

Madison County, Alabama Needs Assessment

Summary & Action Report

Parker Consulting, Inc.
Birmingham, AL

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Introduction

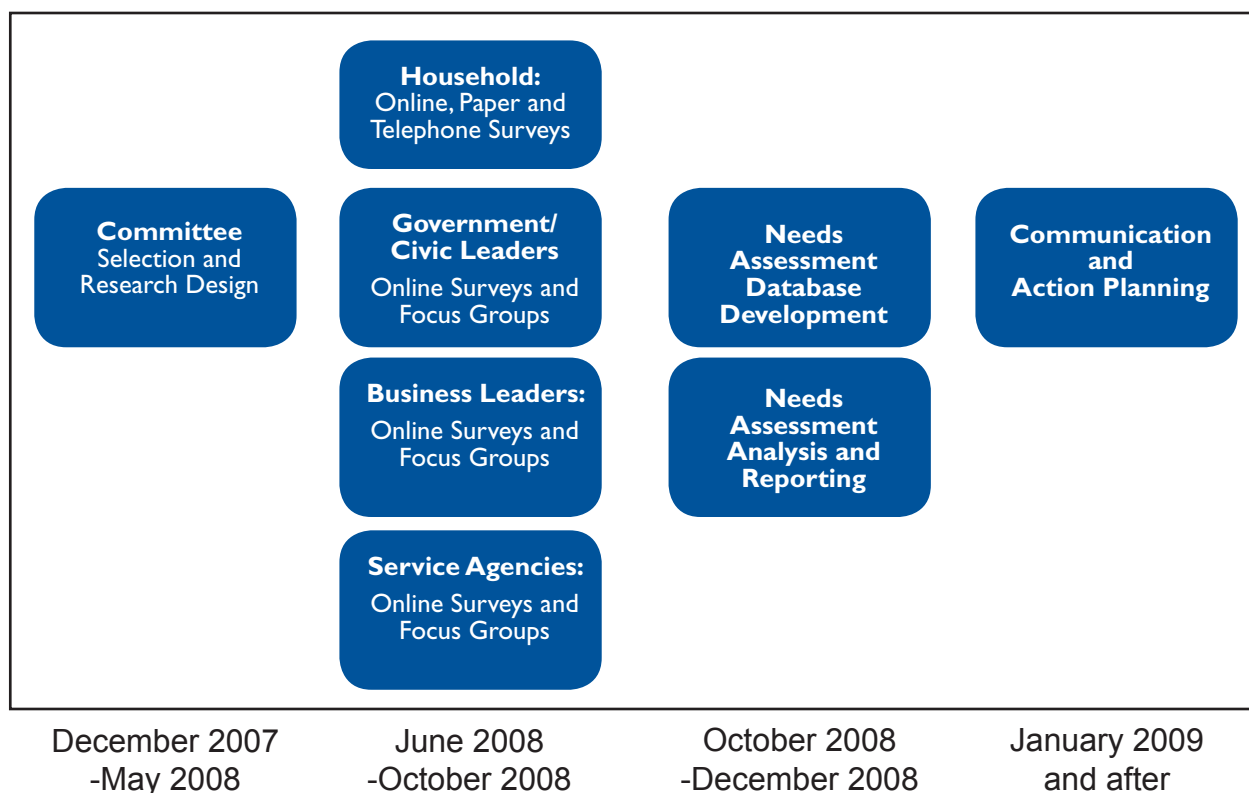
For more than 20 years, United Way of Madison County has conducted a Needs Assessment every five years to fulfill its mission as “a leader in the community uniting volunteers and resources to solve community problems.” United Way commissioned Parker Consulting to conduct this Needs Assessment as an independent analysis and report on community issues and concerns. While United Way will use the Needs Assessment to ensure that our resources have the maximum impact possible in our community, we hope that service providers, policy makers, and other concerned community representatives will also utilize this assessment to create lasting community change to address real community priorities.

Community Needs Assessment Purpose & Methodology

The objective of the Community Needs Assessment is to obtain an independent analysis of the challenges facing residents. This summary describes the most current needs and challenges in Madison County. While the needs in Madison County are challenging, past experience indicates that impacting the lives of our fellow residents is possible through cooperation and compassion.

