

Executive Summary GECAC Needs Statement 2016

The planning department of the Greater Erie Community Action Committee (GECAC) assesses the community needs programming through a comprehensive approach that includes data from the U.S. Census Bureau; the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE); the Erie County Department of Human Services; other federal, state and local governmental sources; local faith-based and community-based organizations. and Internet statistical retrieval. In this report the source of any data presented is listed, along with an Internet address (when available), so that readers can verify statistics and get the most up-to-date information. This report will attempt to develop a statistical picture of Erie County and the needs of eligible children and families. Communities are dynamic systems that do not lend themselves easily to snapshot representations; therefore trends will be highlighted when they exist.

Aging

The Area Agency on Aging (AAA) for Erie County, Pennsylvania, 2012-2016 plan builds upon **the experience and knowledge of** the Greater Erie Community Action Committee (GECAC), the designated AAA for Erie County since 1974. The Plan summarizes **the areas of need expressed by older Pennsylvanians, their families, advocates, and representatives of agencies serving older people and people with disabilities in the Erie area.** This plan was established with public input from consumers, professionals and government sources. It takes a community approach to providing services to seniors to include not only those provided by the AAA, but also supportive and collaborative local community-based organizations including private service providers, faith-based entities, paid and unpaid caregivers, non-profits, public funded supports, and individuals willing to volunteer. The plan for the Area Agency on Aging focuses on meeting the needs of those with the greatest economic and social need from the more than 55,000 older persons in Erie County.

Poverty is very much a reality for young and old in Erie County. Over 43,438 resident of Erie County or 16% are below poverty standard. Only 8.6% of those over age 65 are below the poverty standard. In the City off Erie the Overall poverty rate is 25.1% and 14.3% for those over age 65. (B17001 ACS 2014). 10.9% of persons age 65 live alone (S2501Occupancy Characteristics ACS 2014) In the City 96% of the over 65 population is female and the 76% in the County. 18.9% of those over 65 pay more than 30% of their income for housing. (ACS 2014)

The shrinking center city has a higher concentration of poor and senior citizens. This presents a challenge for the caregivers and the organizations that provide supportive services. A thriving community must include independence, dignity and health and well-being for our older residents. Nearly 25% of seniors are still working in order to afford medicine, rent and food. Therefore, these seniors, mostly women, require training and placement.

Older adults require protection from abuse and advocates that will assist them in obtaining services and benefits. To keep seniors living independently in their own homes, they require recreational and social activities as well as nutritional meals, safety checks and resources for caregivers.

Child Development

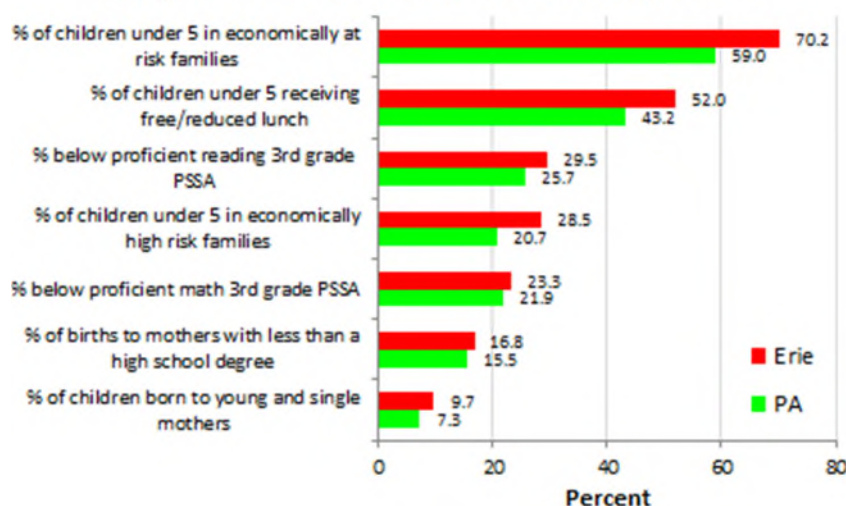
The numbers of impoverished women in Erie County between the ages of 16 and 24 rose nearly 34 percent when comparing 2005 to 2009 to 2010 to 2014 US Census Data. That percentage was much higher in the City of Erie, with 2238 women age 18 to 24 living in poverty in 2010 to 2014 up 57.4 percent from 1427 women in 2005 to 2009

Many parents are forced to work two or more jobs often at odd hours to make enough money to just get by on. This time crunch leads to stress so the parents have less time and patients to deal with their children so there is a need for more child care facilities.

The lack of time to oneself leads to less involvement with the children and their needs. As little as 40% of children in Erie County are coming to Kindergarten ready to learn (Erie Together Superintendents Study) this has long term implications for these children. Schools teach reading in grades K through 3. After grade three children read to learn. If a child is not reading on grade level by grade 3 they stand a very real chance of falling behind their peers. This has real implication for drop out statistics and low on time graduation rates.

In Erie County, the statistical trends suggest that all of the seven most commonly measured risk factors are a concern for our young children. For the 2012-13 school year, every one of the seven factors registered higher rates of incidence in Erie County than in the state as a whole. The depth of Erie's challenge is starkly apparent when the county's indicators are compared with the data for Bucks and Montgomery counties, in suburban Philadelphia, where the risks for young children are among the lowest in the state.

Early Childhood Education – Risk Factors, 2012-13



The ever increasing violence in Erie and surrounding areas has exposed children to more violence both at home and in the streets as result there are more behavior problems. This speaks to the need for more Mental Health services for our Head Start, Pre-k Counts and Early Head Start children and their families. Teen parents and single parent moms need parenting and over all case management Early Head Start allows GECAC to provide years of continuous service for these families who need the most support.

Education Training and Community Service

41.9% of Erie City housing stock (DP 04 Selected Housing Characteristics 2010-2014) is pre world war II and as such needs more maintenance. Large numbers of these homes have little or no insulation as was the practice in those times. These inner city homes are overwhelmingly occupied by low income residents who have few resources to maintain or update their dwellings. The cost to heat the homes puts a real strain on already tight budgets. GECAC Weatherizes 30 homes per year with 60 to 80 houses on the wait list and at least another 80 available to us at all times. GECAC Utility Assistance and Neighbor for Neighbor help to stabiles these families during the cold winter months.

The pay scale in the Erie Area is depressed as result fewer families can afford to buy a house this leads to more renters. 17,140 renters in the Erie Area or 52.2% (ACS 2009-2013) pay

over 30% of their income on rent. This stress can often send them to GECAC housing for rental assistance. Other causes of eviction include job loss, domestic violence, poor money management, drugs and alcohol. Renters in Erie County make up approximately 33% of the total households. In 2009-2013, the estimated Annual Median Income (AMI) for renters was \$19,635. This is 31.6% of the AMI for all households in the County (\$62,000). (*Out of Reach 2015 – Erie County, PA*)

Each year HUD calculates the Fair Market Rent (FMR) for each MSA. Table 6 shows the FMR for zero to four bedroom apartments in Erie County as calculated by HUD in 2015.

FAIR MARKET RENTS (FMRs) BY NUMBER OF BEDROOMS – 2015					
ERIE COUNTY					
Location	Zero	One	Two	Three	Four
Erie County	\$438	\$534	\$673	\$841	\$1004

Using the two-bedroom apartment as our sample, a worker in Erie County would need to earn \$12.94 per hour at 40-hours per week (\$26,920 annually) in order for their rent to be affordable. A worker earning Pennsylvania's 2015 minimum wage (\$7.25 per hour) would need to work 72 hours per week in order to afford their rent. *Out of Reach 2015* estimates that 55% of renters are unable to afford fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment.

Workforce Development

The Erie Area has over 4100 online job postings and 7400 unemployed people. (Sept 2015. PA Dept of Labor and Industry) this juxtaposition is aided and abutted by the multiple barriers that challenge faced by local workers. These barriers include; a misalignment of employment requirements and applicant qualifications, lack of transportation, lack of child care, inability to pass a drug test, poor or nonexistent soft skills, no or slim computer skills and a lack of supports including proper clothing, and tools.

We need more and more effective case management to help the unemployed to overcome the overwhelming barriers to employment. Our programs target economically disadvantaged adults and youth with little or no work experience, the working poor, at-risk youth, and skilled, highly paid dislocated workers.

9.6% of adults over the age of 25 in Erie County do not have a high school diploma (S1501 ACS 2010-2014). The economic implication of the statistic for both the individual and the local economy are grave. Persons without a High School diploma make substantially less income than those who have a higher level of education. The skill level of the Erie Area Workforce is perceived to be lower due to the lack of educational achievement of the area's residents. This complicates local economic development efforts. GECAC's Adult Learning Center serves large numbers of adults each year, however funding has been reduced for Adult Education in the recent past straining resources across the county.

Prologue

The Erie Area has recently been home to numerous study groups and civic improvement movements all of which have reached out to the community to provide input to develop community wide plans. Rather than duplicate these efforts Greater Erie Community Action Committee has chosen to pull from these citizens based inputs to inform our Community Need Statement. These movements include Erie Together, Emerge 2040 and the City of Erie's new comprehensive plan.

Erie Together

Erie Together is a movement of hundreds of local individuals, organizations, and businesses working together in strategic ways to prevent and reduce poverty, elevate prosperity, and make the Erie region a community of opportunity where everyone can learn, work and thrive.

In 2006, The Erie Community Foundation convened a panel to study the prevalence and impact of poverty in our community. After extensive research, in 2007 the group released its findings in a report entitled, **"The High Cost of Poverty: It Affects Us All"**.

Following the study, three organizations - The Greater Erie Community Action Committee (GECAC), United Way of Erie County and Mercyhurst University - came together to identify ways to address the issue. After extensive due diligence regarding best practices elsewhere in the United States and beyond, these three entities launched Erie Together in 2009.

In the spring of 2010, Erie Together convened several hundred local residents to further identify direction and goals related to poverty alleviation here in Erie County. It was at that time that Erie Together developed its aspiration statement, with the input of more than 650 people: "Working together to make the Erie region a community of opportunity where everyone can learn, work and thrive."

Also in 2010, Erie Together formed four countywide action teams consisting of individuals from many different personal and professional backgrounds to bring their time, talent and expertise to the movement. These Action Teams are still active their ongoing participation helped to inform this work.

Emerge 2040

Emerge 2040 brought Erie County residents and leaders together to create a common vision and action plan to meet the challenges facing the region in the 21st century. The vision reflects the values of the community as collected in interviews, public meetings and forums throughout the process. The process focused on the issues, opportunities and connections between the housing, transportation, environment, infrastructure and economic systems, with a focus on implementation and capacity building in the region. The plan emphasizes Erie County and its 38 municipalities, while the economic growth component is broader in scope, encompassing Erie County as well as the four adjacent counties of Warren and Crawford Counties (PA), Chautauqua (NY) and Ashtabula (OH).

Community participation has driven the Emerge 2040 plan throughout the process. Public input has been sought at every step of the way and used to define the critical challenges facing the region, identify the assets on which the Erie region can build upon, create a vision for the future,

and develop a strategy to achieve that vision. The process was guided by the Regional Consortium and Consortium Leadership Team. Work Groups were formed from the membership of the Consortium. The process was overseen by a steering committee. These are described below. Regional Consortium – The Consortium is made up of 72+ organizations from throughout the region to guide the development of the plan. It includes representatives from Erie County's townships, boroughs, and cities; economic and community development organizations; cultural and educational institutions; and environmental and community health organizations.

From its conception, the planning process has been driven by public input and its final recommendations have been shaped by ongoing public involvement. The process was led by a Regional Consortium comprised of more than 72 civic leaders and representatives of public, private, and nonprofit organizations and institutions across Erie County and beyond. Over the plan's three years, more than 4,000 people participated in close to 150 public meetings, workshops, focus groups and online forums to provide feedback at every stage of the plan's development and to shape the community's agenda. Work Groups consisting of dozens of local experts in their field were established around each of five areas of emphasis (Economy and Workforce, Housing and Neighborhoods, Environment, Transportation and Infrastructure, and Community Facilities). The Work Groups provided local expertise and context and provided feedback on the products at each stage of the process. Input from the 2040 process was vital to the development of GECAC's Community Needs Assessment

City of Erie Comprehensive Plan

The citizens of Erie were engaged in numerous provocative public meeting where give and take was allowed and encouraged. The Citizens were challenged to think in new manners and to rise to the task of saving the city from continued decay. The final version of the city of Erie's multiyear development plan will be the key topic of conversation during a public meeting at City Hall this week. Kim Green, the city's director of economic and community development, said she will attend Tuesday's meeting to answer any questions Planning Commission members might have. The comprehensive plan was prepared by Alexandria, Va.-based consulting firm CZB.

The plan addresses Erie's future needs in a number of areas, including housing, transportation, land use and economic development. The plan recommends, among other things, that the city of Erie should develop market-rate and mixed-use housing in targeted areas; build consistent, high-quality downtown streetscapes; create an "iconic connection" between Erie's Bay front and its downtown; improve Erie's 12th Street industrial corridor via redevelopment of mixed-use spaces and strategies to lure new businesses there; establish more parks and green spaces along bay front neighborhoods; develop strategies to encourage homeowners to reinvest in their properties; and look for ways to attract private financial investment for various projects. "I think it's a good plan, although it might be tough to implement some of the things," said Planning Commission member Don Marinelli, a licensed real estate appraiser. "It's going to take a lot of people coming together." Erie Times-News April 10.

Introduction

It is necessary to determine where you are to be able to accurately plan for the future. The planning department of the Greater Erie Community Action Committee (GECAC) assesses the needs and strengths of the Erie County PA community through a comprehensive approach that includes data from the U.S. Census Bureau; the Pennsylvania Department of Education the Erie

County Department of Human Services; other federal, state and local governmental sources; local faith-based and community-based organizations; and the participants in GECAC's programs. Internet based statistical retrieval and Graphical Information System analysis is used to gather the best available demographics on the families and individuals who are in need of supportive services in Erie County. In this report, the source of any data presented is listed, so that readers can verify statistics and get the most up-to-date information.

This report will attempt to develop a statistical picture of Erie County and the needs of eligible children and families. Communities are dynamic systems that do not lend themselves easily to snapshot representations. The very nature of statistics and the process by which they are developed cause them to be out of date by the time they are published. This does not mean that they are any less accurate, but only that they represent the past; therefore trends will be highlighted when they exist.

General Description

Erie County is located in northwestern Pennsylvania on the south shore of Lake Erie. The state of New York is its eastern boundary, and the state of Ohio is its western boundary. Crawford County, Pennsylvania lies to the south. The county has a total land area of 802.6 square miles. Forestland constitutes 36.5 % of the land area, with crop and pastureland composing 26.8 and 7.7 % respectively.

Population: Population Change

Population change in Erie county from 2000-2013 is shown in Table 1. During the thirteen-year period, total population estimates for the area declined by -0.12 %, decreasing from 280,843 persons in 2000 to 280,518 persons in 2013. The City showed a -3.6 % change in the same period.

