection on to others.

### GONORRHEA RATES PER 100,000 POPULATION

Peoria Region, 2012-2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peoria</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tazewell</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodford</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marshall</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stark</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Putnam</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State of Illinois</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STIs continue to be a significant problem in the Peoria region—especially in Peoria County. While the rates for gonorrhea have declined slightly since 2012, chlamydia rates in Peoria County increased and reached a four-year high. Both rates are nearly two times higher than the state average.
HOMELESS CONTINUUM OF CARE

The Heart of Illinois Homeless Continuum of Care is focused on ending homelessness by ensuring access to permanent, safe and affordable housing. With comprehensive, coordinated services, individuals and families can maintain self-sufficiency and improve their quality of life.

ABOUT THE CONTINUUM

Established in 1994, the Heart of Illinois Homeless Continuum of Care is a united coalition of community systems including nonprofit and government organizations. Until 2016, the Continuum of Care was operated by service providers volunteering their time and skills to create a system responsive to the needs of those experiencing homelessness.

With the implementation of performance measures by state and federal funding entities, the Continuum of Care partnered with the Heart of Illinois United Way to provide leadership for the coalition. In July 2016, the United Way assumed the administrative responsibilities of the Continuum of Care and is collaborating to build a sustainable system that will significantly impact homelessness in central Illinois.

HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS, SHELTERED AND UNSHELTERED
Point-In-Time Count
Peoria, Tazewell, Woodford and Fulton Counties, 2016

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires a point-in-time count of homeless persons who are living on the streets, places not meant for human habitation, emergency shelters and transitional housing.

DEMOGRAPHICS OF HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS
Point-In-Time Count, Peoria, Tazewell, Woodford and Fulton Counties, 2016

- Gender:
  - Female: 29%
  - Male: 61%

- Age:
  - Under age 18: 16%
  - 18 and over: 84%

- Race:
  - White: 41%
  - African American: 16%
  - Multiracial: 7%
  - American Indian or Alaskan Native: 2%
  - Asian: 2%

ADULT SUBPOPULATIONS, HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS
Point-In-Time Count, 2016

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development tracks specific situational and health characteristics of homeless adults, including veterans, those with a substance abuse disorder or mental illness, and victims of domestic violence. In Peoria, Tazewell, Woodford and Fulton Counties:

- 25% of adult homeless had a serious mental illness
- 18% of adult homeless had a substance abuse disorder
- 17% of adult homeless were victims of domestic violence
- 2% of adult homeless were veterans
CONTRIBUTING FACTORS TO HOMELESSNESS

Homelessness has long-lasting social impacts. There is not a single solution, nor is there a single cause that results in homelessness. Although the circumstances may vary, there are commonly recognized factors that contribute to both individual and family homelessness. These include:

Situation Driven
Many families and individuals are forced to live without housing due to a specific emergency, such as a natural disaster, job loss or death of a primary income earner. Lack of affordable housing and increasing living expenses push many individuals and their families toward homelessness.

Mental Health
People with poor mental health are more likely to be living in poverty and unable to sustain permanent employment. Nationally, upwards of 35 percent of homeless individuals suffer from mental illness, which makes maintaining basic living conditions, managing a job and paying rent impossible without assistance.

Disabilities
People with disabilities often live in poverty due to employment issues, barriers to educational attainment, expenses related to their disability and lack of supportive housing. Accidents—especially job-related accidents—can happen to anyone, and often increase the risk of homelessness due to economic hardship from job loss.

Domestic Violence
Many individuals and their children who are abused are forced to seek homeless services for stability and safety when fleeing an abusive partner. Due to forced isolation, the abused individual often has no support network and has been denied access to financial resources. The majority of homeless women are victims of domestic violence.

Substance Abuse
As a contributing factor to homelessness and a result of being homeless, substance abuse leads to poor physical and mental health while decreasing an individual’s ability to maintain employment and housing. In the United States, 68 percent of cities report substance abuse as the most prevalent issue for homeless people.

Incarceration
Criminal history and former convictions create barriers to integration back into society. Although community reintegration is a part of discharge planning, employment and housing placement can be difficult for ex-offenders, leading to an increased risk for homelessness.