The Madison County Needs Assessment data collection began with the creation and distribution of a community survey in June 2008. Originally, the Community Needs Assessment Committee set a goal of obtaining 1000 responses as a representative stratified random sample of Madison County. This goal was exceeded four months later when responses from 1,194 households were recorded. The following groups participated in the survey by completing the questionnaire on paper, on-line, or by telephone. In addition, 51 community representatives participated in discussion groups led by trained community facilitators.

2009 Needs Assessment Process



Summary of Findings Regarding Major Issues By Population Group*

Challenges Facing Households throughout Madison County Column 1	<i>Low-Income Households</i> Unemployed, Under-employed, and working with <\$25,000 Annual Income	<i>Residents with Low Level of Education</i> High School or Lower	<i>Senior Households</i> Ages 65 and Older	<i>New Residents of Madison County</i> Lived in County Less than 2 Years
FINANCIAL CHALLENGES				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saving for the future/retirement • Knowing how to budget • Making basic payments on monthly bills • Paying too much for housing • Unemployment 	<p>In addition to Column 1, these households are also challenged by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not affording basic necessities • Finding a job because of education/skills • Needing legal help • Needing public transportation • Threat of foreclosure/eviction 	<p>In addition to Column 1, these households are also challenged by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not affording basic necessities • Finding a job because of education/skills • Threat of foreclosure or eviction • Needing legal help • Affordable care for seniors 	<p><i>Fewer financial concerns than other segments of the population</i></p>	<p>In addition to Column 1, these households are also challenged by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not affording basic necessities • Finding a job
HEALTH CHALLENGES				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stress • Cost of prescription drugs • High blood pressure 	<p>In addition to Column 1, these households are also challenged by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dental Care • Smoking • Health insurance for children 	<p>In addition to Column 1, these households are also challenged by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dental Care • Smoking • Medical care for children 	<p>In addition to Column 1, these households are also challenged by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cancer • Heart attack/stroke • Cost of healthcare • Care for elderly 	<p>In addition to Column 1, these households are also challenged by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dental care • Health insurance for children
EDUCATION, YOUTH & FAMILY CHALLENGES				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being able to afford college 	<p>In addition to Column 1, these households are also challenged by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High school drop outs • Needing school transportation 	<p>In addition to Column 1, these households are also challenged by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needing school transportation • High school drop outs • Unsafe school environment 	<p><i>Fewer education concerns than other segments of the population</i></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable pre-school & childcare • Summer programs for children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Childcare that helps the child learn • Children not prepared to enter school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child not performing at grade level 	<p><i>Fewer family issues than other segments of the population</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Childcare that helps the child learn • Needing care for a special needs child

* Data sets available upon request.

Going Forward

On behalf of the Community Needs Assessment Committee, United Way of Madison County is pleased to present these results to the community in an effort to initiate change that addresses the issues raised by the assessment. United Way hopes to facilitate the community's efforts to address these needs and serve as a convener for the community. We will concentrate on the challenges identified in the Needs Assessment within the parameters of our three focus areas: Education, Income, and Health. Once the strategies for greatest impact have been identified, we will work to increase available financial resources through our annual United Way campaign. The volunteer led allocations process will provide additional resources to meet identified needs through appropriate programs and ensure accountability for program outcomes.

The community must come together and find ways to address the issues this Community Needs Assessment has identified. We can address the challenges we face by establishing a clear vision for a brighter future that will improve lives in our community.

Madison County's future can be significantly improved with your help. You can make a difference.

- Become better informed about our community.
- Share this report with others who want to affect change.
- Use this information to enhance existing programs.
- Use this report to assist agencies, communities of faith, and other Madison County groups to develop innovative plans to address key issues.
- Provide funds or develop creative ways to increase funding for programs and services.
- Volunteer with a social service organization, your community of faith, or civic organization in Madison County.

For an expanded version of this report, or if you would be interested in joining us in the effort to further explore these results through our Impact Councils and to create meaningful, lasting change in the community, please visit our website at www.madisoncountycares.org.