Fig 1

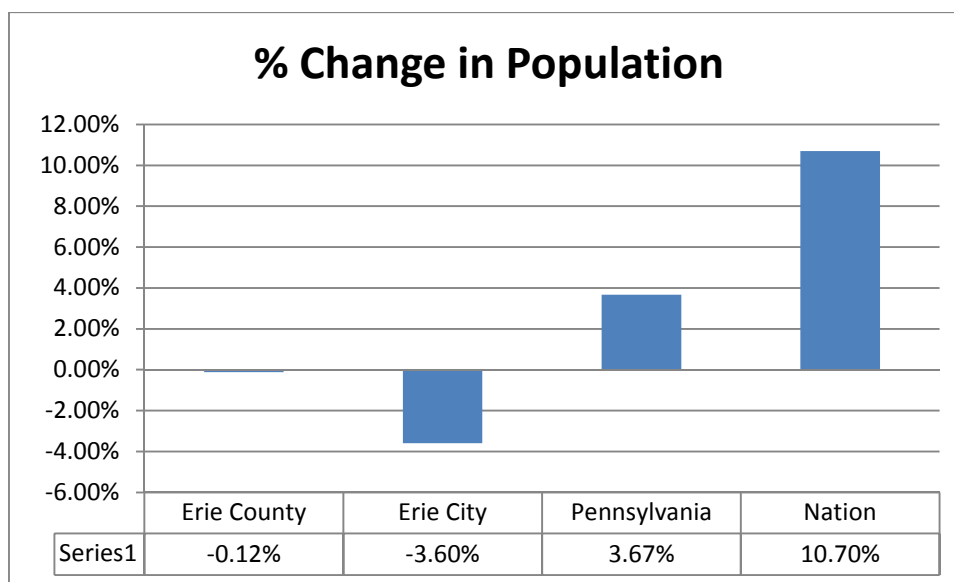


Table 1. Population Change 2000 - 2013

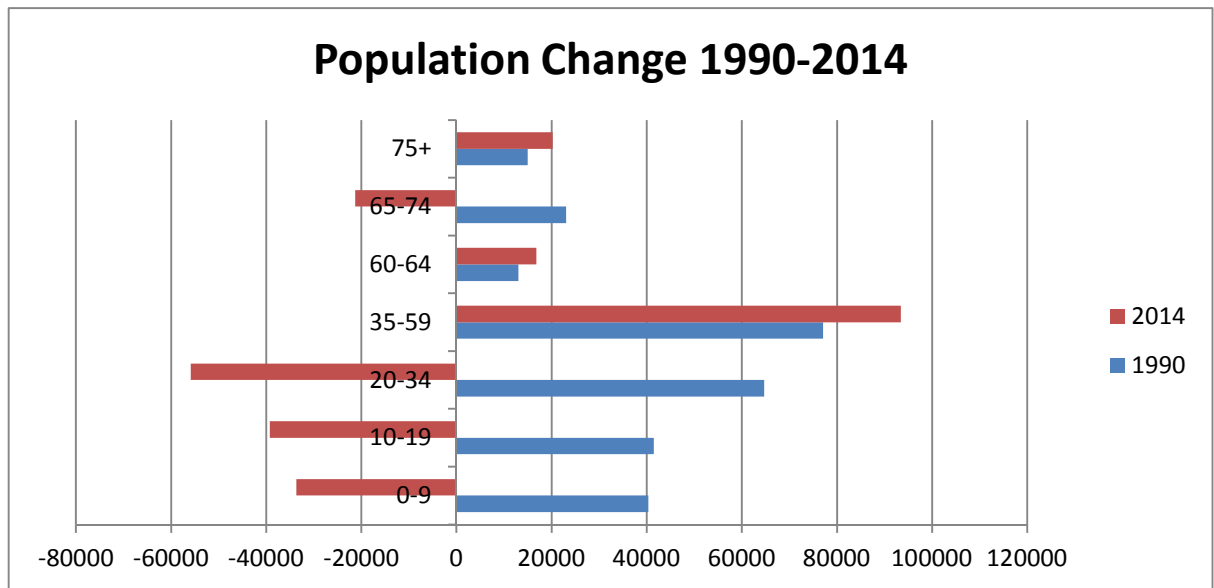
County	Census 2000 Population	ACS 2009 - 2013 Population	Population Change	% Change
Erie	280,843	280,518	-325	-0.12%
Erie City	103,717	100,832	-2,885	-3.6%
Pennsylvania	12,281,054	12,731,381	450,327	3.67%
National	281,421,906	311,536,591	30,114,685	10.70%

Source: United States Census Bureau, Population Division, Census 2010. Release Date: February 2011 and United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2013 Data Release, December 2014. The 2013 American Community Survey 5-year data is a 5-year average of data collected from 2009 through 2013.

Out migration from the city to surrounding areas in the county has continued. The city of Erie has lost 15.9% of its population since 1980. The rest of Erie County has absorbed much of this loss. The shrinking center city has a higher concentration of poor and senior citizens. This presents a challenge for the caregivers and the organizations that provide supportive services. A thriving community must include independence, dignity and health and well-being for our older residents. Nearly 25% of seniors are still working in order to afford medicine, rent and food. Therefore, these seniors, mostly women, require job training and placement.

The general regional trend is that people are moving from the City of Erie to surrounding communities. This trend is taking away green space disproportionately with overall population growth. Sprawling development has also caused an increase in storm water runoff, which is affecting stream quality in several streams, many of which empty into Presque Isle Bay. The population shift has resulted in inequities in tax collection and distribution consistent with sprawl. Ever-increasing taxes in the outlying areas support road, infrastructure and public safety network for a dispersed population. Meanwhile, the city, which serves the region as the employment, social, educational, cultural, social services and health care core of the region, is forced to rely on a diminishing tax base to support its population. Poverty and economic distress are concentrated in the city as a result.

	1990 Population		2000 Population		2014 Population		Estimated Change	
							1990-2014	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
0-9	40,366	14.60%	37,437	13.30%	33,687	12.00%	-6,679	-17.8%
10-19	41,956	15.20%	42,655	15.20%	39,247	14.00%	-2,709	-6.4%
20-34	64,717	23.50%	55,644	19.80%	55,898	19.90%	-8,819	-15.8%
35-59	77,506	28.10%	94,149	33.50%	93,412	33.30%	15,906	16.9%
60-64	13,002	4.70%	10,702	3.80%	16,735	6.00%	3,733	34.9%
65-74	23,034	8.40%	19,968	7.10%	21,319	7.60%	-1,715	-8.6%
75+	14,991	5.40%	20,288	7.20%	20,210	7.20%	5,219	25.7%
	275,572	100.00%	280,843	100.00%	280,508	100.00%	4,936	1.8%



The above chart shows a disturbing trend in Erie County. The age cohorts between 0 and 34 have lost members since 1990. In a healthy community these cohorts would be expanding not contracting. The population loss in the 20 to 34 age group is especially troubling. This age group represents the future. If it is shrinking so will the overall population. Worse, this age group represents the children of the still healthy 35-59 cohort. If the children have left the area then the parents who have the resources will follow as they reach retirement age to be near the children and grandchildren. This will leave the area older, poorer and sicker.

Population: Age and Gender Demographics

Population by gender within Erie county is shown in Table 2. According to American Community Survey 2009 - 2013 5 year population estimates for Erie County, the female population composes 51.12 % of the report area, while the male population represented 48.88. The breakdown by age categories for each gender is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Population by Gender, 2009 - 2013

County	0 to 4		5 to 17		18 to 24		25 to 34	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Erie	8,503	8,085	23,909	22,363	16,116	16,130	17,166	16,570
Pennsylvania	370,033	352,945	1,043,432	993,970	637,049	621,190	779,575	771,368
National	10,247,162	9,804,950	27,536,556	26,288,810	15,908,094	15,163,170	20,996,648	20,714,628

Table 2 (continued). Population by Gender, 2009 - 2013

County	35 to 44		45 to 54		55 to 64		65 and Up	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Erie	16,625	16,623	19,992	20,162	18,109	18,636	15,768	23,869
Pennsylvania	787,115	795,940	935,571	967,027	812,062	859,303	746,763	1,157,833
National	20,345,982	20,528,180	21,907,042	22,599,226	18,145,446	19,499,656	16,290,099	23,690,560

Table 2 (continued). Population by Gender, 2009 - 2013

County	Hispanic Male and Female							
	0 to 4	5 to 17	18 to 24	25 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64	65 and Up
Erie	1,273	2,870	1,336	1,498	1,176	862	488	365
Pennsylvania	82,861	186,380	101,124	124,482	103,250	77,727	44,698	33,179

National	5,118,137	12,217,306	6,303,665	8,533,987	7,500,839	5,684,328	3,449,899	2,978,430
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Source: *United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2013 Data Release, December 2014.*

The 2013 American Community Survey 5-year data is a 5-year average of data collected from 2009 through 2013

Population: Race Demographics

Population by race and gender within Erie County area is shown in Table 3. According to the American Community Survey 5-year averages the white population comprised 88.33% of the report area, black population represented 7.01%, Asian population represented 1.25%, and other races combined were 1.11%. Persons identifying themselves as mixed race made up 2.30% of the population.

In comparison, Pennsylvania's population comprises 82.22 % white, 10.88% black, 2.86 % Asian, 2.13 % other races, and 1.91% mixed race. The United States' population comprises 74.02 %t white, 12.57% black, 4.89% Asian, 5.72% other races, and 2.8% mixed race.

Table 3. Population by Race, 2009 - 2013

County	White		Black		Asian		Other		Mixed Race	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Erie	121,133	126,641	10,276	9,398	1,720	1,793	1,680	1,437	3,271	3,169
Pennsylvania	5,113,214	5,354,219	663,938	721,861	174,777	189,190	139,612	130,996	120,264	123,310
National	113,846,008	116,746,576	18,685,702	20,481,308	7,227,755	8,004,207	9,145,503	8,667,207	4,342,446	4,389,887

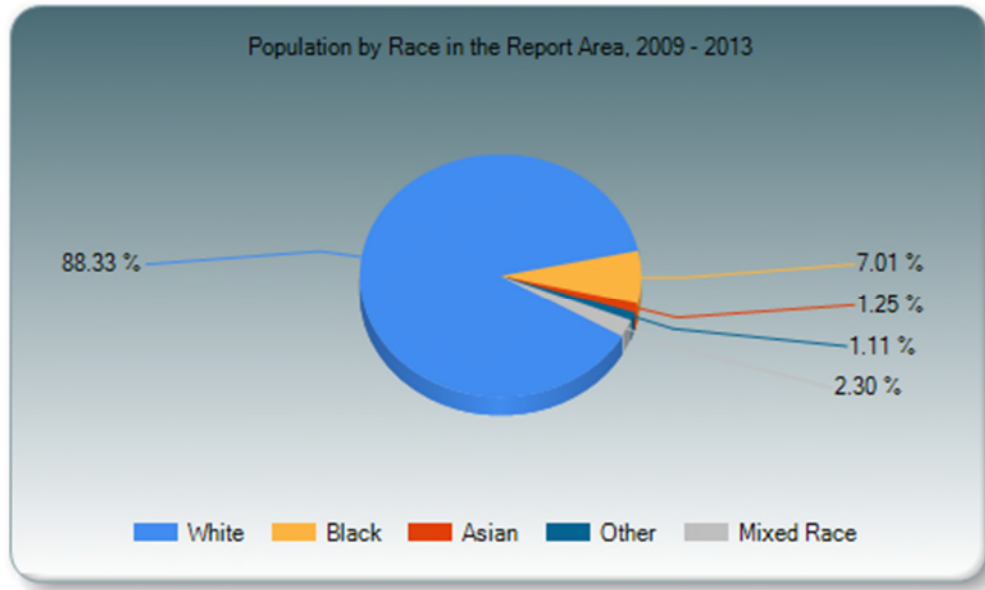
Table 3 (continued). Population by Race, 2009 - 2013

County	Hispanic Population			
	Total	%	Male	Female
Erie	9,868	4	5,090	4,778
Pennsylvania	753,701	5.92	385,850	367,851
National	51,786,592	16.62	26,289,600	25,496,992

Source: *United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2013 Data Release, December 2014.*

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Erie County Population by Race



Population: Household Types

The U.S. Census Bureau estimated there were 109,675 households in the Erie area in 2013. Single person households comprised of 30.25% of the total, two person households comprised 0.03 % of the total, three person households comprised 34.59 % of the total, four person households comprised 0.03 % of the total, and larger households of 5 or more made up 15.06 % of the total.

Table 4. Household Types, 2009 - 2013

County	Total Households	1 Person		2 Persons	
		Count	%	Count	%
Erie	109,675	33,173	30.25%	37,938	34.59%
Pennsylvania	4,958,427	1,462,305	29.49%	1,703,627	34.36%
National	115,610,216	31,778,728	27.49%	38,743,856	33.51%

Table 4 (continued). Household Types, 2009 - 2013

County	3 Persons		4 Persons		5 or More Persons	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Erie	16,518	15%	13,088.00	12%	8,958.00	8%
Pennsylvania	776,632	15.66%	619,892	12.50%	395,971	7.99%
National	18,307,172	15.84%	15,355,819	13.28%	11,424,639	9.88%

Source: *United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2013 Data Release, December 2014.*

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41.9% of Erie City housing stock (DP 04 Selected Housing Characteristics 2010-2014) is pre WWII and as such needs more maintenance. Large numbers of these homes have little or no insulation as was the practice in those times. These inner city homes are overwhelmingly occupied by low income residents who have few resources to maintain or update their dwellings. The cost to heat these homes puts a real strain on already tight budgets. While GECAC weatherizes 30 homes per year with 60 to 80 houses on the wait list. There are at least another 80 available to us at all times. Utility Assistance and Neighbor for Neighbor help to stabilize these families during the cold winter months, more needs to be done to help families conserve energy, preserve financial resources and have healthier and safer environments for their families.

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Each year HUD calculates the Fair Market Rent (FMR) for each Metropolitan Statistical Area. The following table shows the FMR for zero to four bedroom apartments in Erie County as calculated by HUD in 2015.

<i>Fair Market Rents (FMRs) by Number of Bedrooms – 2015 Erie County</i>					
Location	Zero	One	Two	Three	Four
Erie County	\$438	\$534	\$673	\$841	\$1,004

Using the two-bedroom apartment as our sample, a worker in Erie County would need to earn \$12.94 per hour at 40-hours per week (\$26,920 annually) in order for their rent to be affordable. A worker earning Pennsylvania's 2015 minimum wage (\$7.25 per hour) would need to work 72 hours per week in order to afford their rent. *Out of Reach 2015* estimates that 55% of renters are unable to afford fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment.

Population: Change in Number of Households

The change in number of households within Erie County between 2000 and 2013 is shown in Table 5. Total population estimates for the report area increased by 3,168, or 2.97 % reported in the ACS 2013 estimates. This compares to a Pennsylvania increase of 3.8 %.

Table 5. Change in Number of Households, 2000 - 2013

County	Total Households, 2000	Total Households, 2009 - 2013	Change in Households	% Change in Households
Erie	106,507	109,675	3,168	2.97%
Pennsylvania	4,777,003	4,958,427	181,424	3.80%
National	105,480,101	109,198,940	3,718,839	3.53%

Source: *United States Census Bureau, 2000 Census of Population and Housing, Summary File 1, 2000* and *United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2013 Data Release, December 2014*. The 2013 American Community Survey 5-year data is a 5-year average of data collected from 2009 through 2013

This statistic is endemic of urban sprawl. The number of households increased as the population decreased. This puts more pressure on local government and social service agencies to provide services over a larger area as infrastructure is abandoned for Greenfield development.

Population: Citizenship Status

Table 6 shows the numbers and % of population by citizenship status for Erie county The Erie area has a total of 5,847 non-citizens, or 2.08 % of the total population, in contrast to the Pennsylvania average of 2.9 % of the population being non-citizens and the national average of 7.1 % being non-citizens.

Table 6. Citizenship Status

County	Native Born		Born in a US Territory		Born Abroad to US Citizens		Naturalized		Non-Citizen	
	Count	Pct.	Count	Pct.	Count	Pct.	Count	Pct.	Count	Pct.
Erie	266,607	97.06	1,635	0.60	1,062	0.39	5,367	1.95	5,847	2.08
Pennsylvania	11,773,688	95.25	130,389	1.05	67,467	0.55	389,609	3.15	370,228	2.91
National	266,837,152	92.20	1,773,094	0.61	2,584,452	0.89	18,206,896	6.29	22,135,004	7.11

Table 6 (continued). Citizenship Status

County	Hispanic Citizens				Hispanic Non-Citizens			
	Native Born	Native Born Pct.	Foreign Born	Foreign Born Pct.	Foreign Citizen	Foreign Citizen Pct.	Foreign Non-Citizen	Foreign Non-Citizen Pct.
Erie	8,662	3.09	1,206	0.43	372	0.13	834	0.30
Pennsylvania	588,143	4.62	165,558	1.30	57,522	0.45	108,036	0.85
National	33,037,498	10.60	18,749,094	6.02	5,805,668	1.86	12,943,426	4.15

Source: *United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2013 Data Release, December 2014.*

The 2013 American Community Survey 5-year data is a 5-year average of data collected from 2009 through 2013.