According to the Tri-County Community Health Needs Assessment, more than one third of the homeless population use emergency rooms or do not seek medical attention. Both options incur higher costs compared to preventative care, and delayed treatment leads to worsening conditions.

Youth under the age of 18, in the custody of a parent or guardian, represented 16.1 percent of the overall homeless population in the Continuum of Care service area in 2016. Youth become homeless for various reasons, primarily as a consequence of family and household situations. Homelessness not only affects a child’s physical and mental health, it also limits academic progress.

The Heart of Illinois Homeless Continuum of Care, in conjunction with the Heart of Illinois United Way, works to build the community’s support and capacity to end homelessness by:

- Evolving to a crisis response system that prevents homelessness and rapidly returns people to stable housing
- Educating our community on the scope, causes and costs of homelessness as a way to involve citizens and the private sector
- Building the capacity of local developers and nonprofit organizations to increase the supply and availability of affordable and permanent supportive housing
- Encouraging partnerships between housing providers and health/behavioral health care providers to co-locate, coordinate or integrate health services to create better resources
COMMUNITY IMPACT

Every program funded by the Heart of Illinois United Way’s Community Impact Fund is scored on benchmarks set by the Peoria Area Community Assessment. Here are just a few examples of how United Way-funded programs are making positive, sustainable impact on critical needs in central Illinois:

EDUCATION
- 90% of preschool children demonstrated the social-emotional skills needed for school readiness.
- 89% of youth achieved academic success in reading skills.
- 90% of youth achieved academic success in math skills.

FINANCIAL STABILITY
- 91% of families and individuals improved their life skills.
- 81% of individuals and families in need of housing found affordable homes.
- 97% of low-income seniors and persons with developmental or intellectual disabilities were able to live independently with food, shelter and transportation assistance.

HEALTH
- 82% of youth increased their knowledge of healthy choices related to nutrition, risky behaviors, violence and safety.
- 94% of adults in nutrition and health education programs increased their knowledge about eating properly and exercising.
- 100% of individuals who received STI education increased their knowledge and had testing.

UNITED WAY PARTNER AGENCIES

The Heart of Illinois United Way collaborates with partner agencies throughout central Illinois, supporting more than 80 programs to create a strong, safe and healthy community.

- Alzheimer’s Association, Central Illinois Chapter
- American Red Cross, Central Illinois Chapter
- Big Brothers Big Sisters, Heart of Illinois
- Boy Scouts of America, W.D. Boyce Council
- Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Peoria, Inc.
- G.W. Carver Assoc., Inc.
- CASA of Peoria County
- The Center for Prevention of Abuse
- Center for Youth & Family Solutions
- Central Illinois FRIENDS of PWA, Inc.
- Children’s Home Association of Illinois
- Children’s Hospital of Illinois at OSF Saint Francis Medical Center
- Common Place
- Community Workshop and Training Center, Inc.
- Crittenton Centers
- Easterseals Central Illinois
- EPIC
- FamilyCore
- Freedom House
- Girl Scouts of Central Illinois
- Goodwill Industries of Central Illinois, Inc.
- Greater Peoria Family YMCA
- Habitat for Humanity, Greater Peoria Area
- Heartland Health Services
- Henry Community Ambulance Services
- Hult Center for Healthy Living, Inc.
- Human Service Center
- Illinois Valley Center for Independent Living
- Junior Achievement of Central Illinois
- Lutheran Social Services of Illinois
- Neighborhood House Association
- Pearce Community Center
- Peoria Friendship House of Christian Service
- Peoria Promise
- Planned Parenthood Heart of Illinois
- Prairie State Legal Services, Inc.
- Saint Francis Community Clinic
- The Salvation Army
- South Side Office of Concern
- Tazewell County Resource Centers, Inc.
- Tazwood Center for Wellness
- Tri-County (Peoria) Urban League
- We Care, Inc.
- Youth Service Bureau of Illinois Valley
- YWCA of Pekin
In 2017, the Heart of Illinois United Way (HOIUW) collaborated with Bradley University to conduct an assessment of the Peoria region. The assessment, published every three years, is designed to provide critical information to enable the organization in strategic decision making. The primary focus of the assessment is to improve HOIUW's effectiveness at identifying, assessing and supporting key areas of social concern, as well as providing the basis for strategies to improve its development efforts.