



Community Dashboard 2011
*key socioeconomic indicators for
Austin & Travis County*

TRACKING OUR PROGRESS TOGETHER

Community Dashboard 2011 provides an overview of the socioeconomic well-being of Austin and Travis County. By tracking the indicators in this report over time, we identify areas where collective attention and action are needed. The Community Dashboard 2011 report updates the original Community Dashboard 2010 report.

community dashboard 2011

Over the course of the past year, the Community Action Network's Community Council held nine televised public forums on each of the community indicators. Stakeholders from 27 community partner organizations and collaborations shared their expertise and knowledge about the indicators. Key stakeholders were invited to discuss...

1. where we stand on each indicator,
2. who is working to move the indicator in the right direction, and
3. what more needs to be done.

This report highlights what was learned through these conversations and updates the trend lines for each indicator. More detailed analysis of each of the indicators is available at www.cancommunitydashboard.org.



**CAN Partners work together
to build a community of
equity and opportunity.**

Austin Chamber of Commerce
Austin Community College
Austin Independent School District
Austin Travis County Integral Care
Capital Metro
Central Health
City of Austin
Community Justice Council
Interfaith Action of Central Texas
One Voice Central Texas
Seton Family of Hospitals
St. David's Foundation
St. Edward's University
Travis County
United Way Capital Area
University of Texas at Austin
Workforce Solutions– Capital Area

Visit www.cancommunitydashboard.org to learn more about the CAN Community Dashboard indicators and local efforts to improve these community conditions.

A QUICK LOOK AT OUR COMMUNITY

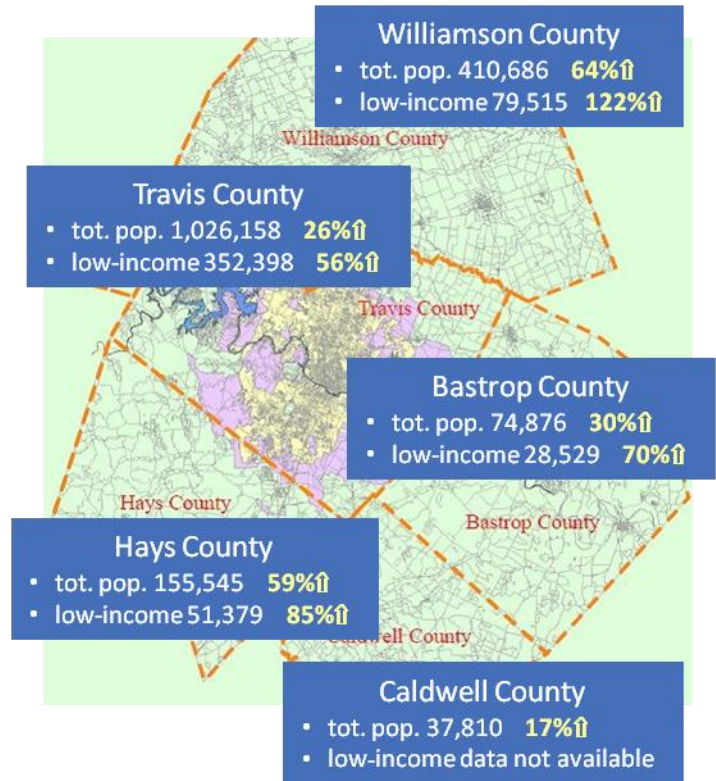
Central Texas is an attractive place to live and thus attracts a wide variety of people. Population growth brings in new energy, social capital, and labor.

While the general population is growing, it is important to recognize that the low-income population is growing at an even faster rate. People are considered to be low-income if they earn less than 200% of the Federal Poverty Level, about \$44,000 for a family of four. In 2009, more than one-third of all people in Travis County were living at or below this income level, which is barely sufficient to make ends meet.

People with low-income tend to fare worse on most Community Dashboard indicators. For example, they are less likely to be kindergarten ready, college-ready, and have health insurance, and are more likely to report poor mental health days.

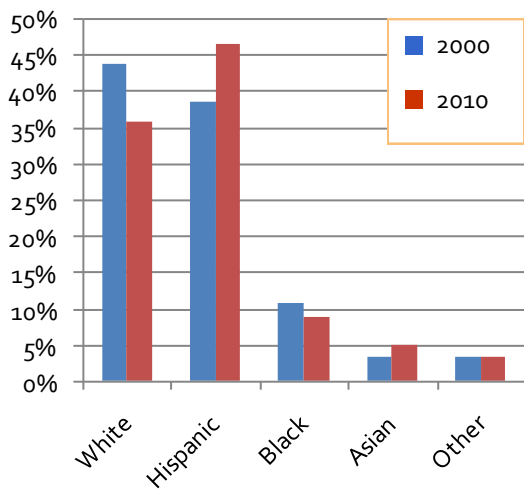
Our ability to move the Community Dashboard indicators in the right direction will depend to a great extent on our ability to expand opportunity for people of all income levels. Policies that promote equity can boost social cohesion, reduce conflict and help expand economic prosperity for all.

Austin-Round Rock MSA 2009 Totals and % Change Since 2000



Source: U. S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates and Population Estimates

Child Population in Travis County by Race/Ethnicity in 2000 and 2010



Source: U. S. Census Bureau 2010 Decennial Census

Children are our future taxpayers and workforce. The well-being of our community over the coming decades relies on the ability of young people to be successful in education, work and life. Efforts to enhance income and promote affordability for this future generation will strengthen the economic foundation of our community which, in turn, will help support the aging population.

According to new Census data, the Hispanic child population grew significantly from 2000 to 2010. Hispanics are more likely than other racial/ethnic groups to live in poverty. The poverty rate among Hispanics in Travis County in 2009 was 27%, compared to 21% for African Americans and 10% for Whites and Asians.

Building on the assets of a growing, diverse population and ensuring that all children are ready for school, work and life are essential to ensuring our community will be economically viable and globally competitive in the future.

OUR COMMON VISION

The first step in creating a community dashboard was to agree where we are headed together. The statements below represent common goals for all people in our community. Throughout 2008, members of the CAN Board of Directors, the CAN Community Council and the many collaborations and non-profit organizations that participate in a CAN Issue Area Group engaged in a process to identify these goals. The dashboard indicators were selected to measure whether we are moving closer to this common vision.

WE ACHIEVE OUR FULL POTENTIAL

We have the education, skills and opportunities to achieve our full potential and lead meaningful, joyful lives.