Veterans: Veterans - Educational Attainment

Table 7 contrasts the distribution of educational attainment levels between veterans and non-veterans in the Erie County. Educational attainment is calculated for persons over age 25, and is an average for the period from 2009 to 2013.

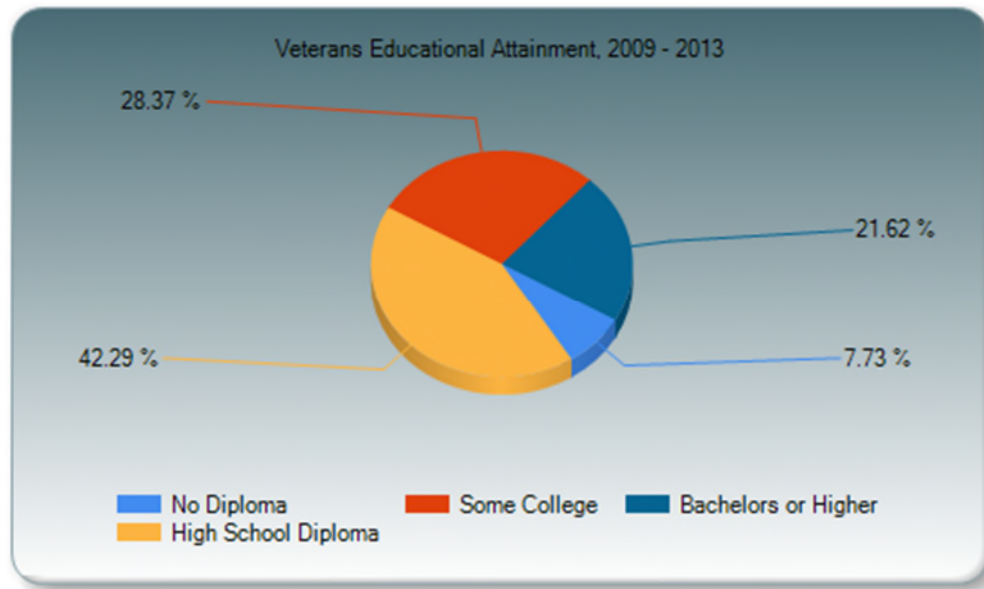


Table 7. % Attaining Educational Levels for Veterans and Non-Veterans, 2009 - 2013

County	Veterans				Non-Veterans			
	% No Diploma	% High School Diploma	% Some College	% Bachelors or Higher	% No Diploma	% High School Diploma	% Some College	% Bachelors or Higher
Erie	7.73%	42.29%	28.37%	21.62%	10.39%	40.58%	23.86%	25.16%
Pennsylvania	9.88%	41.37%	27.82%	20.93%	11.52%	36.55%	23.61%	28.33%
National	7.73%	29.53%	36.42%	26.32%	14.74%	28.01%	28.15%	29.11%

Source: *United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2013 Data Release, December 2014.*

The 2013 American Community Survey 5-year data is a 5-year average of data collected from 2009 through 2013.

Employment

Employment: Current Unemployment

Labor force, employment, and unemployment data for Erie County is provided in Table 8. Overall, the report area experienced an average 6.3 % unemployment rate in February 2016, compared to a statewide rate of 5.3 % and a national rate of 5.2 %.

Table 8. Employment/Unemployment Information, February 2016

County	Labor Force	Employment	Unemployment	Unemployment Rate
Erie	133,814	125,432	8,382	6.3%
Pennsylvania	6,458,727	6,118,392	340,335	5.3%
National	159,420,992	151,069,285	8,351,707	5.2%

Source: *United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, April 6, 2016.*

The Erie County has over 4,100 online job postings and 7,400 unemployed people (Sept 2015. PA Dept of Labor and Industry). This juxtaposition is aided and abutted by the multiple barriers faced by local workers. These barriers include: a misalignment of employment requirements and applicant qualifications, lack of transportation, lack of child care, inability to pass a drug test, poor or nonexistent soft skills, no or slim computer skills and a lack of supports including proper clothing and tools.

More effective case management to help the unemployed to overcome the overwhelming barriers to employment is needed. 9.6% of adults over the age of 25 in Erie County do not have a high school diploma (S1501 ACS 2010-2014). One example of this kind of Case Management is the Career Jump Start program offered by GECAC through the Erie County CareerLink. The program offers a Career Coach to help develop skills and confidence needed to get a Job. This is combined with Work Certified; a three week nationally recognized work readiness course, and the Getting Ahead course to prepare participants to move from poverty to self-sufficiency.

The economic implication of these statistics for both the individual and the local economy are grave. Persons without a high school diploma make substantially less income than those who have a higher level of education. The skill level of the Erie area workforce is perceived to be lower due to the lack of educational achievement of the area's residents. This complicates local economic development efforts. GECAC's Adult Learning Center serves large numbers of adults each year, however funding has been reduced for adult education in the recent past, straining resources across the county.

Employment: Unemployment Change

Unemployment change within Erie County during the period from February 2015 to February 2016 is shown in the chart below. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, unemployment for this period grew from 7,980 persons to 8,382 persons, a rate change of 0.3 % compared to a statewide rate decrease of 0.4 %.

Table 9. Change in Unemployment, February 2015 - February 2016

County	Unemployment, January 2015	Unemployment, January 2016	Unemployment Rate, January 2015	Unemployment Rate, January 2016
Erie	7,980	8,382	6.00%	6.30%
Pennsylvania	365,389	340,335	5.70%	5.30%
National	9,229,677	8,351,707	5.90%	5.20%

Source: *United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, April 6, 2016.*

Erie County continues its recovery from the last recession, but it struggled even beforehand. The region's largest industrial segment, manufacturing, has endured a 15-Year employment decline, shedding nearly 18,000 jobs. An aging population and greater demand for higher skills have driven short-term growth in health care and education. But the region still has significantly more than its share of unskilled workers and not enough high skill workers that area companies now demand. As a consequence, workers earn less and companies add good jobs at a slower rate than they might otherwise. There are good things happening in the economy and action is needed to ensure that the region thrives and that everyone will benefit. New companies are emerging in plastics, health care, insurance and regional banking. But the region's high technology sector remains small. The region's success relies on overcoming barriers and building a strong foundation for the next generation of the Erie regional economy. A strong regional tourism brand can cement this sector's importance in the local economy.

What the public said at an Emerge 2040 forum :

"Embrace the new economy but acknowledge the old," one public forum participant noted. Participants agree that jobs and better skills are needed for the region to compete in today's economy. Many suggested kinds of business sectors for the region, such as agriculture related ideas including food processing and an incubator kitchen, health care, a transfer rail terminal, logistics and "eds and meds." Stopping brain drain, promoting entrepreneurs and being adaptable to change were other themes that emerged.

Employment: Thirteen Month Unemployment Rates

Unemployment change within Erie County from February 2015 to February 2016 is shown in the chart below. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, unemployment for this thirteen month period grew from 5.95 % to 6.26 %, while the Pennsylvania rate fell by 0.4 %.

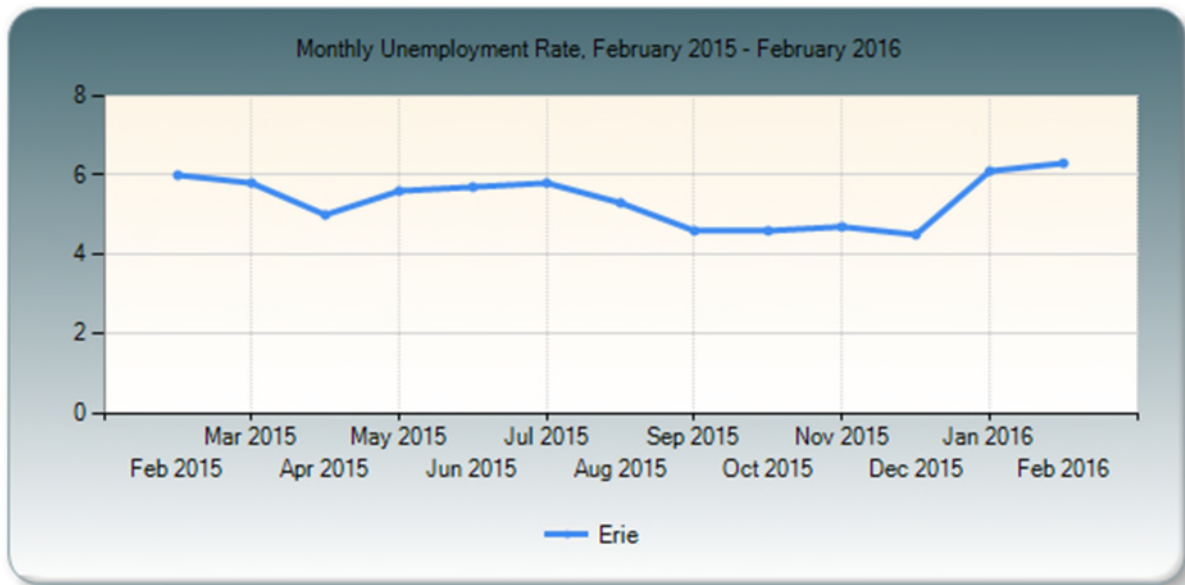


Table 10. Change in Unemployment Rates, February 2015 - February 2016

County	Feb 2015	Mar 2015	Apr 2015	May 2015	Jun 2015	Jul 2015	Aug 2015	Sep 2015	Oct 2015	Nov 2015	Dec 2015	Jan 2016	Feb 2016
Erie	6.00%	5.80%	5.00%	5.60%	5.70%	5.80%	5.30%	4.60%	4.60%	4.70%	4.50%	6.10%	6.30%
Pennsylvania	5.70%	5.50%	4.80%	5.50%	5.50%	5.80%	5.30%	4.60%	4.40%	4.40%	4.10%	5.20%	5.30%
National	5.90%	5.60%	5.10%	5.40%	5.50%	5.60%	5.20%	4.90%	4.90%	4.90%	4.80%	5.30%	5.20%

Source: *United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, April 6, 2016.*

Employment: Top Employers

Table 11 lists the top 50 employers, by county, for the 2nd quarter of 2013.

Table 11. Top 50 Employers, 2nd quarter 2013 - Erie County

Rank	Employer
1	GENERAL ELECTRIC COMPANY
2	ERIE INDEMNITY CO
3	UPMC HAMOT
4	STATE GOVERNMENT

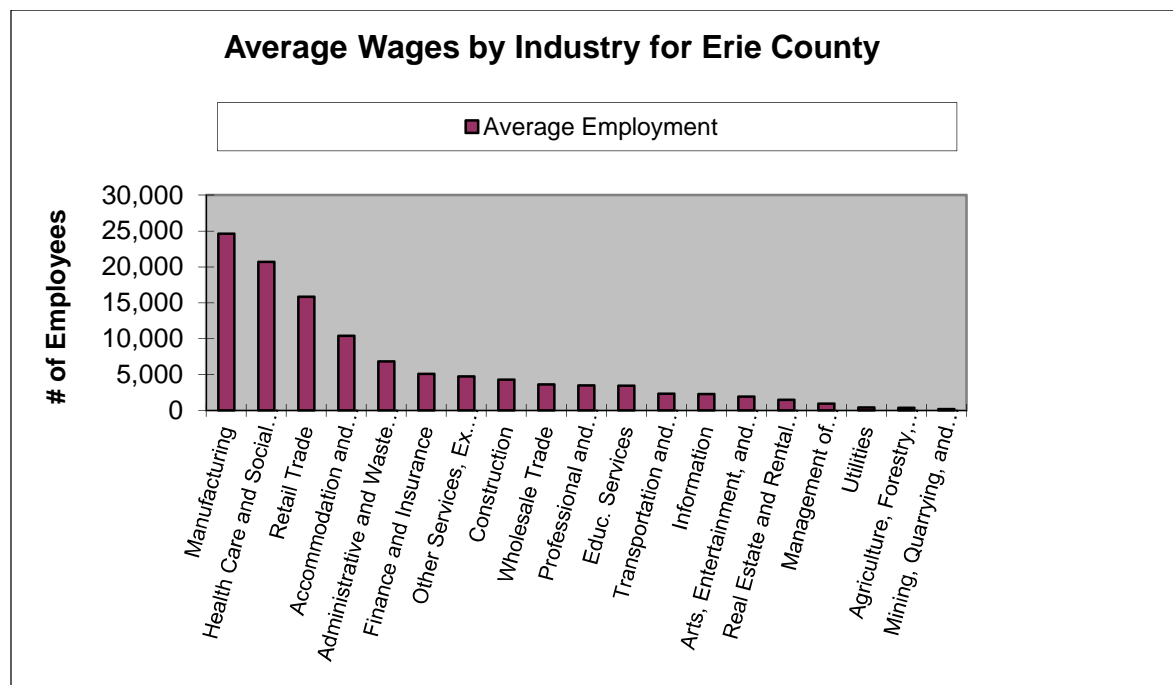
5	SAINT VINCENT HEALTH CENTER
6	WAL-MART ASSOCIATES INC
7	SCHOOL DISTRICT OF THE CITY OF ERIE
8	FEDERAL GOVERNMENT
9	DR GERTRUDE A BARBER CENTER INC
10	ERIE COUNTY
11	MILLCREEK TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT
12	PRESQUE ISLE DOWNS INC
13	LORD CORPORATION
14	CITY OF ERIE
15	PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY
16	COUNTRY FAIR INC
17	PLASTEK INDUSTRIES INC
18	THE TAMARKIN COMPANY
19	YMCA OF GREATER ERIE
20	GANNON UNIVERSITY
21	REGIONAL HEALTH SERVICES INC
22	PA STATE SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION
23	MERCYHURST UNIVERSITY
24	MILLCREEK COMMUNITY HOSPITAL
25	WEGMANS FOOD MARKETS INC
26	LAKESHORE COMMUNITY SERVICES INC
27	VOICES FOR INDEPENDENCE

28	ERIE HOMES FOR CHILDREN & ADULTS
29	MCDONALD'S RESTAURANTS OF PA INC
30	SAINT MARY'S HOME OF ERIE
31	PLEASANT RIDGE MANOR
32	INFINITY RESOURCES INC
33	DR GERTRUDE A BARBER IN HOME SVCS
34	ST VINCENT MED ED & RESEARCH INST
35	PARKER-HANNIFIN CORPORATION
36	WALDAMEER PARK INC
37	ASSOCIATED CLINICAL LABORATORIES LP
38	WELCH FOODS INC
39	STAIRWAYS BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
40	NORTHWEST TRI-COUNTY INT UNIT
41	HARBOR CREEK SCHOOL DISTRICT
42	ERIEZ MFG CO
43	LOWES HOME CENTERS INC
44	PORT ERIE PLASTICS INC
45	EAT'N PARK HOSPITALITY GROUP
46	PARKER WHITE METAL CO INC
47	NORTHWEST BANCSHARES INC
48	FMC TECH MEASUREMENT SOLUTIONS
49	FORT 'LEBOEUF SCHOOL DISTRICT
50	CAREER CONCEPTS STAFFING SVCS INC

Source: *2nd Quarter 2013, Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry, Center for Workforce Information & Analysis.*

The presence of only one manufacturing organization in the Top 10 Employers is telling. Manufacturing wages far surpass wages in most other sectors. The Erie County community has long relied on a strong manufacturing sector to support its economy. During the last several decades, this manufacturing sector has followed the national trend of decline. Over the last several years, Erie County has lost several companies in the manufacturing sector, including: International Paper Co., Unite/EMI, Demure/Copes-Vulcan, Carlisle Engineered Products, Van de Kamp's Frozen Foods, American Meter Co., Erie Plastics and Andover Industries.

