

United Way of Greater Mercer County

Needs Assessment Summary

April 2006

United Way of
Greater Mercer County



Community Needs Assessment Process

- Phase 1: Analysis of key secondary documents and government data relating to community needs in Greater Mercer
- Phase 2: Quantitative Needs Assessment Survey of 343 area residents
- Phase 3: Community focus groups held in Trenton, Hightstown, Lawrenceville,, and Hamilton
- Phase 4: Interviews with Key Informants and Experts on issues relating to health care, self-sufficiency, seniors, people with disabilities, and children.

Key Demographic Factors-Mercer County

- Population growth from 2000 to 2005 +4.4%
- Population over age of 65---12.1% of total in 2005 (down from 12.6% in 2000)
- Population growth primarily among Latino and Asian American communities
- Latinos represent 11.4% of Mercer Co pop in 2005 (up from 9.7% in 2000)
- Asians represent 7.1% of Mercer Co. pop in 2005 (up from 4.9% in 2000)
- Persons below poverty line---8.1% in 2003
- Language other than English spoken at home ---20.2%
- Median household income 2003 \$55,555 (vs. \$56,356 in NJ)
- High school graduates 81.8%
- Home ownership 2000 67.0%
- Number of persons with a disability 2000 55,055

Source US Census Bureau

Secondary Research Findings-Helping Children Succeed

- African American and Latino communities account for a disproportionate number of children in poverty--
-Whites are 61% of county population but 25% of children in poverty
- Problem areas identified include poverty, gang violence, quality child care, substance abuse, support for children with developmental disabilities, mental health, fetal alcohol syndrome, before and after school programs, child abuse prevention, and narrowing the racial achievement gap.

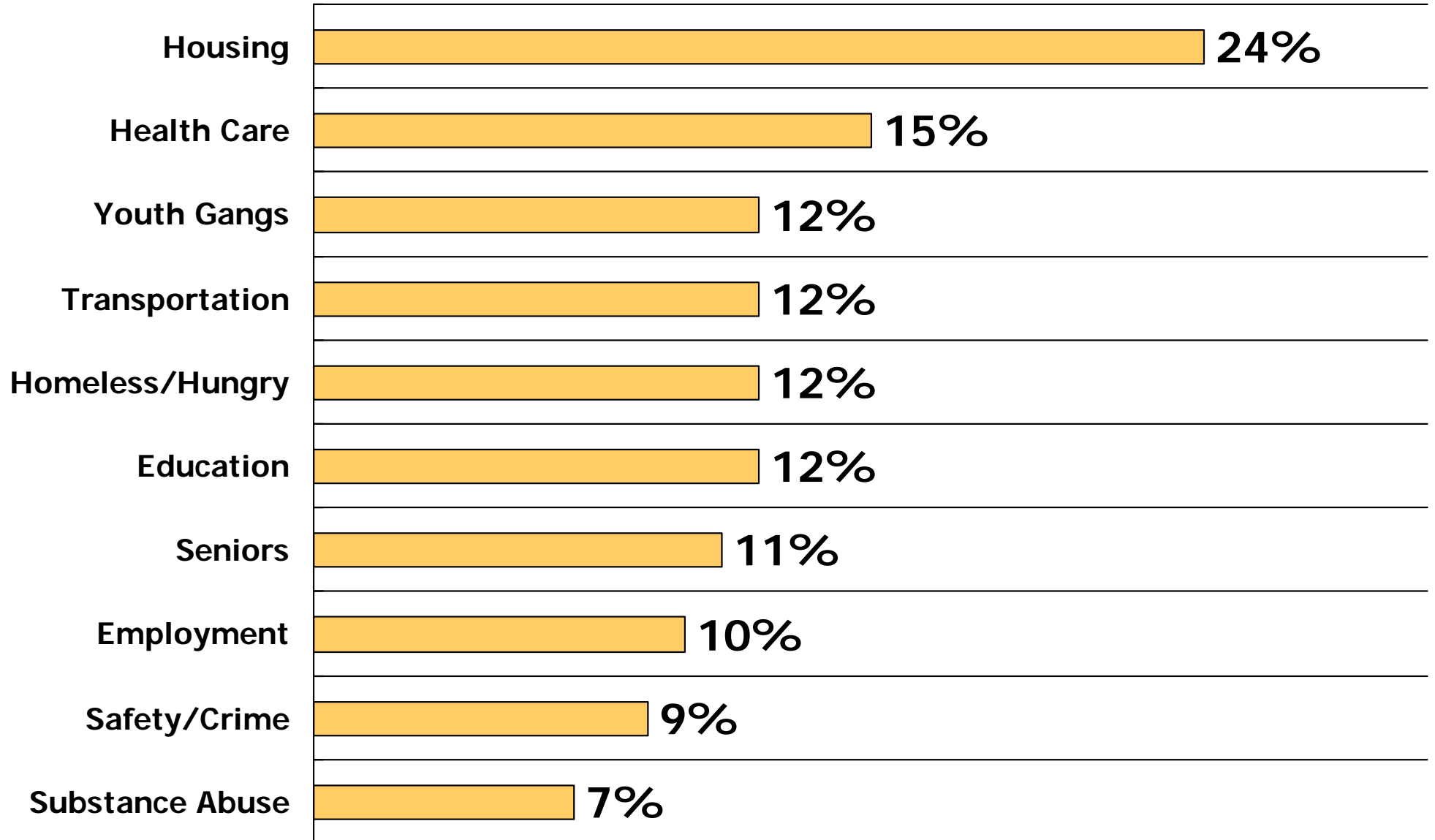
Secondary Research Findings- Fostering Self-Sufficiency