We have adequate income, resources and supports to live independent lives.

OUR BASIC NEEDS ARE MET

We live in a community where the basic needs of all are met.

We live in affordable and stable housing with access to open space and public amenities.

We have safe, affordable, accessible and reliable transportation.

WE ARE HEALTHY

We live, work, learn and play in accessible, safe, clean and healthy physical environments.

We have adequate nutrition and achieve and maintain optimal physical and behavioral health.

WE ARE SAFE, JUST & ENGAGED

We are free from abuse, neglect, crime, violence and injustice.

We respect and value diversity.

We are aware, socially connected, and contribute to our neighborhoods, individual communities, and the community at large.

We have the opportunity and willingness to lead by utilizing our talents, passions and interests to improve the community.

In 2008, members of the CAN community agreed on these common vision statements for all people in our community. In developing this vision, we drew on the Austin Equity Commission report ["Improving the Odds: Increasing Opportunities in Austin,"](#) the [Central Texas Sustainability Indicators Project](#), the Kirwan Institute's [Central Texas Opportunity Mapping Initiative](#), and the National Association of Planning Councils' 2005 report ["Leading Social Indicators."](#)



		community indicator	2010 report	2011 report
we achieve our full potential		Percent of children who are kindergarten ready	under development	52% in 2010
		Percent of Austin ISD students who graduate from high school in four years	74% for the Class of 2008	76% for the Class of 2009
		Percent of Austin ISD graduates who are college ready	50% in 2008	50% in 2009
		Unemployment rate for Travis County	7% in January 2010	7% in January 2011
our basic needs are met		Percent of people in Travis County who are low-income (below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level)	32% in 2008	35% in 2009
		Percent of Travis County households that are cost burdened (pay 30% or more of income for housing)	36% in 2008	38% in 2009
		Vehicle miles traveled per capita in Travis County	26 miles per day in 2007	25 miles per day in 2008
		Number of homeless people in Austin and Travis County identified in the annual point-in-time count	2,568 in 2009	2,087 in 2010
we are healthy		Percent under age 65 in Travis County who have no health insurance	24% in 2008	24% in 2009
		Percent of adults in Travis County who report poor mental health*	18% in 2008	19% in 2009
		Percent of adults in Travis County who are smokers*	19% in 2008	17% in 2009
		Percent of adults in Travis County who are obese*	22% in 2008	21% in 2009
		Attainment of EPA ozone standards	attainment	attainment
we are safe, just & engaged		Violent crime rate in Travis County	432 per 100,000 population in 2008	456 per 100,000 population in 2009
		Proportionality of arrest demographics in Travis County as compared to overall population	disproportionate	disproportionate
		Proportionality of voter turnout in Travis County as compared to overall population	disproportionate	disproportionate

* Three year data aggregates are used to compensate for small sample sizes.

WE ACHIEVE OUR FULL POTENTIAL

52% of children enter kindergarten ready for school

In the first year of a new measure of kindergarten readiness, developed by the [E³Alliance](#), slightly more than half of the 913 students tested showed ability to master key competencies in social-emotional development, language and communication, emerging literacy, and mathematics. Students were tested in school districts across the five county MSA. Children who qualified for free or reduced-price school lunches, were less likely to be kindergarten ready. Children who attended pre-kindergarten programs were much more likely to be kindergarten ready than those who did not.



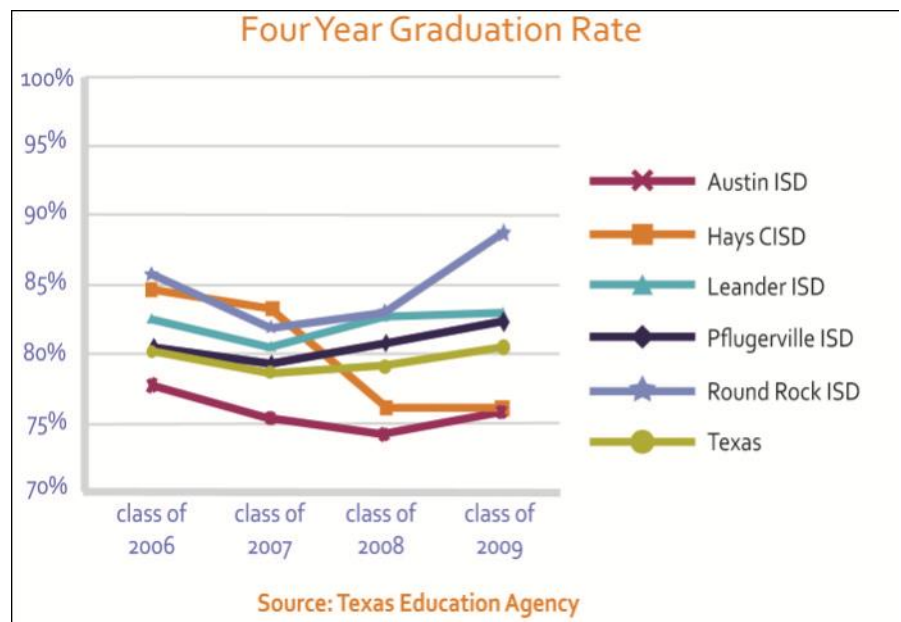
According to [United Way Success By 6](#) many low-income children in our community show up for school already two years behind their peers developmentally. This may lead to a wide range of problems that are significantly more challenging, as well as more expensive, to address later in their lives. High quality early education and pre-kindergarten programs can help eliminate this disparity.

76% of Austin ISD students graduate from high school in four years

The graduation rates for most of the five largest school districts in the Austin MSA improved for the Class of 2009. However, nearly one in four Austin ISD students did not graduate from high school in four years, and the district's graduation rate was lower than the State rate and the other four largest districts in the metro area.

[CAN's analysis](#) reveals that there are significant gaps between the graduation rates of Hispanic and Black students as compared to other races and ethnicities.

According to the [Travis County Snapshot from the American Community Survey](#), people with only a high school degree have higher rates of employment and earn about \$7,000 more than those without a high school degree. With higher levels of educational attainment, rates of employment and incomes rise even further.