The main problem presented by this decline in the manufacturing sector is the loss of wages. Erie County's median wage for someone in manufacturing is \$47,060. For the retail trade industry, which is quickly growing in this county, the median wage is \$20,064. Four of the top 16 industries employing the most workers have a median wage of less than \$24,300, the 2016 poverty level for a family of four. The next graph shows the median wage for each industry. The industries are ordered by number of employees. (Center for Workforce Information and Analysis, 2015)



Another major barrier to work is transportation, especially in the rural regions of Erie County. The city of Erie is served by the Erie Metropolitan Transit Authority's bus service. This is a typical radial bus service that emanates from the downtown area of the city of Erie. Many years ago when the downtown was the mercantile and business center of the region, this system served eight million riders per year. Recently it was found that only 1.64 % of all workers reported that they used some form of public transportation.

Today, routing bus service through the downtown area leaves many areas of the county with little or no service. At the present time, the Metropolitan Transit Authority is in negotiations for a new 50 year charter. Erie County Government is seeking a larger role in the governance of the authority. Their goal is to provide more intensive service to underserved areas of the county. GECAC needs to have a seat at the table to investigate how we can be part of the solution to serving the outlying communities.

Employment: Economic Development Agencies, Statewide

Table 12 lists the statewide Economic Development Organizations that are available to serve each county in Erie County. Phone numbers and website URL's have also been provided where possible.

Table 12. Economic Development Agencies, Statewide

County	Organization Name	Phone Number	Website Address
Pennsylvania	Ben Franklin Technology Partners	(717) 948-4317	www.benfranklin.org
Pennsylvania	Capital Resource Conservation & Development Area Council, Inc.	(717) 241-4361	www.capitalrcd.org
Pennsylvania	Center for Rural Pennsylvania	(717) 787-9555	www.rural.palegislature.us
Pennsylvania	Consolidated Rail Corporation	(215) 209-2000	www.conrail.com
Pennsylvania	Council of Governments	(717) 236-9562	www.pacog.com
Pennsylvania	County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania (CCAP)	(717) 232-7554	www.pacounties.org
Pennsylvania	Executive Pulse	(814) 456-6162	www.e-pulse.net
Pennsylvania	Governor's Advisory Council on Rural Affairs	(717) 772-9028	www.ruralpa.state.pa.us
Pennsylvania	Independent Regulatory Review Commission	(717) 783-5417	www.irrc.state.pa.us
Pennsylvania	Life Sciences Greenhouse of Central PA (LSGPA)	(717) 635-2100	www.lsgpa.com
Pennsylvania	Northeastern Economic Developers Association	(401) 295-9215	www.nedaonline.org

Pennsylvania	PA Chamber of Business and Industry	(717) 255-3252	www.pachamber.org
Pennsylvania	PA Dept. of Agriculture \ Bureau of Market Development	(717) 783-8462	www.agriculture.state.pa.us
Pennsylvania	PA Dept. of Community and Economic Development	(866) 466-3972	www.newpa.com
Pennsylvania	PA Dept. of Community and Economic Development \ Business Assistance \ Center for Business Financing	(717) 787-7120	www.newpa.com
Pennsylvania	PA Dept. of Community and Economic Development \ Governor's Action Team	(717) 787-8199	www.newpa.com
Pennsylvania	PA Dept. of Community and Economic Development \ Governor's Center for Local Government Services	(888) 223-6837	www.newpa.com
Pennsylvania	PA Dept. of Education \ Bureau of Career & Technical Education	(717) 783-5530	www.education.state.pa.us
Pennsylvania	PA Dept. of Environmental Protection \ Bureau of Waste Management	(717) 783-2388	www.depweb.state.pa.us
Pennsylvania	PA Dept. of Environmental Protection \ Bureau of Water Management	(717) 787-4693	www.depweb.state.pa.us
Pennsylvania	PA Dept. of Environmental Protection \ Bureau of Water Quality Protection	(717) 787-9637	www.depweb.state.pa.us

Pennsylvania	PA Dept. of Labor and Industry \ Office of Vocational Rehabilitation \ Bureau of Rehabilitation Program Operations	(800) 442-6352	www.cwds.state.pa.us
Pennsylvania	PA Dept. of Labor and Industry \ Penn SERVE - Governor's Office of Citizen Service	(717) 787-1971	www.dli.state.pa.us
Pennsylvania	PA Dept. of Transportation \ Bureau of Municipal Services	(717) 787-2183	www.dot.state.pa.us
Pennsylvania	PA Dept. of Transportation \ Bureau of Planning and Research \ Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP)	(800) 367-5827	www.ltap.state.pa.us
Pennsylvania	PA Dept. of Transportation \ Bureau of Public Transportation \ Rural and Intercity Transportation Division	(717) 783-9461	www.dot.state.pa.us
Pennsylvania	PA Dept. of Transportation \ Bureau of Public Transportation \ Urban Transit Division	(717) 787-1221	www.dot.state.pa.us
Pennsylvania	PA Dept. of Transportation \ Center for Program Dev. and Management \ Transportation	(717) 787-5248	www.dot.state.pa.us
Pennsylvania	PA Downtown Center	(717) 233-4675	www.padowntown.org
Pennsylvania	PA Economic Development Association	(717) 441-6047	www.peda.org

Pennsylvania	PA Economy League	(717) 234-3151	www.pelcapital.org
Pennsylvania	PA Game Commission	(717) 787-4250	www.pgc.state.pa.us
Pennsylvania	PA House Finance Agency	(717) 780-3800	www.phfa.org
Pennsylvania	PA Industrial Resource Center Network, Inc (IRC Network)	(570) 329-3200	www.pairc.net
Pennsylvania	PA Infrastructure Investment Authority \ PENNVEST	(717) 783-6798	www.pennvest.state.pa.us
Pennsylvania	PA Manufacturer's Association	(717) 232-0737	www.pamanufacturers.org
Pennsylvania	PA Municipal Authorities Association	(717) 737-7655	www.municipalauthorities.org
Pennsylvania	PA Municipal League	(717) 236-9469	www.pamunicipalleague.org
Pennsylvania	PA Municipal League \ Local Public Procurement Program (L3P)	(800) 438-5370	www.pamunicipalleague.org
Pennsylvania	PA Planning Association	(717) 671-4510	www.planningpa.org
Pennsylvania	PA Recycling Markets Center	(717) 948-6660	www.parmc.org
Pennsylvania	PA Rural Development Council	(717) 237-2299	www.rurdev.usda.gov/pa
Pennsylvania	PA Rural Electric Association	(717) 233-5704	www.prea.com
Pennsylvania	PA State Association of Boroughs	(717) 236-9526	www.boroughs.org
Pennsylvania	PA State Association of Township Supervisors	(717) 763-0930	www.psats.org
Pennsylvania	Penn State Harrisburg	(717) 948-6000	www.hbg.psu.edu

Pennsylvania	Penn State Harrisburg \ Institute of State and Regional Affairs	(717) 948-6178	isra.hbg.psu.edu
Pennsylvania	Penn State Harrisburg \ Institute of State and Regional Affairs \ Center for Geographic Information Services	(717) 948-6336	cgis.hbg.psu.edu
Pennsylvania	Penn State Harrisburg \ Institute of State and Regional Affairs \ Center for Survey Research	(717) 948-6429	csr.hbg.psu.edu
Pennsylvania	Penn State Harrisburg \ Institute of State and Regional Affairs \ Economic Development Research and Training Center	(717) 948-6178	edrtc.hbg.psu.edu
Pennsylvania	Penn State Harrisburg \ Institute of State and Regional Affairs \ PA State Data Center	(717) 948-6336	pasdc.hbg.psu.edu
Pennsylvania	Penn State University \ Ag. Economics and Rural Sociology \ PA Rural Leadership Program (RULE)	(814) 863-4679	rule.psu.edu
Pennsylvania	Penn State University \ Center for Economic & Community Development	(814) 865-9542	cecd.aers.psu.edu
Pennsylvania	Penn State University \ Innovation Park at Penn State	(814) 865-5925	www.innovationpark.psu.edu
Pennsylvania	Penn State University \ Office of Technology Management	(814) 865-9519	www.research.psu.edu/offices/otm

Pennsylvania	Penn State University \ PA Technical Assistance Program (PENNTAP)	(814) 865-0427	www.penntap.psu.edu
Pennsylvania	U.S. Dept. of Agriculture \ Farm Service Agency	(717) 237-2117	www.fsa.usda.gov
Pennsylvania	U.S. Dept. of Agriculture \ Natural Resources Conservation Service	(717) 237-2100	www.pa.nrcs.usda.gov/
Pennsylvania	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency \ Region 3 Mid-Atlantic States	(800) 438-2474	www.epa.gov
Pennsylvania	U.S. Small Business Administration \ Philadelphia District Office	(610) 382-3062	www.sba.gov
Pennsylvania	U.S. Small Business Administration \ Pittsburgh District Office	(412) 395-6560	www.sba.gov

Source: *The Pennsylvania State Data Center* compiled the above listing of key economic development contacts from a variety of sources.

Education: School Enrollment

Table 13 shows the total public and non-public school enrollment for 2014-2015. In Erie County a total of 45,003 persons were enrolled in school, with 25,031 enrolled in elementary school and 19,972 enrolled in secondary schools. In this report, private schools refer to both private and nonpublic institutions 5,347 students are enrolled in private schools or 11.88 % of the student population.

Table 13. Public and Non-Public School Enrollment, 2014-2015

County	Enrollment			Elementary			Secondary		
	Total	Public	Private	Total	Public	Private	Total	Public	Private
Erie	45,003	39,656	5,347	25,031	21,424	5,347	19,972	18,232	1,740

Pennsylvania	1,969,706	1,739,559	230,147	1,082,710	924,223	230,147	886,996	815,336	71,660
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Source: Public School Enrollment report and Private and Non-Public Schools Enrollments Reports, 2014-2015, The Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Education: High School Dropouts

Table 14 shows the annual High School dropout rate which is defined as the number of students who, for any reason other than death, leave school before graduation without transferring to another school or institution. For the academic year 2013-2014, 428 students dropped out in Erie County.

Table 14. High School Dropout Rates, 2013-2014

County	Total Enrollment Grades 7-12	Dropouts			Dropout Rate
		Male	Female	Total	
Erie	18,399	250	178	428	2.33%
Pennsylvania	819,838	8,080	5,865	13,945	1.70%

Source: *Dropouts Public by School 2013-2014, The Pennsylvania Department of Education.*

After several decades of focusing on ‘dropout rates’ as the measure of secondary school success in our communities, attention has turned to ‘graduation rates’ instead. Graduation rates refer to the number of students who graduate with a regular high school diploma within the standard four year timeframe. Beginning in 2012, using graduation data from the Classes of 2010 and 2011, the “4-Year Cohort Graduation Rate” calculation replaced the “4-Year Leaver Graduation Rate” calculation. This change brought the state into compliance with Federal laws and provided a more uniform and precise measure of the high school graduation rate – one which can then be used for comparison with other states.

PA Four Year Graduation Rate	
CORRY AREA MS/HS	90.96
CENTRAL HS	69
EAST SHS	63.33
STRONG VINCENT HS	64.5
FAIRVIEW HS	93.08
FORT LEOEUF SHS	91.95
GENERAL MCLANE HS	98.87
GIRARD HS	89.13
HARBOR CREEK Senior HS	89.5
IROQUOIS JSHS	96.7
MCDOWELL SHS	94.83
NORTH EAST HS	92.37
NORTHWESTERN SHS	90.55
UNION CITY HS	92.77
SENECA HS	86.7

On average Erie Counties schools have high graduation rates – 93.9%. This rate is above the Pennsylvania average of 83%. The senior graduation rate was determined by dividing the

number of students receiving their diploma in the spring of 2014 by the number of 12th graders enrolled in the fall of 2013 at each school.

Education: High School Graduates

Table 15 shows the number of Public High School Graduates planning on attending college in Erie County for 2013-2014 academic year. The chart shows Erie County has 68.48% of graduates attending college. Statewide, 69.8 % of graduates plan on going to college.

Table 15. High School Graduates, 2013-2014

County	Total Graduates	College Bound	College Bound %
Erie	2,668	1,827	68.48%
Pennsylvania	128,042	89,372	69.80%

Source: *Graduates Public by School 2013-2014, The Pennsylvania Department of Education.*

Education: Achievements in Math

Table 16 shows the reading proficiency results for each school district in Erie County from the 2012 Pennsylvania Systems of Schools Assessment (PSSA) Academic Achievement Report. This data is intended to assist parents, educators and administrators in evaluating their student's strengths and weaknesses so they can increase student achievement scores. The Federal No Child Left Behind Act requires states to determine annually whether schools and districts in Pennsylvania make Adequate Yearly Progress. Those school districts not meeting the 78 % proficient target in math for 2011-2012 are shown in red.

Table 16. Achievements in Math, 2012 - Erie County

School District	Number Scored in Math	Advanced Math	Proficient Math	Basic Math	Below Basic Math
CORRY AREA	1,035	40.1%	34.6%	14.7%	10.6%
ERIE CITY	5,699	31.8%	29.1%	18.2%	20.8%
FAIRVIEW	812	64.9%	24.6%	6.5%	3.9%
FORT LEBOEUF	1,111	60.8%	28.1%	8.2%	2.9%
GENERAL MCLANE	1,122	51.8%	29.6%	13.0%	5.6%
GIRARD	930	59.1%	30.2%	7.3%	3.3%
HARBOR CREEK	1,045	57.6%	30.0%	8.0%	4.3%

IROQUOIS	571	52.4%	27.3%	11.4%	8.9%
MILLCREEK TOWNSHIP	3,718	51.3%	29.9%	11.3%	7.5%
NORTH EAST	849	53.4%	31.6%	9.4%	5.7%
NORTHWESTERN	791	50.8%	28.3%	9.5%	11.4%
UNION CITY AREA	577	40.6%	33.4%	13.9%	12.1%
WATTSBURG AREA	774	33.7%	36.6%	16.9%	12.8%

Source: 2011-2012 Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) and Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Results, Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Education: Achievements in Reading

Table 17 shows the reading proficiency results for each school district in Erie County from the 2012 Pennsylvania Systems of Schools Assessment (PSSA) Academic Achievement Report. This data is intended to assist parents, educators and administrators in evaluating their student's strengths and weaknesses so they can increase student achievement scores. The federal No Child Left Behind Act requires states to determine annually whether schools and districts in Pennsylvania make Adequate Yearly Progress. Those school districts not meeting the 81 % proficient target in reading for 2011-2012 are shown in red.

Table 17. Achievements in Reading, 2012 - Erie County

School District	Number Scored in Reading	Advanced Reading	Proficient Reading	Basic Reading	Below Basic Reading
CORRY AREA	1,036	28.1%	43.4%	16.2%	12.3%
ERIE CITY	5,666	20.7%	33.1%	18.9%	27.4%
FAIRVIEW	804	56.1%	33.7%	7.1%	3.1%
FORT LEBOEUF	1,109	47.4%	33.5%	11.7%	7.3%
GENERAL MCLANE	1,122	38.8%	37.3%	14.0%	10.0%
GIRARD	930	37.7%	37.8%	14.8%	9.6%

HARBOR CREEK	1,040	43.7%	39.6%	10.1%	6.6%
IROQUOIS	572	33.7%	36.9%	13.6%	15.7%
MILLCREEK TOWNSHIP	3,718	41.2%	37.0%	12.4%	9.4%
NORTH EAST	843	45.9%	37.7%	10.1%	6.3%
NORTHWESTERN	792	39.6%	33.3%	13.6%	13.4%
UNION CITY AREA	577	26.2%	37.4%	18.5%	17.9%
WATTSBURG AREA	775	33.0%	38.2%	16.4%	12.4%

Source: 2011-2012 Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) and Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Results, Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Education: Achievements in Science

Table 18 shows the science proficiency results for each school district in Erie County from the 2012 Pennsylvania Systems of Schools Assessment (PSSA) Academic Achievement Report. This data is intended to assist parents, educators and administrators in evaluating their student's strengths and weaknesses so they can increase student achievement scores.