- High cost of housing---31% of household budget
- Problem areas include affordable housing, access to and cost of health care, inadequate child care, illiteracy, need for after school and summer school programs, transportation, and the needs of people who have limited language skills in English

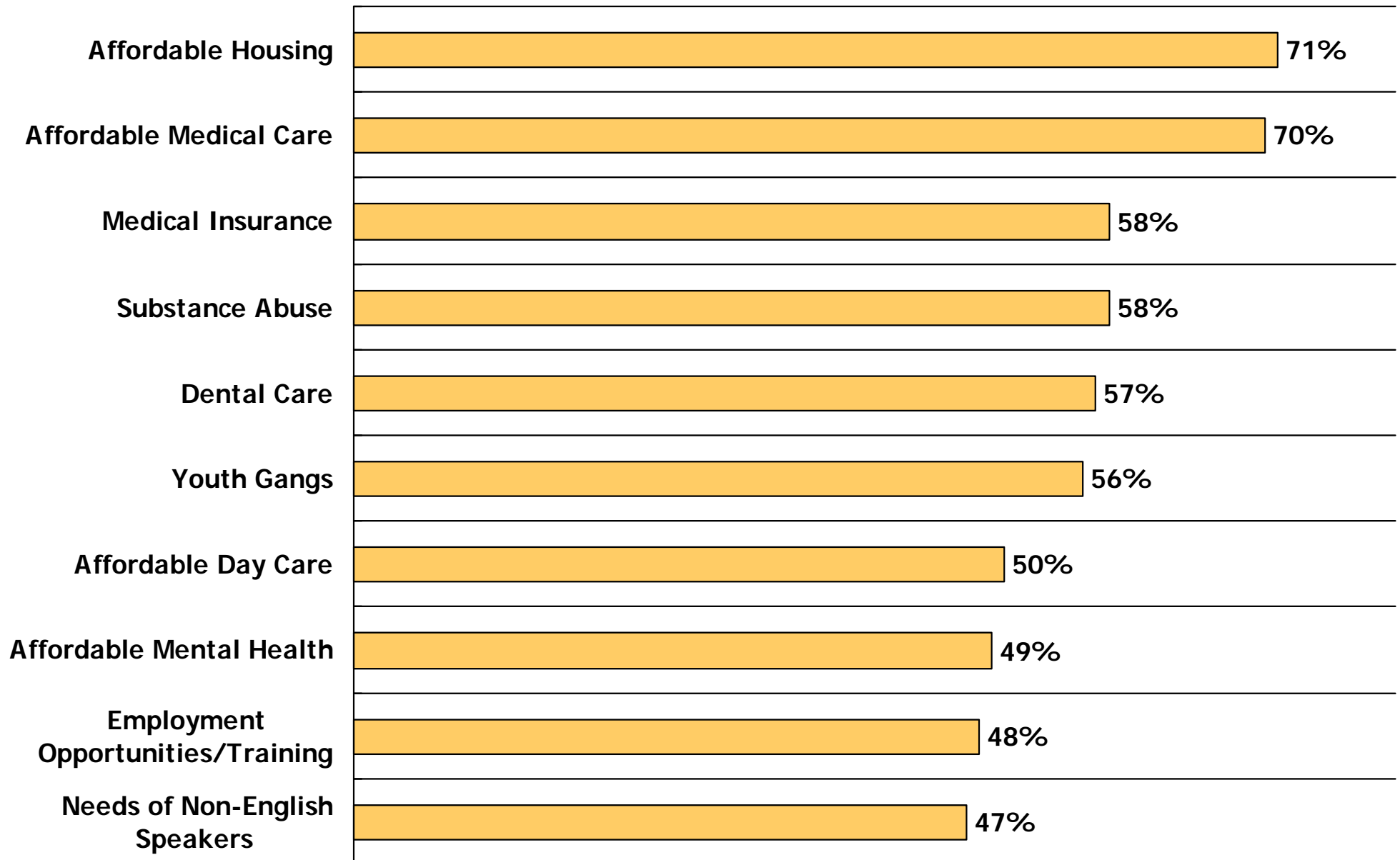
Secondary Research Findings-Caring for Seniors and People with Disabilities