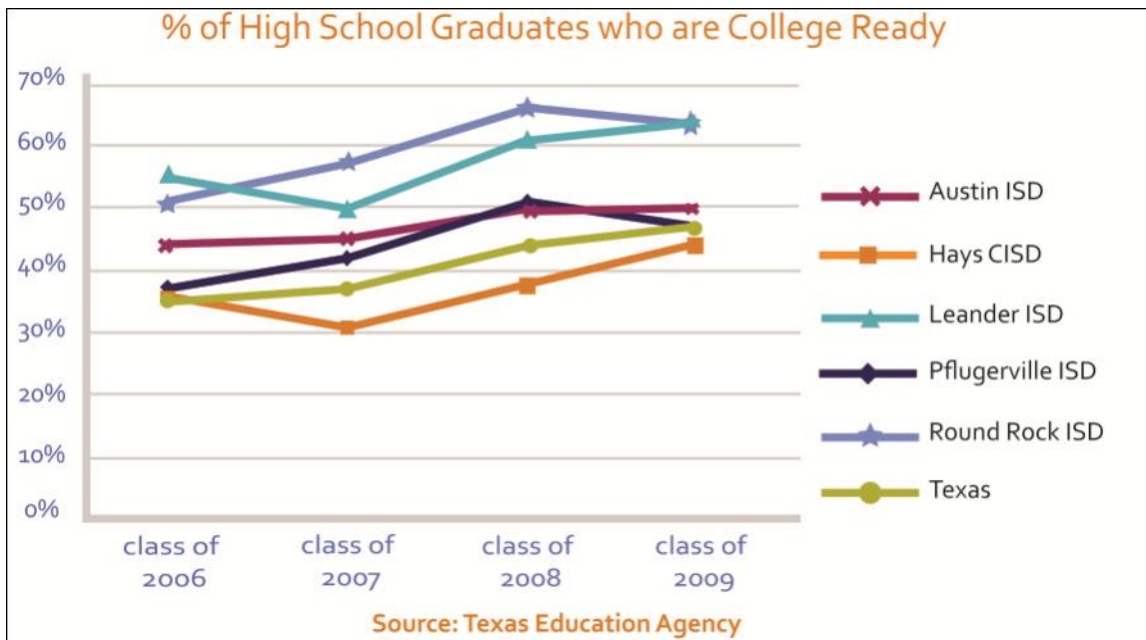


50% of Austin ISD graduates are college ready

More students are graduating from high school college ready, according to a measure developed by the [Texas Education Agency](#). The percent of Austin ISD students who graduate college ready remained static over the past year, but has increased over time and is better than the State rate.

[CAN's analysis](#) shows disparities among student groups within Austin ISD. Only 25% of African American students and 35% of Hispanic students who graduated from AISD in 2009 were college ready. Thirty percent of economically disadvantaged students graduated ready for college success.

The [2010 State of the Workforce](#) report for the Austin-Round Rock MSA notes that college readiness is critical for students as the fastest-growing, highest-paying jobs in Central Texas require some post-secondary education.



7% of Travis County workers are unemployed

The local unemployment rate has shown recent improvement and is significantly lower than both the state and the nation. The sharp increase in unemployment rates that was experienced locally and across the U.S. from 2008 through 2009 has begun to level off and improve. There is concern, however, that state and federal budget cuts will increase the local unemployment rate as teachers and government employees lose their jobs.

[Workforce Solutions Capital Area](#) reports that the overwhelming majority of people receiving unemployment benefits have no post secondary degree. Workers with an associate's degree or more fared better during the recent economic downturn. They make up 45% of the local workforce, but only 15% of those receiving unemployment benefits.



We achieve our full potential.

SOME LOCAL EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THESE INDICATORS

- [United Way Capital Area's Success by 6 program](#) aims to ensure that by the time children enter their first year of school they are prepared to become healthy, happy, and smart students. The program's "[Child Well-Being Report Card](#)" is an annual report of child well-being in Austin and Travis County.
- The [Austin Independent School District's Strategic Plan 2010-2015](#) includes goals related to the graduation rate and college readiness.
- The [E3 Alliance's Blueprint for Educational Change](#) seeks to improve educational outcomes across the Central Texas region from pre-k through college with a collaborative process that engages parents, students, school personnel and members of the larger community.
- The [Ready By 21 Coalition in Austin/Travis County](#) has developed a detailed dashboard of outcomes and indicators for children and youth which includes the educational indicators in this report as well as a child and youth perspective on many of the health and other social indicators in this report.
- The [Truancy Plus Working Group](#) of Austin ISD, the City of Austin, and Travis County is identifying ways to improve school attendance and to reduce truancy, important precursors to successful graduation.
- The Austin Chamber's [Plan for 2015](#) initiative engages school districts and colleges and universities in ensuring success in high school and college. Economic development initiatives strive to attract, retain and grow businesses.
- [Austin Community College](#) is the primary trainer and re-trainer of the local workforce. The College Readiness Initiative at ACC includes partnerships with local high schools.
- The [Literacy Coalition of Central Texas](#) is dedicated to supporting and expanding literacy services so that businesses can hire skilled labor, people can work, and families can thrive.
- [Workforce Solutions—Capital Area](#) coordinates local workforce development efforts and is currently developing a collaborative initiative called "Pathway to Prosperity."