Table 18. Achievements in Science, 2012 - Erie County

School District	Number Scored in Science	Advanced Science	Proficient Science	Basic Science	Below Basic Science
CORRY AREA	451	31.9%	31.7%	26.6%	9.8%
ERIE CITY	2,430	14.8%	29.3%	27.1%	28.8%
FAIRVIEW	365	52.9%	31.2%	14.0%	1.9%
FORT LEOEUF	494	39.1%	34.0%	21.9%	5.1%
GENERAL MCLANE	487	33.7%	35.3%	23.8%	7.2%
GIRARD	394	32.0%	37.8%	21.8%	8.4%
HARBOR CREEK	445	37.1%	36.4%	21.1%	5.4%

IROQUOIS	225	29.8%	36.4%	26.7%	7.1%
MILLCREEK TOWNSHIP	1,547	30.4%	37.6%	25.1%	6.9%
NORTH EAST	350	42.6%	29.1%	22.9%	5.4%
NORTHWESTERN	348	28.4%	33.9%	26.4%	11.2%
UNION CITY AREA	253	26.9%	31.2%	29.6%	12.3%
WATTSBURG AREA	330	29.1%	32.7%	27.0%	11.2%

Source: 2011-2012 Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) and Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Results, Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Education: Achievements in Writing

Table 19 shows the writing proficiency results for each school district in Erie County from the 2012 Pennsylvania Systems of Schools Assessment (PSSA) Academic Achievement Report. This data is intended to assist parents, educators and administrators in evaluating their student's strengths and weaknesses so they can increase student achievement scores.

Table 19. Achievements in Writing, 2012 - Erie County

School District	Number Scored in Writing	Advanced Writing	Proficient Writing	Basic Writing	Below Basic Writing
CORRY AREA	469	5.5%	66.7%	24.3%	3.4%
ERIE CITY	2,392	3.4%	43.9%	45.7%	7.1%
FAIRVIEW	368	23.4%	63.3%	12.5%	0.8%
FORT LEBOEUF	521	10.7%	73.9%	14.4%	1.0%
GENERAL MCLANE	520	7.3%	67.9%	23.5%	1.3%
GIRARD	418	6.7%	64.4%	27.0%	1.9%
HARBOR CREEK	431	5.8%	76.3%	16.9%	0.9%
IROQUOIS	236	5.1%	60.2%	31.8%	3.0%

MILLCREEK TOWNSHIP	1,614	12.2%	66.4%	19.6%	1.7%
NORTH EAST	375	8.3%	66.4%	24.3%	1.1%
NORTHWESTERN	358	8.4%	72.1%	18.4%	1.1%
UNION CITY AREA	259	0.8%	57.5%	38.6%	3.1%
WATTSBURG AREA	338	7.1%	69.8%	22.5%	0.6%

Source: 2011-2012 Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) and Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Results, Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) results vary widely across school districts in Erie County, and some are doing very well. But for the 2011-12 academic years, the county-wide %of third grade students who were graded “Advanced” fell in both math and reading, and the %who were graded “Below Basic” rose in both math and reading. These results are quite problematic as they reflect on the area’s economic competitiveness. The lack of early childhood education and poor academic achievement leads to low graduation rates. While graduation rates vary across Erie County school districts, every district in the county beat the PA average in each of the last four years—except the City of Erie school district. Moreover, the city’s graduation rate has been falling since its 2010-11 rate of 81.5%, down to the 2013-14 rate of just 73.2%. Clearly, the city’s rate needs improvement. This is especially important due to the large size of the City School District as compared to all the other county schools.

The cornerstone to individual prosperity and a competitive regional economy is an educational network that provides all students with high quality, accessible education and training. Many Erie County students are not developing the skills they need to ensure workforce competitiveness and a sound economic future. Educational attainment rates lag compared with Pennsylvania and in the United States, and some residents are not able to access or afford the educational and training programs that would make them attractive to the region’s employers. These educational challenges are a drag on regional economic competitiveness. Low numbers of highly skilled workers and a workforce that is not able to adapt to new skills will ensure that the region’s struggles to overcome poverty, manufacturing decline and the job/skills mismatch will persist.

Trends suggest that a disproportionate number of Erie County children are subject to risk factors related to their ability to learn and succeed in school. For example, children in economically stressed families are more likely to have difficulty succeeding in school – and 28% of Erie County’s children were living in poverty in 2013. Poverty is found throughout Erie County at a higher rate than in the state and the nation as a whole. Disparities in educational performance exist throughout the region, and high school graduation rates vary considerably by location and demographics. In 2010, a quarter of Erie County’s Hispanics and Latinos and 18 %

of blacks did not graduate from high school, compared with nine % of the County's white residents.

What the public said at The Emerge 2040 Forum:

The educational system should be more integrated with daily life, said participants in public forums. "Turn schools into community resource centers," said one. Promoting schools as hosts for community events, adult programs and as community resource centers with high-speed internet service were prevalent themes in the forums. Students need to be prepared for work but also for life and the education system should help them with these skills, such as problem solving. Many participants noted the need for universal pre-K and pre-school. Adult education opportunities such as personal finance and other "soft" skills people need to help them get and hold onto jobs were also mentioned by a number of participants.

Education: Educational Attainment

Table 20 shows the distribution of educational attainment levels in Erie County. Educational attainment is calculated for persons over 25 except where noted, and is an average for the period from 2009 to 2013. The statewide percentage of persons with no High School Diploma is 11.34 %, while the national % is 13.98 %.

Table 20. % Attaining Educational Levels, 2009 - 2013

County	Over Age 18 and No High School Diploma	Education Level for Persons over 25					
		No High School Diploma	High School Only	Some College	Associates	Bachelors	Graduate or Professional
Erie	10.32%	10.08%	40.78%	16.36%	8.02%	15.80%	8.96%
Pennsylvania	11.56%	11.34%	37.05%	16.48%	7.59%	16.85%	10.69%
National	14.20%	13.98%	28.12%	21.25%	7.81%	18.05%	10.79%

Source: *United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2013 Data Release, December 2014.*

The 2013 American Community Survey 5-year data is a 5-year average of data collected from 2009 through 2013.

Low graduation rates lead to a need for Adult Education. Nearly 10% of adults over the age of 25 do not have a high school diploma. This has real economic consequences. Persons with less education make substantially less income than those with more education. The Erie region is less competitive with other regions that have a higher educational skill level and the effects of reduced funding to the Pennsylvania Department of Education funded adult education providers

are being felt as more and more employers report having difficulty finding qualified candidates with the education levels required for their positions.

Education: Adult Literacy

The National Center for Education Statistics produces estimates for adult literacy based on educational attainment, poverty, and other factors in each county. The number of providers of Adult Education has been falling while the need increases. Educational attainment of adults is low in Erie County. Only 25.6% of Erie County adults 25 years and older have a four year college degree, compared to 36.3% for the state and 32.4% across the nation. More than two % (2.7%) of the adults in Erie County have less than a ninth grade education (PA – 3.6% and US – 5.8%), and 8.9% do not have a high school diploma (PA – 11.0% and US – 13.6%). (US Census Bureau, 2014)

There are four adult education service providers in Erie County. Three of the four are located in the city of Erie with the Intermediate Unit being the exception.

Barber National Institute

100 Barber Place
Erie, PA

GECAC Adult Learning Center

440 West 18th Street
Erie, PA

Multicultural Resource Center's Literacy Center

554 East 10th Street
Erie, PA

Northwest Tri-County IU#5

25 Waterford Street
Edinboro, PA

The local Public Broadcasting Station (WQLN) also provides distance learning through many local community based organizations.

Table 21. Persons Lacking Basic Prose Literacy Skills, 2003

County	Estimated Population over 16	Lacking Literacy Skills %
Erie	213,185	12%
Pennsylvania	9,561,844	13%
National	219,016,209	12%

Source: United States Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, State and County Estimates of Low Literacy, 2003.

Education: Free and Reduced Lunch Program

Table 22 shows the number of students eligible for the Free and Reduced Lunch Program in the 2014-2015 school year. The figures below include public, private and parochial schools, and residential child care institutional figures. There are 25,768 students eligible in Erie County, which makes up 58.66 % of total enrolled students, compared to a Pennsylvania rate of 47.74 %.

Table 22. Students Participating in the Free and Reduced Lunch Program (Lunches Only), 2014-2015

County	School District	School Type	Total Enrollment	Free Lunch Eligible	% Free Lunch Enrollment	Reduced Lunch Eligible	% Reduced Lunch Enrollment	% Free and Reduced Lunch Enrollment
Erie	CORRY AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT	Public School	2,176.00	1,178.00	54.14%	121.00	5.56%	59.70%
Erie	ERIE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT	Public School	12,771.00	12,771.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00%	100.00%
Erie	ERIE COUNTY TECHNICAL SCHOOL	Public School	880.00	352.00	40.00%	71.00	8.07%	48.07%
Erie	FAIRVIEW SCHOOL DISTRICT	Public School	1,613.00	270.00	16.74%	50.00	3.10%	19.84%
Erie	FORT LEOEUF SCHOOL DISTRICT	Public School	2,130.00	808.00	37.93%	129.00	6.06%	43.99%
Erie	GENERAL MCLANE SCHOOL DISTRICT	Public School	2,172.00	649.00	29.88%	122.00	5.62%	35.50%
Erie	GIRARD SCHOOL DISTRICT	Public School	1,728.00	735.00	42.53%	172.00	9.95%	52.49%
Erie	HARBOR CREEK SCHOOL DISTRICT	Public School	2,147.00	579.00	26.97%	110.00	5.12%	32.09%
Erie	IROQUOIS SCHOOL DISTRICT	Public School	1,217.00	638.00	52.42%	100.00	8.22%	60.64%
Erie	MILLCREEK TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT	Public School	7,161.00	2,265.00	31.63%	378.00	5.28%	36.91%

Erie	MONTESSORI REGIONAL CS	Public School	422.00	219.00	51.90%	35.00	8.29%	60.19%
Erie	NORTH EAST SCHOOL DISTRICT	Public School	1,672.00	705.00	42.17%	100.00	5.98%	48.15%
Erie	NORTHWESTERN SCHOOL DISTRICT	Public School	1,460.00	726.00	49.73%	88.00	6.03%	55.75%
Erie	UNION CITY AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT	Public School	1,160.00	907.00	78.19%	0.00	0.00%	78.19%
Erie	WATTSBURG AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT	Public School	1,424.00	344.00	24.16%	114.00	8.01%	32.16%
Erie	BLESSED SACRAMENT SCHOOL	Private or Parochial School	1,121.00	250.00	22.30%	81.00	7.23%	29.53%
Erie	CATHEDRAL PREPARATORY SCHOOL	Private or Parochial School	925.00	136.00	14.70%	49.00	5.30%	20.00%
Erie	COMMUNITY COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL	Private or Parochial School	65.00	65.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00%	100.00%
Erie	DR GERTRUDE A BARBER CENTER	Private or Parochial School	219.00	158.00	72.15%	0.00	0.00%	72.15%
Erie	OUR LADY OF PEACE SCHOOL	Private or Parochial School	360.00	41.00	11.39%	15.00	4.17%	15.56%
Erie	ST GEORGE SCHOOL	Private or Parochial School	488.00	63.00	12.91%	13.00	2.66%	15.57%

Erie	ST JAMES SCHOOL	Private or Parochial School	216.00	55.00	25.46%	15.00	6.94%	32.41%
Erie	ST LUKE SCHOOL	Private or Parochial School	402.00	71.00	17.66%	20.00	4.98%	22.64%
Erie County	no data	no data	43,929.00	23,985.00	54.60%	1,783.00	4.06%	58.66%
Pennsylvania			1,760,476.00	767,835.00	43.61%	72,650.00	4.12%	47.74%

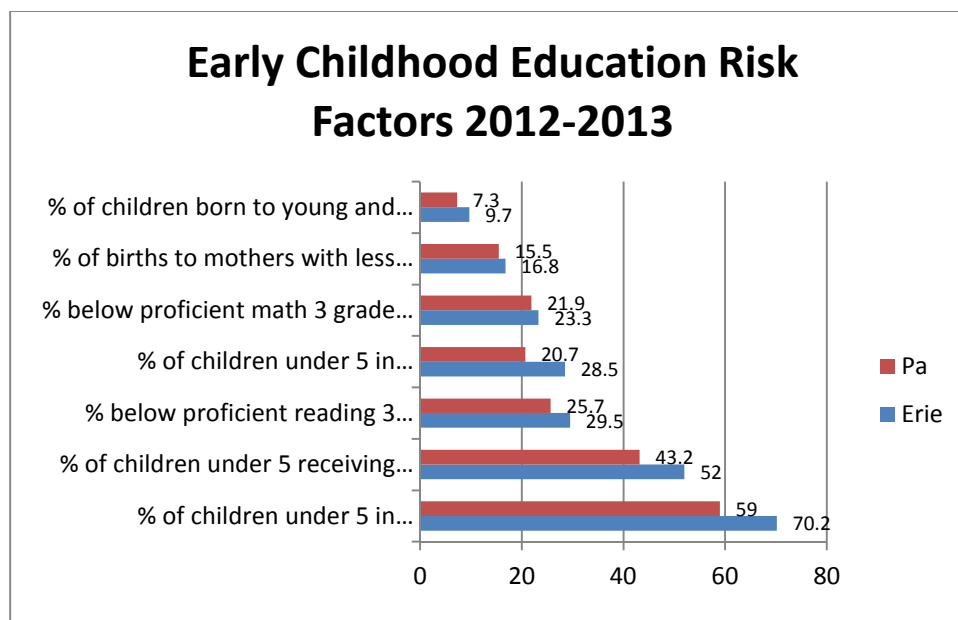
Source: *Pennsylvania Department of Education, Division of Food and Nutrition, 2015.*

Free and Reduced lunch participation is a very good indicator of poverty in the area. Erie County is above the state in this statistic. Poverty is very much a reality for young and old in Erie County. Over 43,438 residents of Erie County, or 16%, are below poverty standard. Only 8.6% of those over age 65 are below the poverty standard. In the City of Erie, the overall poverty rate is 25.1% and 14.3% for those over age 65. (B17001 ACS 2014). The numbers of impoverished women in Erie County between the ages of 16 and 24 rose nearly 34% when comparing 2005-2009 to 2010-2014 US Census data. That %was much higher in the city of Erie, with 2,238 women age18 to 24 living in poverty in 2010-2014, up 57.4 % from 1,427 women in 2005-2009.

Many parents are forced to work two or more jobs, often at odd hours to make enough money to barely make ends meet. This time crunch leads to stress so the parents have less time and patience when interacting with their children. Parents report not having enough time to spend with their own children and needing quality programs to know their children are safe and cared for while they are working.

High quality early childhood education continues to remain a need in Erie County. Less than 60% of children take part in some form of early childhood education and only 40% come to Kindergarten ready to learn (Erie Together Superintendents' Study). This has long term implications for these children as research has shown that from Kindergarten through third grade children learn to read; after that, they read to learn. If a child is not reading on grade level by grade 3 they stand a very real chance of falling behind their peers. This has real implications for dropout statistics and low on time graduation rates. A growing body of research underscores the importance of providing children with quality early education opportunities. Advances in brain research, for example, reveal that much of the brain's development occurs very early in a child's life and that stimulation and supportive relationships during those early years greatly influence that development.

In Erie County, the statistical trends suggest that all of the seven most commonly measured risk factors are a concern for our young children. For the 2012-13 school year, every one of the seven factors registered higher rates of incidence in Erie County than in the state as a whole.



The ever increasing violence in Erie and surrounding areas has exposed children to more violence both at home and in the streets; as result there are more behavior problems. This speaks to the need for more mental health services for our Head Start, Pre-k Counts and Early Head Start children and their families. Teen parents and single parent mothers need parenting and over-all case management

Education: Child Care Facilities

The number of day care centers and group day care homes within Erie county are shown in Table 23. According to the Pennsylvania Departments of Public Welfare and Education, there were a total of 169 licensed child care facilities in the report area in 2012.