- Fast growth in population over age 85-increased by +41% since 1990
- 58% of adults over 65 have incomes below \$25,000
- 13% of older adults below poverty line
- 6% of seniors have sole responsibility for raising grandchildren
- Problem areas for seniors include transportation to essential services, access to medical care, social and recreational opportunities, housing accessibility issues, respite care for caregivers, case management services, and affordable legal services.
- Problem areas for people with disabilities include housing accessibility, job training, day programming, medical care, case management, and transportation

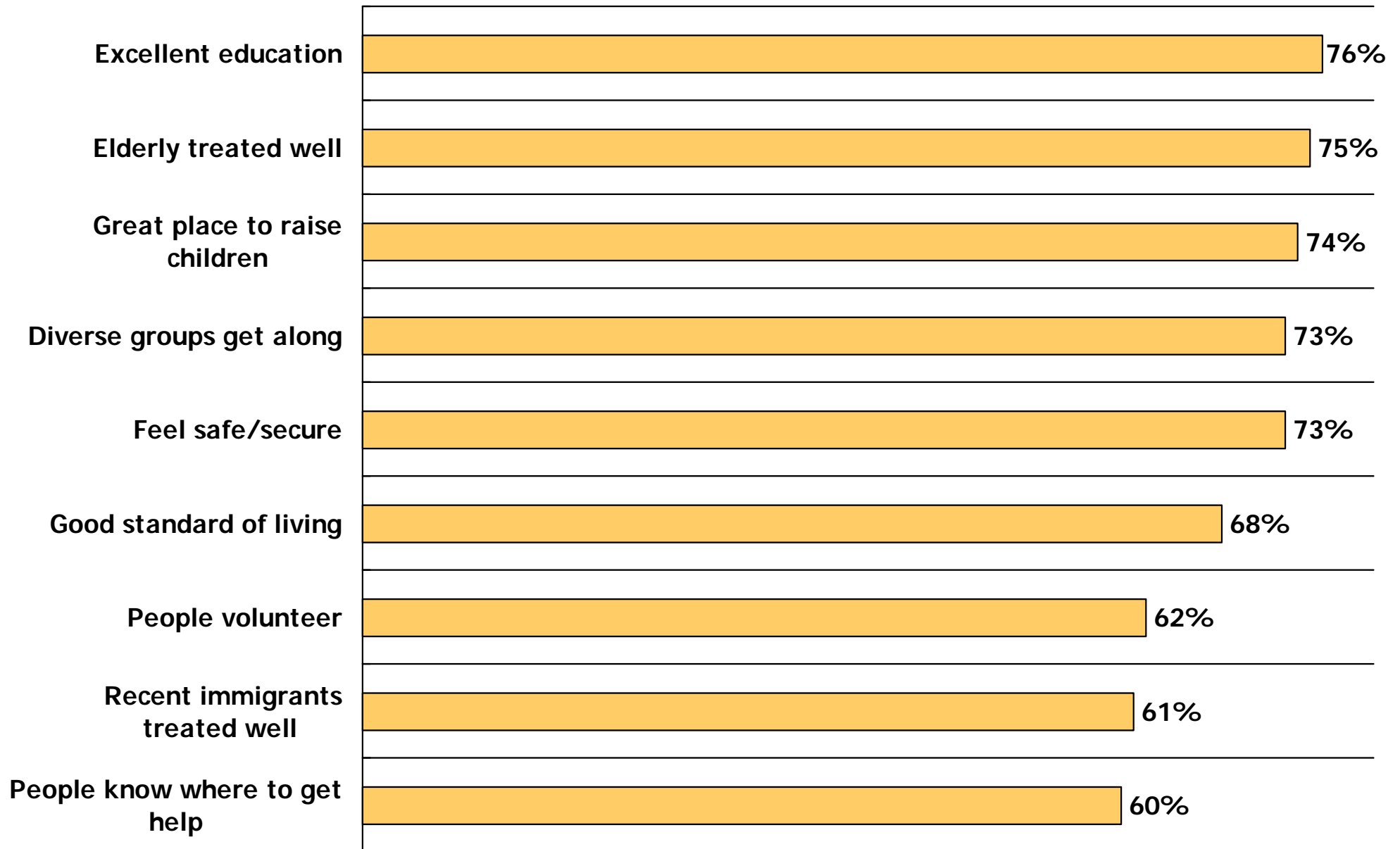
Community Survey-Top of Mind Priorities for Community Improvement (N=173)