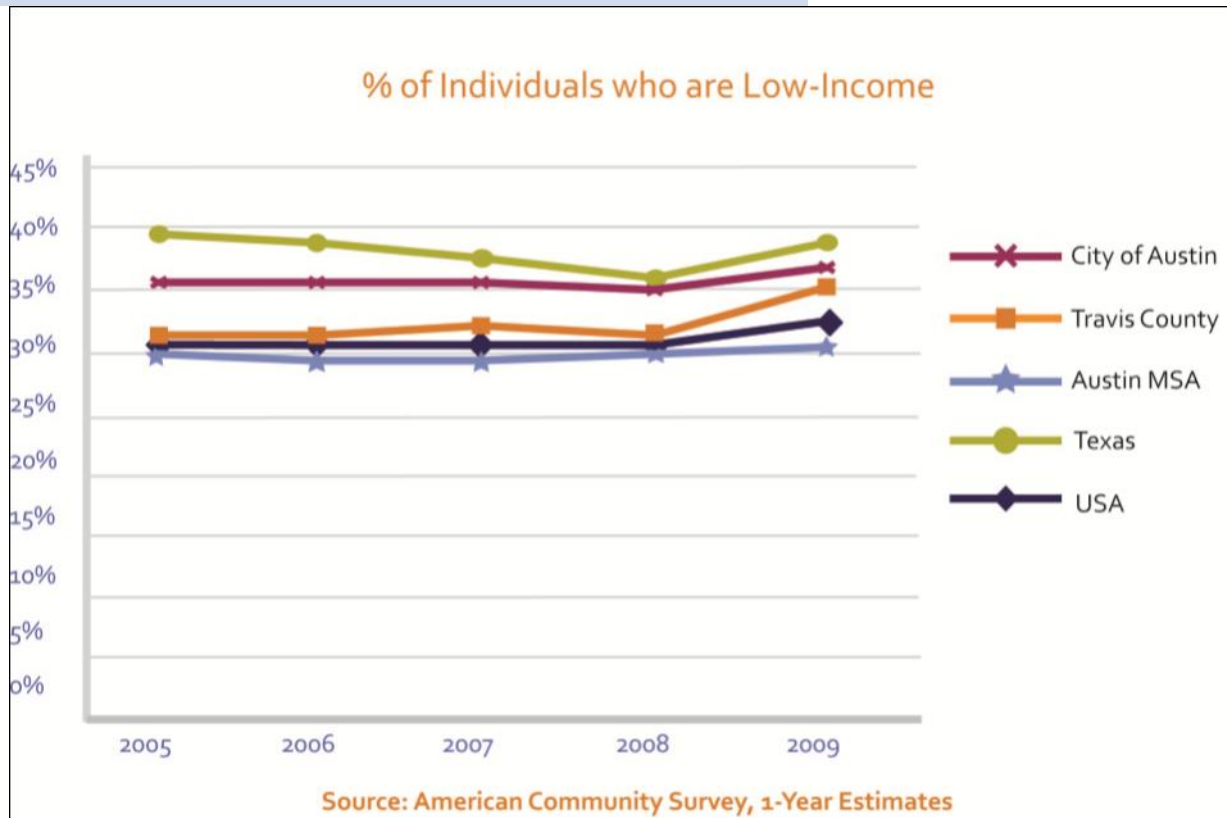
OUR BASIC NEEDS ARE MET

35% of Travis County residents are low-income

The percent of people in Travis County who are low-income increased from 32% in 2008 to 35% in 2009. The [Urban Institute](#) defines people as low-income when they earn less than 200% of the Federal Poverty Level, or less than \$44,000 annually for a family of four. Over 350,000 people in Travis County have fallen below this income level that is barely sufficient to make ends meet given the local cost of living. Most low-income families have at least one adult who works full-time in a job or jobs that do not provide benefits.

The [Urban Institute](#) explains that low-income families may experience hardships related to food, housing and healthcare. [CAN's analysis](#) of the indicators in 2010 found that people who are low-income are less likely to be kindergarten ready, less likely to be college-ready when they graduate from high school, more likely to smoke, more likely to be obese, less likely to have health insurance, more likely to report poor mental health days, and less likely to find housing that they can afford.

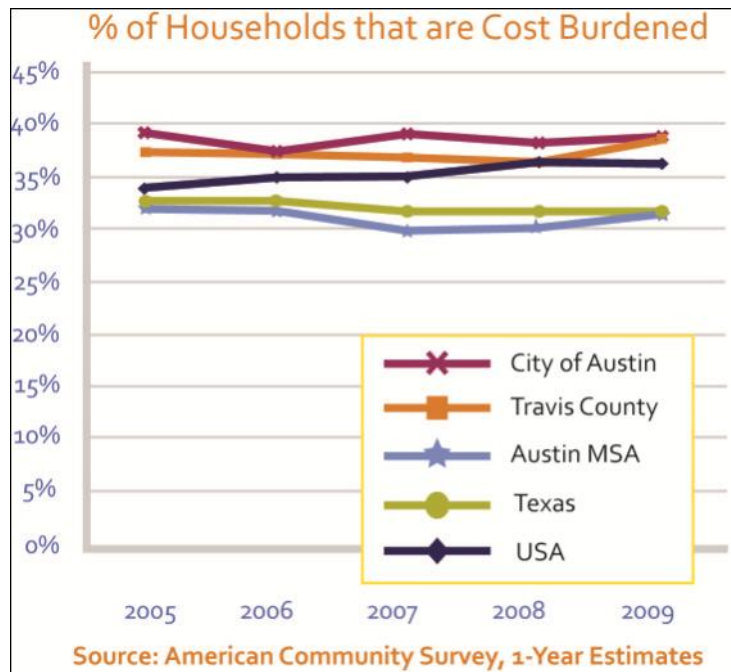
Promoting equity through expansion of opportunities for people to enhance their skills and income while ensuring the cost of living is affordable will, in the long run, boost economic prosperity for all.



38% of Travis County households are housing cost burdened

The percent of households in Travis County who paid too much of their total income on housing increased from 2008 to 2009. The [U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development](#) considers households to be cost burdened if they pay 30% or more of their income on housing costs and utilities. Austin and Travis County have higher rates of households that are cost burdened than the five-county metro area, the state, and the nation.

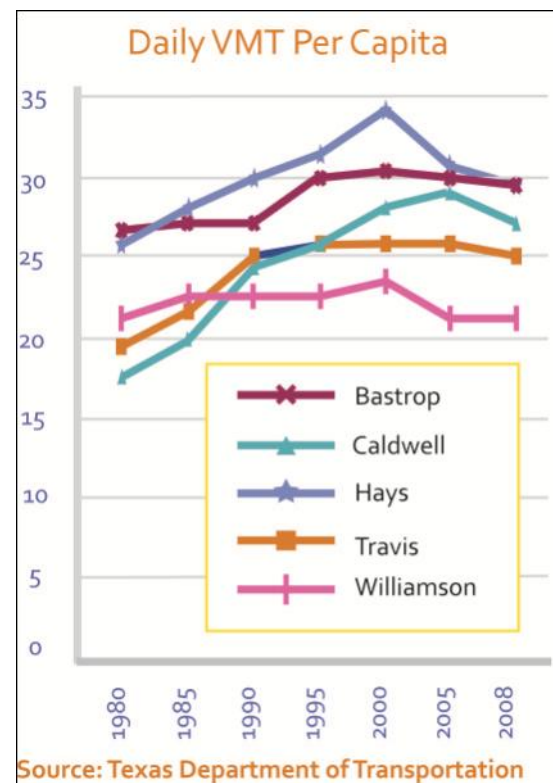
According to the report [Building and Retaining an Affordable Austin](#), creating affordable homes in all parts of town can promote socioeconomic diversity, provide greater access to employment and services, and lead to stable and safe neighborhoods and schools.