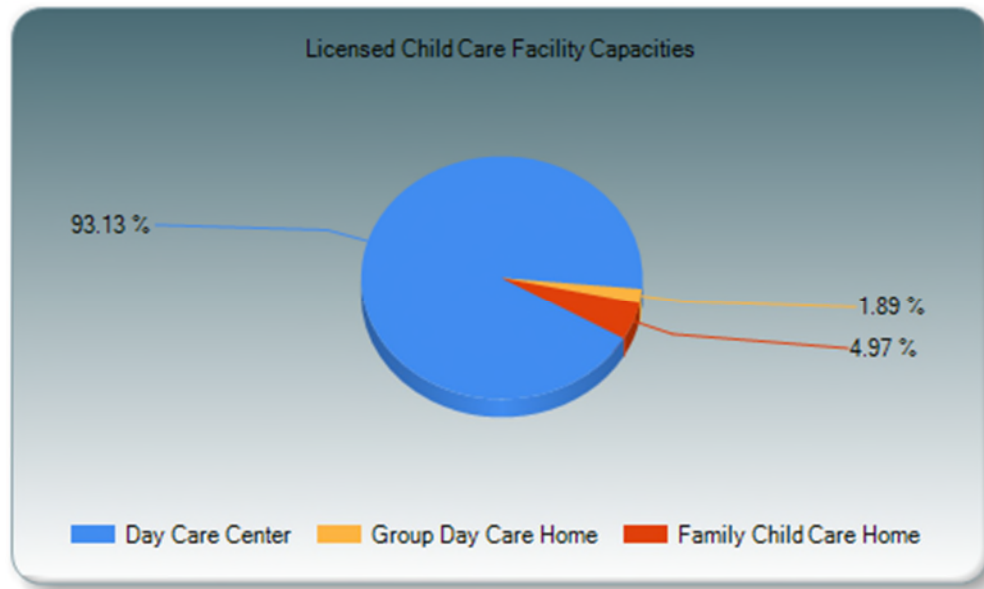


Table 23. Day Care Centers and Group Day Care Homes, 2012

County	Number of Facilities	Total Capacity	Day Care Centers		Group Day Care Homes		Family Child Care Homes	
			Number	Capacity	Number	Capacity	Number	Capacity
Erie	169	8,082	89	7,527	13	153	67	402
Pennsylvania	8,213	352,663	4,672	326,670	827	9,709	2,716	16,296

Source: *Pennsylvania Departments of Public Welfare and Education, Office of Child Development and Early Learning, August 2013.* and *Pennsylvania Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL), 2014.*

One of the Medium Range Goals from the Emerge 2040 community meetings is to ensure Erie County children are ready to learn when they enter school by creating countywide access to high-quality early care and education. Establish a formal alliance of business leaders, early childhood professionals, K-12/16 educators, parents, support agencies, and related initiatives such as Erie Together and Success by 6®, focused on ensuring access to high quality early care and education for all children in Erie County. This group should create and deploy strategies to: (1) raise countywide awareness of the importance of high quality pre-Kindergarten programming on children’s future success; (2) make high quality pre-Kindergarten programs affordable for families (this may include building Erie’s Future Fund (a scholarship fund designed to allow low income children to attend quality pre-school classes) and/or identifying additional opportunities); (3) address any existing “gaps” in programming across the county, whether those gaps be geographic, capacity, or program-related; and (4) address transportation

issues. This group should also maintain a close connection with state and federal legislators to both understand and help inform relevant legislation.

Erie Together is a community wide collective action movement that has been active in the Erie Area for the last seven years. The Emerge 2040 goal is echoed by Erie Together Action Team 1: Early Childhood Readiness and Success - Pre-K through 3rd Grade There Theme is every young child is able to succeed. The identified Outcome is: The Erie region will be the leader in constantly increasing and improving children's ability to succeed from birth through age 8, by improving pre-Kindergarten outcomes as measured by Kindergarten benchmarks and third grade reading level.

Education: Child Care Costs

The 2013-2014 Department of Public Welfare reports the average costs for child care based on responses from licensed care provider centers in each county. Cost of child care for each type of care and age group for Erie County is shown in Table 24. These figures include the average cost of care for all age ranges including: Infant care, Toddler care, Pre-school care, School-age Before and After Care and School-age Full Day rates.

Table 24. Average Child Care Costs, 2011-2012

County	Type of Care	Daily Cost, Full-Time	Daily Cost, Part-Time
Erie	CENTER	\$28.74	\$26.55

Source: *Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, 2013-2014.*

Education: Child Care Ceiling Rates

Table 25 is a listing of the daily Maximum Child Care Allowances (MCCA) determined by the Department of Public Welfare (DPW), effective January 1, 2013. This is the maximum base amount paid by Child Care Information Services (CCIS) agencies for child care assistance for eligible families enrolled in the CCIS program. The family pays family co-pay which is subtracted from the amount paid to the provider by the CCIS office. DPW does periodic provider rate assessments and determines the MCCA amounts by utilizing the 75 %ile of actual child care provider costs in the county by type and age range. The rates listed below provide an estimated average daily rate by Provider Type and the Child's Age Range for Full Time Care.

Table 25. Child Care Ceiling Rates

County	Type of Provider	Full Time Care					
		Infant	Young Toddler	Old Toddler	Pre-School	Young School-Age	Old School-Age
Erie	Child Care Center	\$32.65	\$31.65	\$30.58	\$27.65	\$24.95	\$24.95
Erie	Group Child Care Home	\$29.65	\$28.95	\$27.35	\$26.50	\$25.65	\$25.65
Erie	Family Child Care Home	\$24.65	\$22.65	\$22.58	\$22.35	\$20.59	\$20.59
Erie	Unregulated	\$11.00	\$11.00	\$11.00	\$11.00	\$11.00	\$11.00

Source: *Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, Child Care Works Subsidized Child Care Program*

Housing

Housing: Housing Units

The number of housing units within Erie County in July of each year from 2004-2014 is shown in Table 26. According to the U.S. Census, there were a total of 119,816 housing units in the report area in 2014, an increase of 3,117 or 2.67 % since 2004 compared to 3.3 % increase in Pennsylvania.

Table 26. 2004 - 2014 Housing Units

County	July 2004	July 2005	July 2006	July 2007	July 2008
Erie	116,699	117,392	117,889	118,332	118,844
Pennsylvania	5,411,357	5,454,141	5,490,779	5,520,838	5,544,680

Table 26 (continued). 2004 - 2014 Housing Units

County	July 2009	July 2010	July 2011	July 2012	July 2013	July 2014
Erie	118,986	119,182	119,449	119,461	119,648	119,816
Pennsylvania	5,560,138	5,568,612	5,574,584	5,576,370	5,581,865	5,590,373

Source: *United States Census Bureau, Population Division, Housing Unit Estimates for Counties: July 1, 2004 to July 1, 2014, Release Date May 2015*

The increase in the number of housing units contrasted to the decreasing population is an indicator of increased urban sprawl. The urbanized area of Erie has increased by more than 33% while the population has shrunk by 3.6%. This puts more pressure on local government and social service agencies to provide services over a larger area as infrastructure is abandoned for Greenfield development.

Housing: Housing Age

The known year of when housing units where built for Erie County area are shown in Table 27.

Table 27. Median Housing Unit Age, 2009 - 2013

County	Housing Units Where Year Built is Known	Median Year built	Housing Units Built				% Units Built			
			Newer than 2000	Built 1980 to 1999	Built 1960 to 1979	Built pre 1960	Newer than 2000	Built 1980 to 1999	Built 1960 to 1979	Built pre 1960
Erie	119,175	1959	8,048	21,353	29,072	60,702	6.75%	17.92 %	24.39 %	50.94 %
Pennsylvania	5,565,653	1961	476,283	1,064,767	1,276,802	2,747,801	8.56%	19.13 %	22.94 %	49.37 %
National	132,057,808	1976	20,157,260	36,735,368	35,676,692	39,488,480	15.26 %	27.82 %	27.02 %	29.90 %

Source: *United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2013 Data Release, December 2014.*

The 2013 American Community Survey 5-year data is a 5-year average of data collected from 2009 through 2013.

41.9% of Erie City housing stock (DP 04 Selected Housing Characteristics 2010-2014) is pre WWII and as such needs more maintenance. Large numbers of these homes have little or no insulation as was the practice in those times. These inner city homes are overwhelmingly occupied by low income residents who have few resources to maintain or update their dwellings. The cost to heat the homes puts a real strain on already tight budgets. While GECAC weatherizes 30 homes per year with 60 to 80 houses on the wait list. At least another 80 homes are available to us at all times. Utility Assistance and Neighbor for Neighbor help to stabilize these families during the cold winter months, more needs to be done to help families conserve energy, preserve financial resources and have healthier and safer environments for their families.

Housing: Homeowners

The U.S. Census Bureau estimated there were 73,729 owner occupied homes in Erie County area in 2000, and 73,979 owner occupied homes in the report area for the 5 year estimated period from 2009 - 2013. Erie County saw a 0.34 % change in occupied homes between 2000 and 2013. Comparatively, the Pennsylvania increase in owner occupied homes was 1.65 %.

Table 28. % Change in Owner Occupied Homes, 2000 - 2013

County	Homes, 2000	Homes, 2009/2013	Owner Occupied Homes Change %
Erie	73,729	73,979	0.34%
Pennsylvania	3,406,337	3,462,512	1.65%
National	69,815,753	75,075,700	7.53%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census of Population and Housing, Summary File 1, 2000; United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2013 Data Release, December 2014.

The 2013 American Community Survey 5-year data is a 5-year average of data collected from 2009 through 2013.

In the ongoing recovery from The Great Recession, Erie County wages and income per capita have been lackluster, and real income per capita (adjusted for inflation) actually fell a bit. Erieites are relying more and more on payments from governments for their income. Worst of all, those at the bottom end of the economic spectrum continue to struggle as poverty rates have risen and self-sufficiency rates have fallen. This puts pressure on all phases of the population, especially the lowest income brackets.

Depressed wages contribute to an inability of local families to afford the quality rental housing that is available and causes them to rent substandard apartments. A worker earning Pennsylvania's 2015 minimum wage (\$7.25 per hour) would need to work 72 hours per week in order to afford their rent. Out of Reach 2015 estimates that 55% of renters are unable to afford fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment.

Housing: Housing-Cost Burden (Renters)

The 2009 - 2013 American Community Survey shows in Table 29 that 48.31% of occupied units paying rent nationwide pay 30 % or more of their income on housing costs. For Erie County, 48.30% of occupied units paying rent have a housing cost burden. 30% or more of income spent on housing costs is considered a "housing-cost burden". The number of occupied units is limited to those where gross rent as a %of household income is able to be calculated.

Table 29. Housing-Cost Burden (Renters), 2009 - 2013

County	Total Housing Units	Occupied Units Paying Rent	30 % or More of Income Paying Rent	% of Renters Spending 30 % or More of Income with Rent
Erie	119,175	35,696	17,240	48.30%
Pennsylvania	5,565,653	1,495,915	687,895	45.98%
National	132,057,808	40,534,516	19,581,492	48.31%

Source: *United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2013 Data Release, December 2014.*

The 2013 American Community Survey 5-year data is a 5-year average of data collected from 2009 through 2013.

Housing: Housing-Cost Burden (Owners)

The 2009 - 2013 American Community Survey shows in Table 30 that 35.4% of homeowners with mortgages nationwide pay 30% or more of their income on housing costs. 26.67% of owners with mortgages and 13.31% of owners without mortgages spend 30 % or more of their income on housing costs in the report area. 30% or more of income spent on housing costs is considered a "housing-cost burden".

Table 30. Housing-Cost Burden (Owners), 2009 - 2013

County	Total Housing Units	Owners with Mortgages	30 % or More of Income with Mortgage	% of Owners Spending 30 % or More of Income with Mortgage	Owners without Mortgages	30 % or More of Income without Mortgage	% of Owners Spending 30 % or More of Income without Mortgage
Erie	119,175	45,566	12,151	26.67%	28,413	3,782	13.31%
Pennsylvania	5,565,653	2,161,939	680,772	31.49%	1,300,573	212,716	16.36%
National	132,057,808	49,820,840	17,636,344	35.40%	25,254,860	3,784,400	14.98%

Source: *United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2013 Data Release, December 2014.*

The 2013 American Community Survey 5-year data is a 5-year average of data collected from 2009 through 2013.

According to the 2013 Census, Erie County had a total of 119,175 housing units, 109,675 (91.9%) of which were occupied. Single-unit structures comprise the majority of this total – 77,877, or 65.4%. Of all multi-unit structures, smaller complexes (those with four or fewer units per structure) are the most prevalent making up 58.4% of the multi-unit total. (US Census Bureau, 2009-2013)

The housing stock in Erie County is aging. When preparing Erie County's Comprehensive Housing Plan in 2001, Graney, Grossman, Ray and Associates of Harrisville, PA noted “one key census question concerns the date a house was constructed. One important element is the number of homes built prior to 1940. Though older homes are not necessarily in poor condition, they usually do require more maintenance.” (Erie County Planning Department) Thirty five point five percent (35.5%) of Erie County's housing units were built prior to 1940. The additional maintenance required by these homes translates into additional costs for homeowners. (US Census Bureau, 2009-2013)

The majority of Erie County's occupied housing units are owner-occupied – 73,979, or 67.5%. The majority of householders have lived in their current homes less than 15 years (57.2%). The median value of Erie County homes is \$115,100. Over sixty % (61.6%) of the owner-occupied homes have a mortgage. The median monthly owner costs for a homeowner with a mortgage are \$1,140, while homeowners without a mortgage have an average of \$442 monthly costs. (US Census Bureau, 2009-2013)

Housing: Vacancy Rates

The U.S. Census Bureau provides vacancy data based on American Community Survey 5-year estimates (2009 - 2013). Vacancy rates for Erie County are reported in Table 31.

Vacant non-rental housing totals 1,746 units and includes those for sale only and sold but not occupied. For the report area, that is a non-rental housing vacancy rate of 1.47%, in comparison

to the Pennsylvania rate of 1.57% and the national rate of 1.73 %.

Vacant rental housing totals 2,788 units and includes those for rent and rented but not occupied. For Erie County, that is a rental housing vacancy rate of 2.34 %, in comparison to the Pennsylvania rate of 2.15% and the national rate of 2.9%.

Vacant other housing totals 4,966 units and includes those used for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use, as well as units used for migrant workers. For Erie County, that is a other housing vacancy rate of 4.17 %, in comparison to the Pennsylvania rate of 7.19 % and the national rate of 7.82 %.

Table 31. Address Vacancies, 2009 - 2013

County	Total Housing Units	Vacant Non-Rental	Vacant Non-Rental Rate	Vacant Rental	Vacant Rental Rate	Vacant Other	Vacant Other Rate
Erie	119,175	1,746	1.47%	2,788	2.34%	4,966	4.17%
Pennsylvania	5,565,653	87,387	1.57%	119,768	2.15%	400,071	7.19%
National	132,057,808	2,290,610	1.73%	3,830,007	2.90%	10,326,971	7.82%

Source: *United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2013 Data Release, December 2014.*

The 2013 American Community Survey 5-year data is a 5-year average of data collected from 2009 through 2013.

Housing: Overcrowded Housing

Occupied housing units, overcrowded housing units, and percent overcrowded are provided for both owners and renters located in Erie County in Table 32. Figures listed are for those occupied housing units where occupants per room are known. The average for the report area is 1.31%. Comparatively, the Pennsylvania rate was 1.26% while the national rate logged in at 3.28%.