Community Survey-Ratings of Issues as a Major Problem (N=308)



Community Survey- Attitudinal Ratings(N=303)



Focus Group Findings-Trenton

- Impact of gang violence on community
- Lack of economic opportunity
- Lack of affordable housing
- Lack of affordable and accessible healthcare
- Need for parental involvement and mentoring
- More prevention services needed
- Lack of recreational programs for youth
- Need for UW to play a more major role in coordinating services between various community groups and not-for-profits

Focus Group Findings-Hightstown

- Need for more child care
- Need for before/after/holiday season school programs
- Transportation to jobs/services
- Under/unemployment
- Need for tutoring/mentoring
- Special difficulties with treatment of recent immigrants
- Need for UW to coordinate and strengthen available services

Focus Group Findings-Lawrence

- Improved transportation
- Prescription assistance
- Parenting skills and stronger families
- Improving the environment
- Focus on people's basic needs and focus on Trenton
- Gang violence
- Stronger role for UW as convener, catalyst, and coordinator

Focus Group Findings-Hamilton

- Gang violence problems
- More pre and after school activities
- Summer programs needed
- Transportation for seniors
- Teen activities needed
- More volunteering and leadership needed in community
- UW can play a real leadership role

Key Informant Focus Groups-Key Findings

- **Seniors:**
- Need for transportation especially at off-hours
- Aging in place with dignity
- Need for case management
- Mental health issues
- Respite care for caregivers
- Affordable legal services
- **People with Disabilities:**
- Need for transportation
- Affordable and supported housing
- Respite care
- Job skills training
- Affordable dental and mental health services
- Recreational programs

Key Informant Focus Groups-Key Findings

- **Accessing Health Care:**
- Transportation to appointments
- Fragmented services
- Obesity in adults and children
- Diabetes
- Inadequate screening for disease
- **Helping Children Succeed:**
- Quality childcare
- After-school summer programs
- Pregnancy prevention/prenatal care
- Tutoring /mentoring
- Substance abuse in teens
- Gang violence
- UW in coordination role

Key Informant Focus Groups-Key Findings

- **Fostering Self-Sufficiency:**
- Affordable housing/homelessness
- Job training
- Literacy
- Domestic violence
- Needs of recent immigrants
- Financial literacy
- Substance abuse
- Need for direct financial assistance

Data Inputs-Abbreviated

- Secondary research-SR
- Needs assessment survey-NS
- Community focus groups-FG
- Key Informants-KI

Emerging Needs-Overarching

	SR	NS	FG	KI
Growth in gang violence		X	X	X
Growth in non-English speaking pop	x	x	x	x
Growing population of older seniors	x			x
Need for UW as key coordinator of services			x	x

Helping Children Succeed

	SR	NS	FG	KI
After school/summer programs			X	X
Quality child care	X	X	X	X
Substance abuse	X	X		X
Parental involvement/mentoring			X	X

Helping Children Succeed

	SR	NS	FG	KI
Youth gangs		X	X	X
Recreational programs			x	x
Tutoring			X	x

Caring for Seniors/People with Disabilities

	SR	NS	FG	KI
Transportation	X	X	X	X
Access to medical/dental care	X	X	X	X
Affordable housing	X	X	X	X
Respite care for caregivers	X			X

Caring for Seniors/People with Disabilities

	SR	NS	FG	KI
Case management	X			X
Recreational programs	X		X	X
Affordable legal services	X			X
Job skills training	X	X	X	X

Fostering Self-Sufficiency

	SR	NS	FG	KI
Affordable housing	X	X	X	X
Access to medical/dental care	X	X	X	X
Inadequate child care	X	X	X	X
Transportation	X	X	X	X

Fostering Self-Sufficiency

	SR	NS	FG	KI
Needs of recent immigrants	X	X	X	X
After school/summer recreational programs	X		X	X
Affordable legal services/financial literacy	X			X