25 daily vehicle miles per capita in Travis County

Vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per capita has been trending downward across the five-county region over the past decade. Counties furthest away from high-employment centers have the highest VMT rates per capita. As affordable housing is pushed further away from core employment areas, there is often a trade-off in longer commutes and higher transportation costs. Even though VMT per capita has declined, the regional transportation system remains congested.

VMT per capita often declines during recessions with fewer people driving to work and a reduction in the amount of freight and goods that are transported. Factors that reduce VMT per capita even in a thriving economy include community design that sites affordable housing near employment and services, greater access to alternative modes of transportation, or when freight and goods are transported by rail rather than by truck.



There are 2,087 homeless people in Travis County

Based upon the [Ending Community Homelessness Coalition](#) (ECHO) annual point-in-time count, the number of homeless people in Austin and Travis County decreased in 2010. Each year, ECHO enlists the help of hundreds of volunteers to conduct an annual count of unsheltered people, plus those who are in emergency or transitional shelter. Counting people who are homeless is very difficult. In 2010, postponement of the annual point-in-time count due to bad weather conditions affected volunteer participation and the ability of available volunteers to count each unsheltered person. Those who are doubling up on the couches of friends or relatives are not included in this count.

When individuals and families facing homelessness return to stable housing, they are better able to pursue and maintain employment, pursue educational opportunities, access health and behavioral health services they need, and avoid entry or reentry into the criminal justice system.

Austin/Travis County Annual Point-in-Time Homeless Count

	2007	2008	2009	2010
Sheltered	1,305	1,301	1,345	1,254
Unsheltered	2,146	not available	1,223	833
Total	3,451	not available	2,568	2,087

Source: Homeless Management Information System

Our basic needs are met.

SOME LOCAL EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THESE INDICATORS

- The [Basic Needs Coalition of Central Texas](#) is a coalition of agencies that work to secure basic resources, such as food and housing, for people in need.
- The [Center for Public Policy Priorities](#) (CPPP) advocates at the state level for policies to improve the safety net for people in need.
- [Bank on Central Texas](#) is a community initiative led by [United Way Capital Area](#) and [PeopleFund](#) that includes banks, credit unions, financial service providers, government, private sector, community organizations, and nonprofits to bring more people into the financial mainstream.
- The [City of Austin's Neighborhood Housing and Community Development](#) provides housing, community development, and small business development services to increase opportunities for self-sufficiency.
- [HousingWorks](#) advocates for affordable housing throughout the City. In 2010, they released a collaborative report with the Urban Land Institute, the Real Estate Council of Austin, and the Austin Area Research Organization entitled "[Building and Retaining an Affordable Austin.](#)"
- [Capital Metro](#) provides alternatives to private vehicle travel.
- The [Capital Area Regional Transit Coordination Committee \(RTCC\)](#), an issue area group of CAN, promotes full mobility and access to community services for all people.
- The [Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization \(CAMPO\)](#) is working to improve this indicator through their new 2035 plan that will fund transportation to support high density "activity centers" connected by public transit.
- The [Ending Community Homelessness Coalition \(ECHO\)](#) identifies specific strategies and oversees ongoing planning efforts and implementation of the plan to end chronic homelessness in Austin and Travis County.

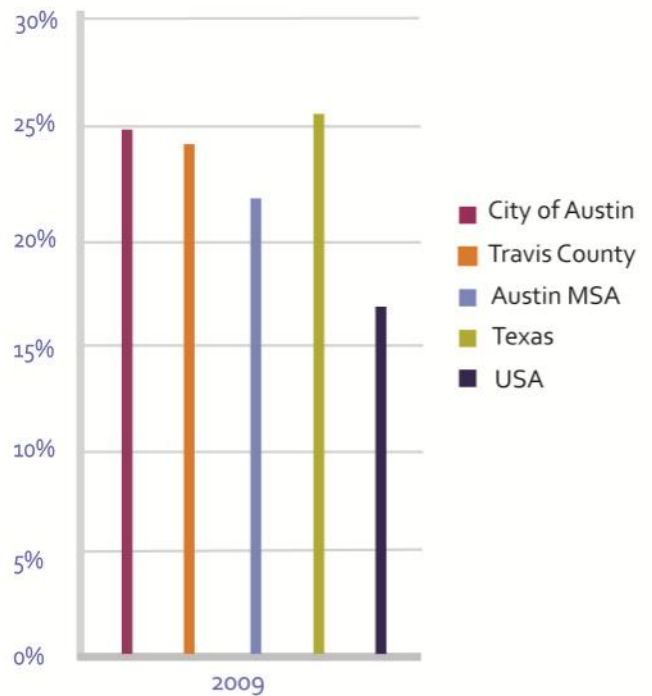
WE ARE HEALTHY

24% of those under age 65 in Travis County have no health insurance

Texas had the highest rate of people with no health insurance in the nation in 2009, according to the [U.S. Census Bureau](#). The percent who are uninsured in Travis County is almost as high. Texas provides very few public insurance benefits for adults. Even though there are more public insurance options for children, Texas children are less likely than children in other states to have health insurance. Private insurance has historically been provided through employers, but according to a report by the [Center for Public Policy Priorities](#) (CPPP), only 48% of Texas workers had employer-sponsored health insurance in 2009, compared to 57% in 2000. The CPPP estimates that three-fourths of all uninsured Texans are citizens.

People with health insurance have greater access to medical care and have better health outcomes than those with no health insurance. Better health outcomes help improve productivity, quality of life, and drive down health care costs and insurance premiums.

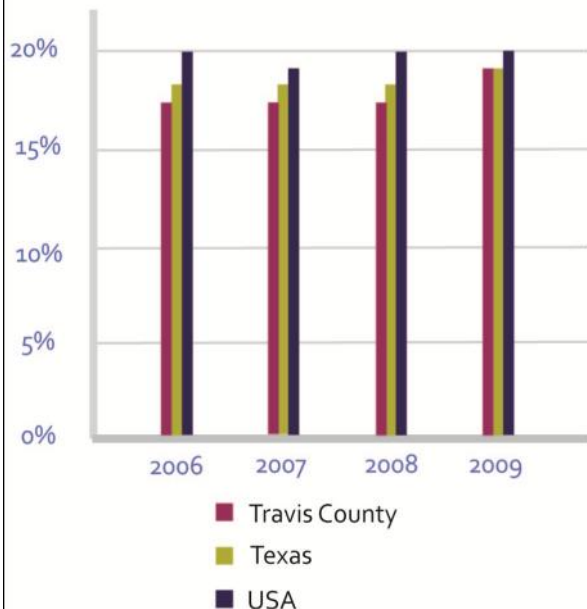
% Under Age 65 with No Health Insurance



Source: American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimates

19% of adults in Travis County report poor mental health

% Reporting Five or More Poor Mental Health Days within the Past Month



Source: Texas BRFSS

In 2009, there was an increase in the percent of people in Travis County who reported five or more poor mental health days within the past month. Days that include stress, depression and problems with emotions are considered "poor mental health days" in the [Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System](#) (BRFSS) survey, conducted by states in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control. Three year aggregates were used for the state and local data to compensate for the small sample size of this survey.