Table 32. Overcrowded Housing Units, 2009 - 2013

County	Occupied Housing Units	Overcrowded Housing Units		Overcrowded Owner Occupied		Overcrowded Renter Occupied	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Erie	109,675	1,437	1.31%	747	1.01%	690	1.93%
Pennsylvania	4,958,427	62,260	1.26%	24,586	0.71%	37,674	2.52%
National	115,610,216	3,797,345	3.28%	1,277,577	1.70%	2,519,768	6.22%

Table 32 (continued). Overcrowded Housing Units, 2009 - 2013

County	Hispanic Householder		
	Housing Units	Overcrowded Number	Overcrowded %
Erie	2,321	122	5.26%
Pennsylvania	205,225	11,751	5.73%
National	13,698,727	1,836,247	13.40%

Source: *United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2013 Data Release, December 2014.*

The 2013 American Community Survey 5-year data is a 5-year average of data collected from 2009 through 2013.

The pay scale in the Erie area is depressed and as result fewer families can afford to buy a house. This leads to more renters. 17,140 renters in the Erie area, or 52.2%, (ACS 2009-2013) pay over 30% of their income on rent. Other causes of eviction include job loss, domestic violence, poor money management, drugs and alcohol. Renters in Erie County make up approximately 33% of the total households. In 2009-2013, the estimated Annual Median Income (AMI) for renters was \$19,635. This is 31.6% of the AMI for all households in the county (\$62,000). (*Out of Reach 2015 – Erie County, PA*)

Renters in Erie County make up approximately 32% of the total households. In 2014, the estimated Annual Median Income (AMI) for renters was \$34,986. This is 61.2% of the AMI for all households in the County (\$55,500). (*Out of Reach 2015 – Erie County, PA*) Each year, HUD calculates the Fair Market Rent (FMR) for each Metropolitan Statistical Area. The FMR for zero to four bedroom apartments in Erie County was calculated by HUD in 2013. The FMRs represent a decrease ranging from 13-22% from 2008 rates.

FAIR MARKET RENTS (FMRs) BY NUMBER OF BEDROOMS – 2013 ERIE COUNTY					
Location	Zero	One	Two	Three	Four
Erie County	\$438	\$534	\$673	\$841	\$1,004

Using the two-bedroom apartment as our sample, a worker in Erie County would need to earn \$12.81 per hour at 40-hours per week (\$26,640 annually) in order for their rent to be affordable. A worker earning Pennsylvania's 2013 minimum wage (\$7.25 per hour) would need to work 72hours per week in order to afford their rent. *Out of Reach 2015* estimates that 55% of renters are unable to afford fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment.

Public Housing is centered in the city of Erie. There are 2,157 apartments available for families in the city. There are also 683 Section 8 units available. In the County there are 15 family public units in North East and 69 in Corry. There are 154 Section 8 units in Corry. There are 547 Section 8 units throughout the rest of Erie County. The Housing Authority of the City of Erie has 2,157 units of housing. There are 13 complexes serving the elderly with 1,666 units available. Fifteen shelters have 258 available beds. Two hundred and ten beds are available in transitional housing at 11 locations. Forty-six beds are available in single-room occupancy and 117 handicapped housing units.

Citizen input from Emerge 2040 came together around these recommendations: Defend neighborhoods and communities against decline by adopting a regional strategy to address decaying and abandoned properties through data collection, code enforcement, and creation of a Housing Court. To understand the challenges posed by problem properties throughout Erie County, municipalities should develop a shared property information system to track and map information about property ownership, code violations, permitting, tax claims, crime incidents, and foreclosures, and to analyze how policy-makers can most effectively target resources. In areas where problem properties are most prevalent, Erie municipalities should consider standardizing code enforcement systems and creating a Housing Court with jurisdiction over housing, building, fire, zoning, and health code violations and landlord/tenant disputes.

Help homeowners maintain, improve and upgrade their homes for the future by establishing a clearinghouse that provides connections to technical assistance and funding for home repairs and energy efficiency improvements. The county and its partners should create a clearinghouse for resources and funding that will assist all homeowners with access to technical assistance and existing financing programs related to housing repair and energy efficiency technologies. As a secondary step the partnership should explore whether additional funding mechanisms, such as a revolving loan fund, tax incentives, or a targeted private financing program, should be established to support housing repair and energy efficiency work. It should also work with trade schools to increase the number of qualified contractors to perform this work.

GEACAC Housing is extremely busy dealing with evictions and stabilizing families in safe affordable housing. The Housing Department annually faces times where all funding has been expended.

INCOME

Income: Wages

Average weekly wages for Erie County during the period July - September, 2014, are provided in Table 33. Erie County has an average wage of \$754.59. The average federal government weekly wage is \$1,328, which compares to the average state and local government weekly wage of \$828.50 and the average private weekly wage is \$738.

Table 33. Weekly Wages, Third Quarter 2014

County	Total Employees	Average Weekly Wage	Federal Employees	Average Federal Government Weekly Wage	State/Local Employees	Average State/Local Government Weekly Wage	Private Employees	Average Private Weekly Wage
Erie	125,179	\$755	1,523	\$1,332	13,479	\$933.5	110,177	\$733
Pennsylvania	5,676,185	\$937	95,018	\$1,440	588,208	\$1,002.0	4,992,959	\$925
National	137,724,117	\$949	2,731,870	\$1,541	18,428,727	\$961.0	116,563,520	\$940

Source: *United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.*

Income: Living Wage

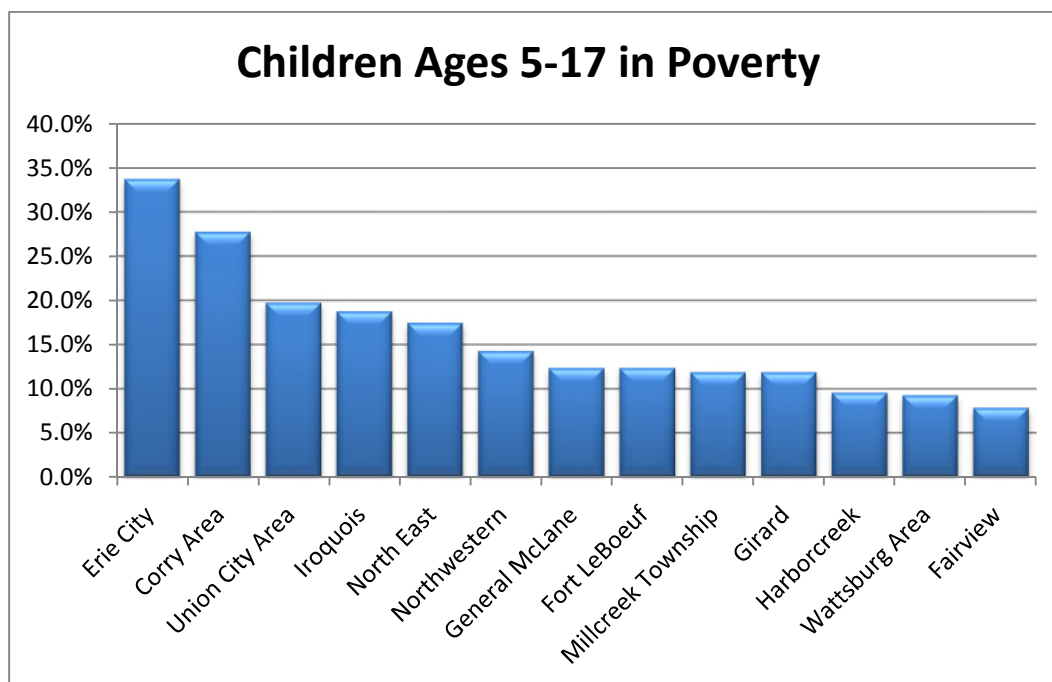
How much income is enough for families to meet their needs without public subsidies? Although determining an exact dollar figure may be difficult, most people know if their income is adequate or if it is not. The Federal Poverty Level (FPL), or federal poverty measure, is the official measurement used by the federal government to determine income adequacy. Families are characterized as “poor” if their income is below the Federal Poverty Level and “not poor” if it is above the FPL. (*PathWaysPA, 2010-2011*)

The 2016 Federal Poverty Level for a household of four was \$24,300. According to the 2014 American Community Survey, approximately 43,438 citizens in Erie County fall below this level. Of these 18,716 live in extreme poverty, earning less than \$10,000 annually. (US Census Bureau, 2014)

This rate was above the Pennsylvania rate of 13.5% and the national rate of 15.5%. The poverty rate for children was even higher with 17.7% of Erie County’s children under the age of 18 living in poverty. This rate is above the Pennsylvania average of 16.% and below national average of 18.5% for children living in poverty. (American Fact Finder 2014)

The following table shows the number and %of children ages 5-17 living in poverty alphabetized by school district. The graph following it also demonstrates this information.

Children in Erie County in Poverty by School District			
School District	Children 5- 17	Children in Poverty 5-17	% Children in Poverty 5-17
Corry Area SD	2,649	733	27.7%
Erie City SD	15881	5,351	33.7%
Fairview SD	1,738	136	7.8%
Fort LeBoeuf SD	2,389	283	11.8%
General McLane SD	2,296	283	12.3%
Girard SD	2,055	320	15.6%
Harborcreek SD	2,472	236	9.5%
Iroquois SD	1,292	241	18.7%
Millcreek SD	8,676	1,024	11.8%
North East SD	1,801	313	17.4%
Northwestern SD	1,801	201	14.2%
Union City SD	1,413	243	19.7%
Wattsburg SD	1,231	167	9.2%



The federal poverty measure has become increasingly problematic and outdated as a measure of income adequacy. Indeed, the Census Bureau itself states, “the official poverty measure should be interpreted as a statistical yardstick rather than as a complete description of what people and families need to live...” The most significant shortcoming of the federal poverty measure is that for most families, in most places, it is simply not high enough. Because families can have income above the federal poverty measure and yet lack sufficient resources to adequately meet their basic needs, most assistance programs use a multiple of the federal poverty measure to determine need. (PathWaysPA, 2010-2011)

To address the shortcomings in the federal poverty measure, PathwaysPA compiles an annual self-sufficiency standard for all Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA) in Pennsylvania. The self-

sufficiency standard calculates the bare-minimum costs for housing, childcare, food, transportation, and health care costs that Pennsylvania families face specific to each individual community. “A Self-Sufficiency Wage means the family or individual is on the road to economic independence and is not forced to choose between basic necessities. However, it is important to note that the Standard is a conservative measure that does not include long-term needs, credit card or other debt repayment, purchases of major items (such as a car or refrigerator), emergency expenses or even items such as school supplies and cell phone bills.” (PathWaysPA, 2010-2011)

The living wage shown is the hourly rate that an individual must earn 40 hours a week in order to meet the basic living expenses of their family. The Minimum Hourly Wage for Pennsylvania is \$7.25.

In the table below, for families with two adults, the assumptions are that one adult is staying home with the children so there are no child care costs, and the family has access to only one vehicle.

Table 34. County Hourly Living Wage, 2014

County	One Adult	One Adult, One Child	One Adult, Two Children	One Adult, Three Children	Two Adults*	Two Adults, One Child*	Two Adults, Two Children*	Two Adults, Three Children*
Erie	\$9.17	\$20.29	\$25.33	\$32.03	\$7.66	\$11.25	\$13.99	\$16.43
Pennsylvania	\$10.40	\$21.79	\$26.83	\$34.00	\$8.30	\$12.00	\$14.74	\$17.41

Source: *Poverty in America, Living Wage Calculator, 2014.*

* This number assumes only one wage earner and that the family has no child care expenses and only one vehicle.

Income: Income by Family Size

Table 35 shows median household income broken out by family size. For a household of three persons, Erie County has a median household income of \$62,509, compared to the Pennsylvania average of \$71,793 and national average of \$67,084.

Table 35. Median Household Income by Family Size, 2009 - 2013

County	Median Household Income						
	Household of One	Household of Two	Household of Three	Household of Four	Household of Five	Household of Six	Household of Seven
Erie	\$22,454	\$52,531	\$62,509	\$69,810	\$62,377	\$61,656	\$66,146
Pennsylvania	\$26,077	\$58,295	\$71,793	\$82,418	\$80,082	\$74,894	\$70,641
National	\$27,980	\$59,456	\$67,084	\$77,607	\$71,624	\$67,546	\$69,240

Source: *United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2013 Data Release, December 2014.*

The 2013 American Community Survey 5-year data is a 5-year average of data collected from 2009 through 2013.

In the ongoing recovery from The Great Recession, Erie County wages and income per capita have been lackluster, and real income per capita (adjusted for inflation) actually fell a bit. Erieites are relying more and more on payments from governments for their income. Worst of all, those at the bottom end of the economic spectrum continue to struggle as poverty rates have risen and self-sufficiency rates have fallen. This puts pressure on all phases of the population, especially the lowest income brackets.

As mentioned previously, poverty is very much a reality for young and old in Erie County. Over 43,438 residents of Erie County, or 16%, are below poverty standard. Only 8.6% of those over age 65 are below the poverty standard. In the city of Erie, the overall poverty rate is 25.1% and 14.3% for those over age 65. (B17001 ACS 2014). 10.9% of persons age 65 live alone (S2501 Occupancy Characteristics ACS 2014). 18.9% of those over 65 pay more than 30% of their income for housing. (ACS 2014)Poverty

Poverty: Federal Poverty Income Guidelines

The Federal Poverty Income Guidelines (FPIG) displayed in Table 36 are issued every year by the Federal Department of Health and Human Services) and are the measure used for determining financial eligibility for all federal and many state programs. The FPIG is the same for all 48 contiguous states and the District of Columbia. The Federal Poverty Income Guidelines is a slightly different, simplified version of the Poverty Thresholds used to measure poverty for statistical purposes. In most communities, a family would need to earn twice or 200% of the amount identified for their family size in the FPIG guidelines to achieve stability and in some communities that number is closer to 3 times or 300%. In order for a community to assist families in moving out of poverty into stability, a self-sufficiency model like the Living Wage Calculator must be used so that appropriate strategies can be instituted.

2016 Poverty Guide Lines

Family Unit	100%	125%	130%	150%	185%	200%	250%	300%
1	\$11,880	\$14,850	\$15,444	\$17,820	\$21,978	\$23,760	\$29,700	\$35,640
2	\$16,020	\$20,025	\$20,826	\$24,030	\$29,637	\$32,040	\$40,050	\$48,060
3	\$20,160	\$25,200	\$26,208	\$30,240	\$37,296	\$40,320	\$50,400	\$60,480
4	\$24,300	\$30,375	\$31,590	\$36,450	\$44,955	\$48,600	\$60,750	\$72,900
5	\$28,440	\$35,550	\$36,972	\$42,660	\$52,614	\$56,880	\$71,100	\$85,320
6	\$32,580	\$40,725	\$42,354	\$48,870	\$60,273	\$65,160	\$81,450	\$97,740
7	\$36,730	\$45,913	\$47,749	\$55,095	\$67,951	\$73,460	\$91,825	\$110,190
8	\$40,890	\$51,113	\$53,157	\$61,335	\$75,647	\$81,780	\$102,225	\$122,670
For each additional add	\$4,160	\$5,200	\$5,408	\$6,240	\$7,696	\$8,320	\$10,400	\$12,480

Poverty: Poverty Rate (ACS)

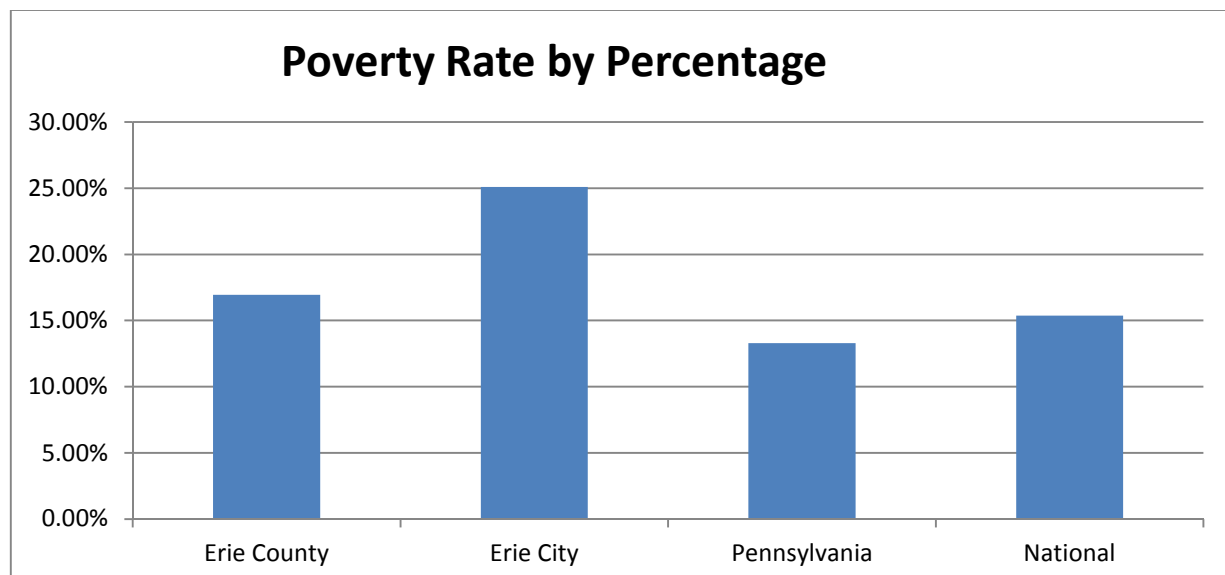
Table 37 shows the total population estimates for all persons in poverty for Erie County. According to the American Community Survey 5 year averages, an average of 16.94% of all persons lived in a state of poverty during the 2013 calendar year. The poverty rate for all persons living in Erie County is greater than the Pennsylvania average of 13.3%.