A more [in-depth analysis](#) reveals that people earning less than \$25,000 per year are three times more likely to report poor mental health than people earning \$50,000 or more. According to the [World Health Organization](#), poor mental health impacts employee performance, rates of illness, absenteeism, accidents, staff turnover and is a leading cause of disability.

Good mental health promotes learning, creativity, productivity, resiliency, and can help prevent the onset or relapse of physical or mental illness.

Austin area is in attainment of EPA air quality standards

Even though the Austin area is in attainment of current Environmental Protection Agency standards for ozone, the area will most likely not be in attainment of the proposed new standard. Ozone levels have been steadily decreasing in the Austin area over the past decade, according to the [Capital Area Council of Governments](#), but EPA standards have been growing more stringent during this same time period.

Not all ozone pollution is locally generated. In late August through September, CAPCOG estimates that up to 80% of Austin's ozone pollution blows in from power plants and industry in areas both inside and outside of Texas.

Maintaining good air quality will help our community sustain an overall quality of life, attract companies with jobs, attract innovators and talent to live and work in our community, and reduce respiratory and other illnesses that can affect productivity, school absences, and healthcare costs.



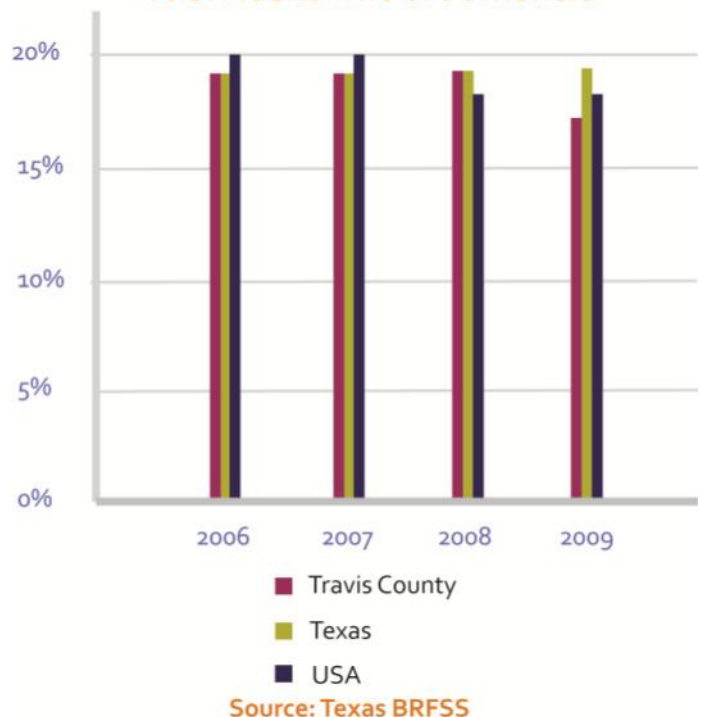
17% of adults in Travis County are smokers

There was a slight decline in the percent of people in Travis County who report being smokers according to the [Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System](#) survey. In Texas, the smoking rate has remained stable at 19%. Three year data aggregates were used for the state and local data to compensate for the small sample size of this survey.

Before the negative effects of smoking were generally known, smoking was most prevalent among wealthier people. Now, those who earn less than \$25,000 a year are more than twice as likely to smoke than those earning \$50,000 a year or more. [CAN's analysis](#) of smoking data shows higher rates of smoking among the young and among men.

In the U.S., smoking-related illnesses cause more deaths annually than alcohol, car accidents, illegal drugs, suicide, homicide, driving while intoxicated and fire combined, according to the [University of Texas Tobacco Research and Evaluation Team](#).

% of Adults who are Smokers

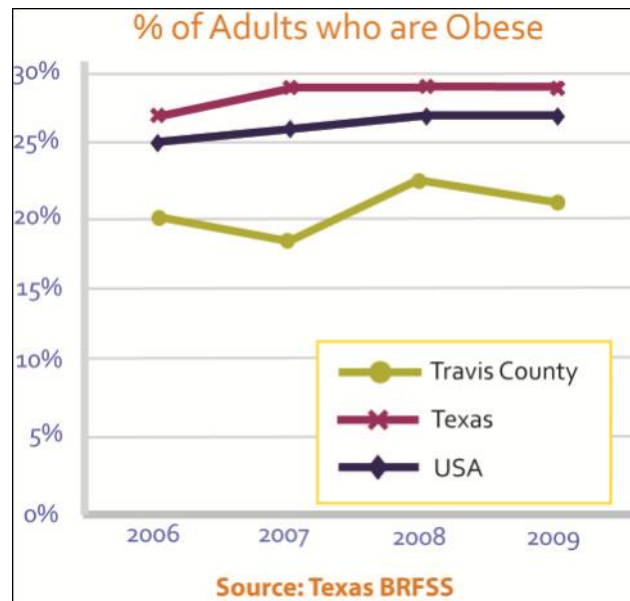


21% of adults in Travis County are obese

About one in five people in Travis County are obese. The state and national rates are even higher. Three year aggregates were used for the state and local data to compensate for the small sample size of this survey.

Adults who are obese or overweight are at a higher risk for coronary disease, type 2 diabetes, and cancer according to the [National Institutes of Health](#). Obesity rates are disproportionately high among low-income adults and among youths who are males, African Americans, and/or Hispanics.

In the report [Gaining Costs, Losing Time: The Obesity Crisis in Texas](#), the State Comptroller estimates that obesity cost Texas business \$9.5 billion in 2009. Reducing obesity helps promote better health and mental health outcomes, reduce the high cost of treating obesity-related illnesses, and reduce health insurance premiums.



We are healthy.

SOME LOCAL EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THESE INDICATORS

- [Integrated Care Coalition \(ICC\)](#) members screen individuals for public health insurance programs and assist families with the application process. ICC is developing technology that would allow agencies, with client permission, to share client documents. [Catholic Charities of Central Texas](#), through a grant from the [Texas Health and Human Service Commission](#), also provides community outreach and assistance for State benefits including public health insurance programs.
- [Central Health](#) implements the Medical Assistance Program (MAP) which provides access to healthcare services for low-income Travis County residents who are not eligible for other public or private insurance programs.
- [Austin Travis County Integral Care](#)'s mission is to improve the lives of people affected by behavioral health and developmental and/or intellectual challenges.
- The [Mayor's Mental Health Task Force](#), the [Behavioral Health Planning Partnership](#), and the [Child and Youth Mental Health Planning Partnership](#) are local collaborations that help coordinate behavioral health planning needs.
- The [Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services Department](#) received a \$7.5 million "Communities Putting Prevention to Work" grant in 2010 from the [Centers for Disease Control](#) to reduce smoking in our community. The Department also received a \$300,000 planning grant from the State Health Department to encourage people to make healthy food choices and to make physical activity a regular part of their day.
- The [Austin Mayor's Fitness Council](#) promotes physical activity, nutrition, healthy weight, and tobacco-free living.
- The [Austin Tobacco Prevention and Control Coalition](#) works to promote smoking cessation.
- [Children's Optimal Health \(COH\)](#) is a collective leadership initiative to ensure that every child in Central Texas becomes a healthy, productive adult engaged in his or her community.
- The [Clean Air Coalition](#) is a collaboration of local governments in our five-county region working together to develop plans to comply with EPA air quality guidelines.

WE ARE SAFE, JUST AND ENGAGED

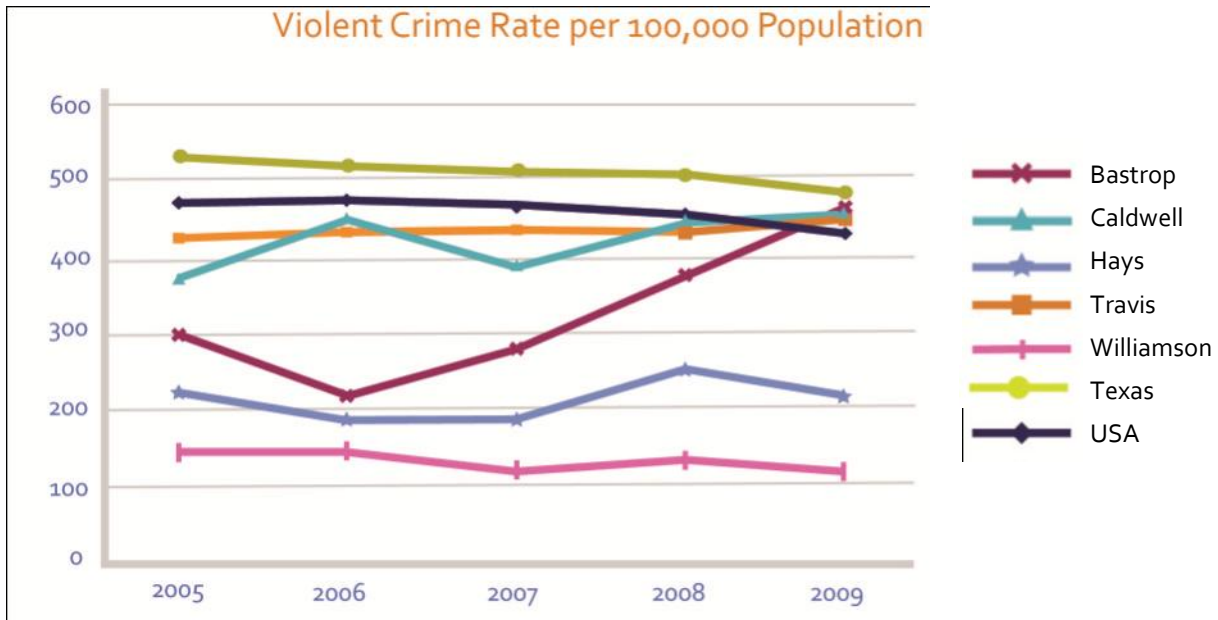
Violent crime occurred at a rate of 456 per 100,000 population in Travis County

The violent crime rate for Travis County increased from 2008 to 2009, due largely to increases in crime in the urban areas of the county. Nation-wide, more densely populated areas typically experience higher rates of crime.

[CAN's analysis](#) of victims of violent crime finds that some populations are more vulnerable than others. These include children, the elderly, adults with disabilities, immigrants and low-income populations.

The [National Institute of Justice](#) reports that victims of violent crime face tangible costs of over \$17 billion annually because of medical and mental health care expenses, lost productivity, and property damage. If the intangible costs of reduced quality of life, pain, and suffering are added to this, the total rises to \$330 billion.

Safe communities where people can live free from abuse, neglect, crime, violence and injustice promote individual and overall quality of life and greater economic prosperity.



Source: Capital Area Council of Governments and Federal Bureau of Investigation

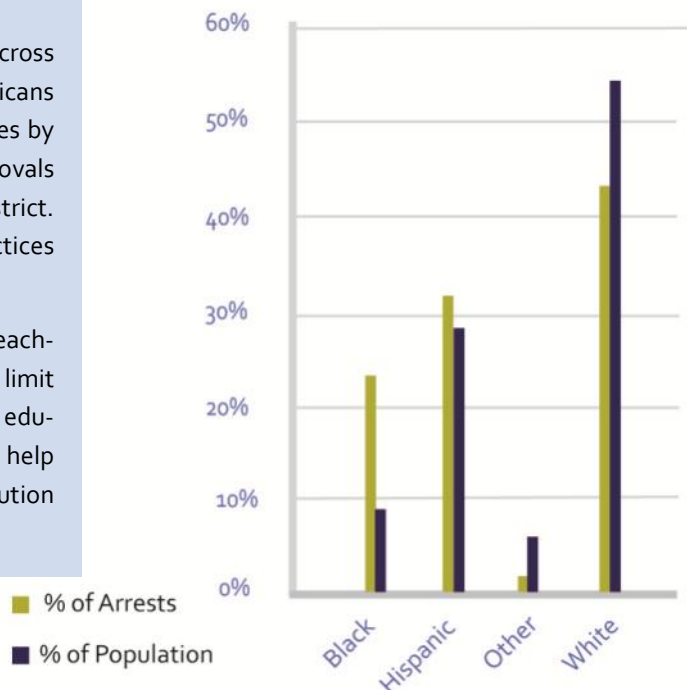
Arrests are not proportionate for all races

When the demographics of those who are arrested in Travis County are compared with the demographics of the adult population as a whole, racial disparities become apparent. For example, 24% of all people booked into the Travis County jail in 2009 were African American, yet African Americans comprised only 9% of the total adult population. Hispanics were also arrested at a disproportionately high rate, while people who are White or of other ethnic backgrounds were arrested at a disproportionately low rate.

The causes of disproportionality are complex and cross many social systems. For instance, African Americans experience higher rates of removals from their homes by Child Protective Services and higher rates of removals from classrooms at Austin Independent School District. Both entities are working to develop systemic practices that can help address these inequities.

The consequences of disproportionality can be far reaching. Disproportionate arrests and convictions can limit success in school, work and life. Equitable access to educational, employment and housing opportunities can help promote the quality of life, productivity, and contribution of individuals to our community.

Arrest Demographics Compared to Total Adult Population in Travis County, 2009



Source: Travis County Criminal Justice Planning Department and the American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimate

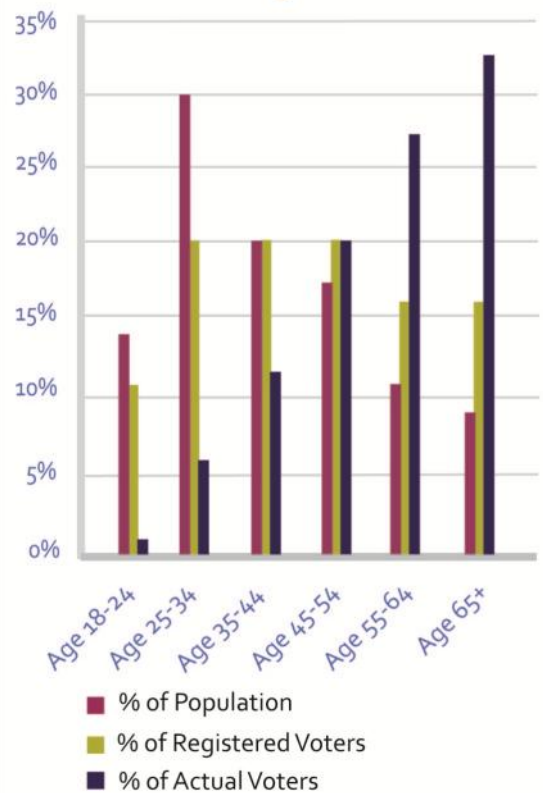


Voter turnout is disproportionate

Young people are much less likely to participate in elections than older people. Experts speculate this may be due to distrust of the government or mobile lifestyles in which youth do not feel connected to the communities in which they live. African Americans and Hispanics also tend to be under-represented in the voting booths. The type of election impacts who is likely to vote. National elections generally have higher voter turnout than local elections. The 2009 vote included the election of a Governor and state and local representatives.

The [Nonprofit Voter Engagement Network](#) explains that who votes and who does not vote impacts who elected officials pay attention to, the course of public policy and the quality of democracy. It also impacts civic participation. People who vote are more likely to volunteer, contact their elected officials and participate in public life.

Travis County Demographics Compared to Demographics of Voters in the 2009 General Election



Source: Opinion Analysts and American Community Survey

We are safe, just and engaged.

SOME LOCAL EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THESE INDICATORS

- Coalitions such as the [Austin/Travis Family Violence Task Force](#), the [Start Strong Coalition](#), the [Austin/Travis County Reentry Roundtable](#), and [Central Texas Afterschool Network](#), are helping to monitor and create programs and practices that impact violent crime.
- Special problem-solving courts/dockets have been created locally to address issues such as substance abuse, mental health, domestic violence, veterans, repeat offenders, etc.
- [Austin Regional Intelligence Center](#) provides a strategy that will allow local law enforcement entities to share information across jurisdictional lines.
- The [Austin Disproportionality Advisory Committee](#) was created to assist the Texas Department of Family Protective Services with strategies to address the disproportionate removal of children from their homes.
- Area school districts have implemented efforts to help reduce disproportionate school disciplinary referrals.
- The [Travis County Elections Division](#) works to increase voter turnout by offering programs such as early voting which provides voters with flexibility in voting times and locations.
- The [Annette Strauss Institute for Civic Engagement](#) at the University of Texas works with young adults through programs such as "[University of Texas Votes](#)," a non-partisan effort to increase voting among college-age youth.
- The [East Austin Voter Mobilization Initiative](#) targets get-out-the-vote efforts in East Austin precincts with low voter turnout and large African American and Hispanic populations.

WHAT WE LEARNED

One-third of all people in Travis County and one-half of all children in the City of Austin are low-income, according to the latest U.S. Census data. We learned that when people are low-income, or earn less than 200% of the Federal Poverty Level, they fare poorly on many of the Community Dashboard indicators.

Six out of ten
low-income children
are not kindergarten ready.



Seven out of ten
low-income students
do not graduate college ready.



Three out of ten
low-income adults
smoke cigarettes.



Four out of ten
low-income adults
are obese.



Four out of ten
low-income people under the age of 65
have no health insurance.



Five out of ten
low-income people report
poor mental health.



our futures are linked together

Our ability to move the indicators on the Community Dashboard in the right direction will depend to a great extent on our ability to expand opportunity for people who are low-income or at-risk of becoming low-income. Promoting equity through expansion of opportunities for people to enhance their skills and income while ensuring the local cost of living is affordable will, in the long run, boost economic prosperity for all.

WHAT WE ARE DOING ABOUT IT



taking action together

Two key findings of CAN's analysis of the Community Dashboard indicators are:

1. Over the past decade, the low-income population grew at twice the rate of the total population.
2. People who are low-income fare worse on most indicators.

The CAN Board of Directors has committed to work together in 2011 to:

- develop collaborative solutions to help low-income people find jobs that pay a living wage,
- continue efforts to ensure people are connected to community resources to help them become stable,
- promote coordination of housing planning efforts across the housing continuum, and
- take a closer look at shifting demographics and trends and the impact on our community.

For more information on the CAN 2011 Work Plan, visit the CAN Initiatives page at www.caction.org.



www.caction.org
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