Table 37. Poverty Rate (ACS), 2009 - 2013

County	Poverty Rate for All Persons		
	Total Population	In Poverty	Poverty Rate
Erie	268,118	45,408	16.94%
Erie City	95,275	23,944	25.1%
Pennsylvania	12,318,805	1,638,820	13.30%
National	303,692,064	46,663,432	15.37%

Source: *United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2013 Data Release, December 2014.*

The 2013 American Community Survey 5-year data is a 5-year average of data collected from 2009 through 2013.



Poverty: Households in Poverty

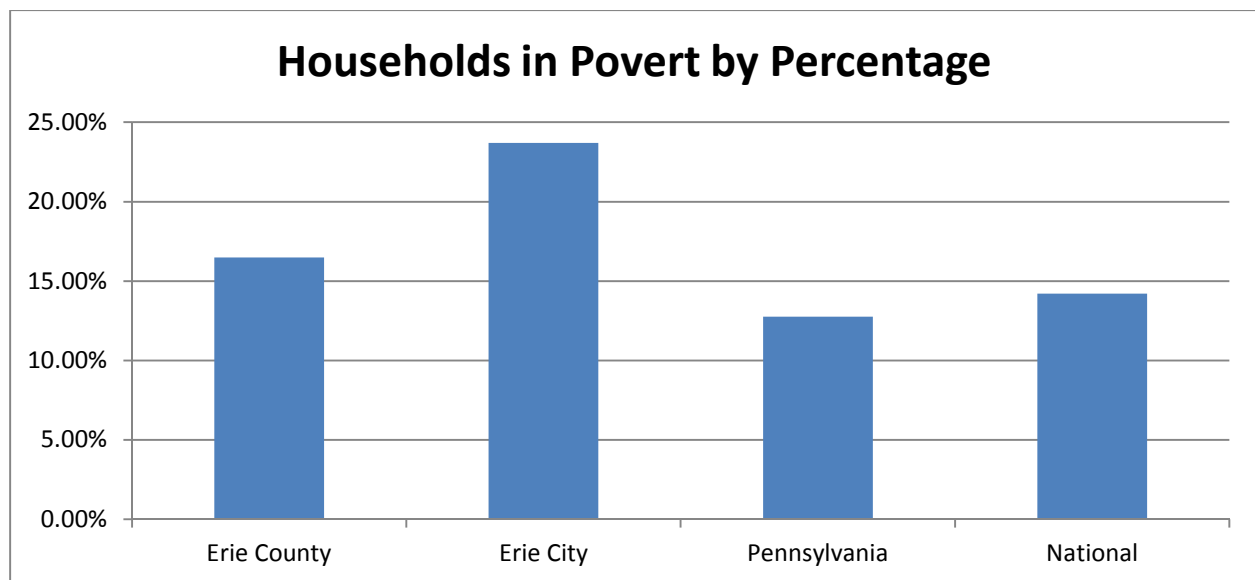
Table 38 shows the number and %of households in poverty based on the Poverty Thresholds in Erie County. In 2013, it is estimated that there were 18,088 households, or 16.49%, living in poverty in Erie County and 9,605 households in Erie City or 23.7%, compared to a Pennsylvania average of 12.76 %.

Table 38. Households in Poverty, 2009 - 2013

County	Total Households, 2009/2013	Households in Poverty, 2009/2013	% Households in Poverty, 2009/2013
Erie County	109,675	18,088	16.49%
Erie City	40,433	9,605	23.7%
Pennsylvania	4,958,427	632,670	12.76%
National	115,610,216	16,415,984	14.20%

Source: *United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2013 Data Release, December 2014.*

The 2013 American Community Survey 5-year data is a 5-year average of data collected from 2009 through 2013.



Poverty: Child (0-17) Poverty Rate (ACS)

Table 39 shows the total population estimates for children and children in poverty in Erie County. According to the American Community Survey 5 year averages, an average of 25.06% of children lived in a state of poverty during the 2013 calendar year. The poverty rate for children living in Erie County is greater than the Pennsylvania average of 18.76%.

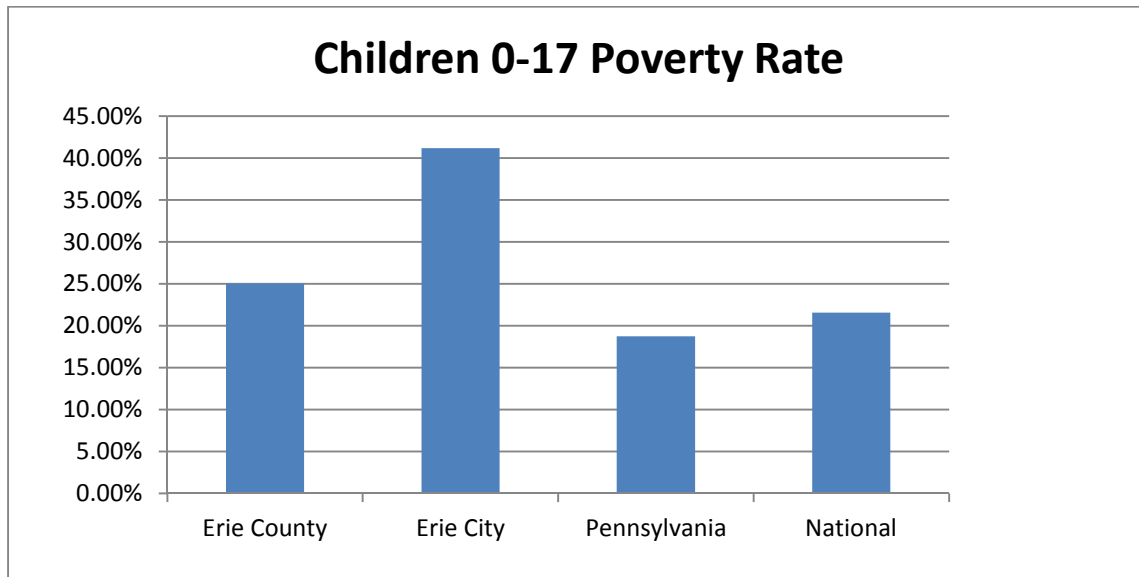


Table 39. American Community Survey, Child (0-17) Poverty Rate, 2009 - 2013

County	Children, Ages 0 - 17 years		
	Total Population	In Poverty	Poverty Rate
Erie County	61,554	15,425	25.06%
Erie City	23,082	9,510	41.20%
Pennsylvania	2,716,032	509,623	18.76%
National	72,748,616	15,701,799	21.58%

Source: *United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2013 Data Release, December 2014.*

The 2013 American Community Survey 5-year data is a 5-year average of data collected from 2009 through 2013.

Poverty: Number of Individuals Eligible for County Assistance Funding

Table 40 shows the average monthly unduplicated number of persons eligible for services from the County Assistance Office for the fiscal year 2013-2014. Of Erie counties total population of 280,294, only 5,940 are eligible for Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF - Case Assistance), less than 2.12% of the population.

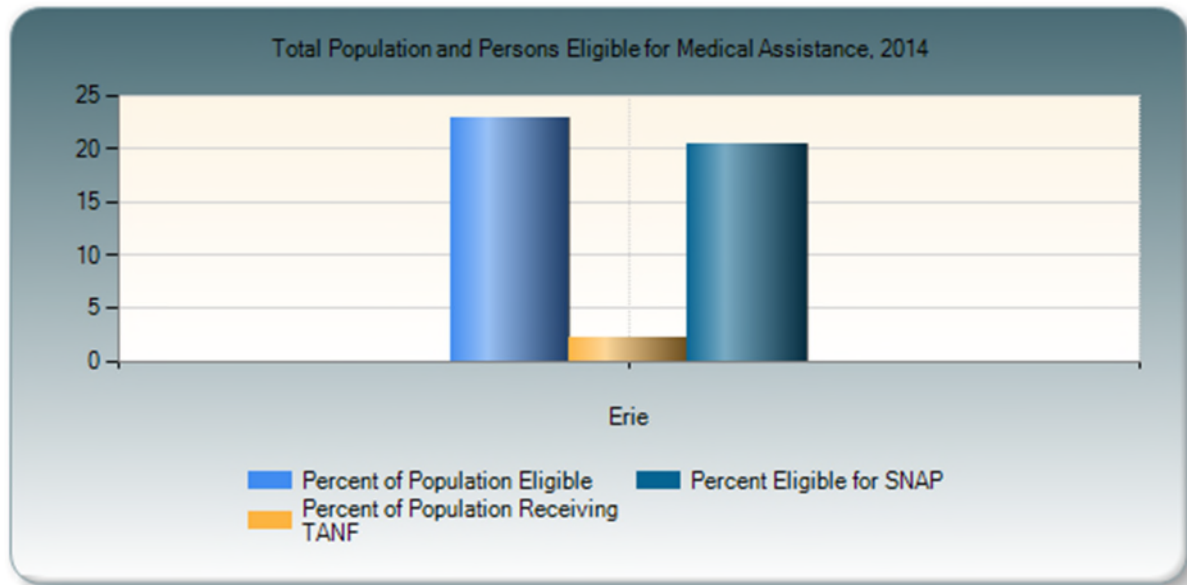


Table 40. Number of Individuals Eligible for County Assistance Funding, 2014

County	Total Population	Persons Eligible for Medical Assistance	% of Population Eligible	Receiving TANF	% of Population Receiving TANF	Eligible for SNAP	% Eligible for SNAP
Erie	280,294	63,944	22.81%	5,940	2.12%	57,024	20.34%
Pennsylvania	12,773,801	2,217,825	17.36%	192,087	1.50%	1,818,144	14.23%

Source: 2013 - 2014 Average Monthly Unduplicated Number of Persons Eligible for Medical Assistance, Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare and Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, 2013-2014.

Poverty: Number of Households Eligible for County Assistance Funding

Table 41 shows the average monthly unduplicated number of households eligible for services from the County Assistance Office for the fiscal year 2013-2014. Of Erie County's total of 109,675 households, only 2,126 are eligible for Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF - Case Assistance), less than 1.94% of the households.

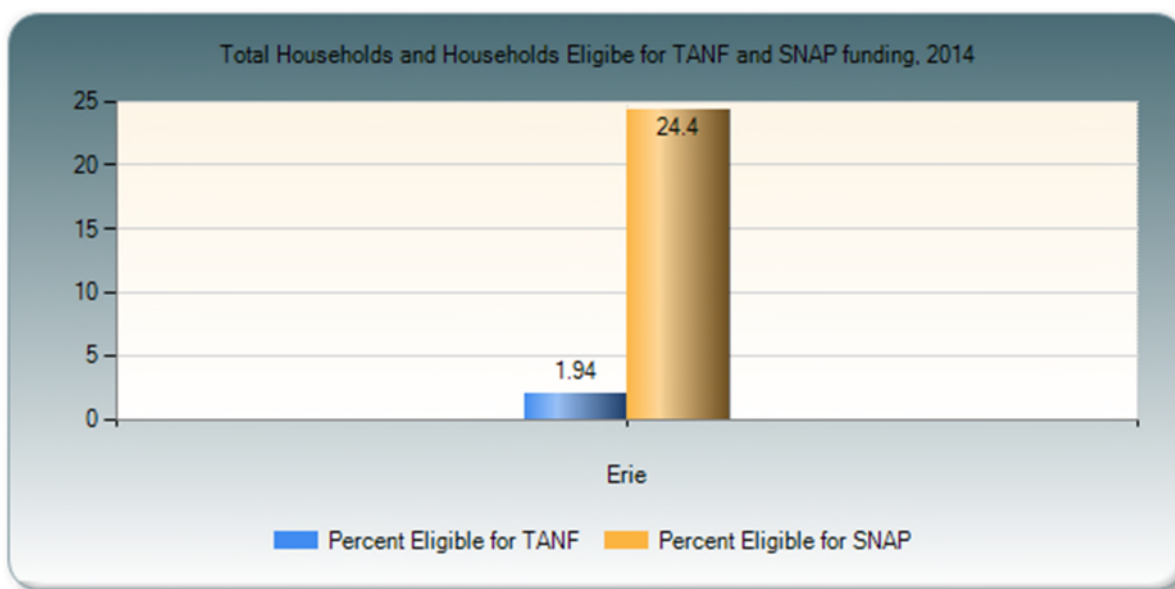


Table 41. Number of Households Eligible for County Assistance Funding, 2014

County	Total Households	Households Eligible for County Assistance Funding	Eligible for TANF	% Eligible for TANF	Eligible for SNAP	% Eligible for SNAP
Erie	109,675	28,887	2,126	1.94%	26,761	24.40%
Pennsylvania	4,958,427	971,061	75,204	1.52%	895,857	18.07%

Source: *Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, 2013-2014.*

United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2013 Data Release, December 2014.

The 2013 American Community Survey 5-year data is a 5-year average of data collected from 2009 through 2013.

This is another indication of poverty in the Erie area. The 24.4% of households who are eligible for SNAP correlates well with other statistics that reflect the challenges faced by the Erie area as it relates to poverty.

Poverty: Persons Eligible for Medical Assistance

Table 42 shows the average monthly unduplicated number of persons eligible for medical assistance for the fiscal year 2013-2014. According to the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare for Erie County, there was a total of 63,944 persons eligible, or 22.81 percent, for medical assistance. This is compared to Pennsylvania's 17.36 percent.

Table 42. Persons Eligible for Medical Assistance, 2014

County	Total Population	Persons Eligible	% of Population Eligible
Erie	280,294	63,944	22.81%
Report Area	280,294	63,944	22.81%
Pennsylvania	12,773,801	2,217,825	17.36%

Source: 2013 - 2014 Average Monthly Unduplicated Number of Persons Eligible for Medical Assistance, Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare.

Poverty: Supplemental Security Income

The number of Supplemental Security Income recipients and expenditures in the report area are shown in Table 43. The number of recipients in Erie County totaled 11,500 receiving \$6,625,000 in payments with an average payment of \$576.09 per month.

Table 43. Supplemental Security Income, December 2013

County	Total Recipients	Amount of Payments (\$1,000)	Average Monthly Payment	Recipients by Age Category		
				Under 18	18 - 64	65 or Older
Erie	11,500	\$6,625	\$576.09	2,720	7,450	1,330
Pennsylvania	379,194	\$215,247	\$567.64	76,358	238,702	64,134

Source: Social Security Administration, Office of Retirement and Disability Policy, Supplemental Security Record (Characteristic Extract Record format), 100 % data, December 2013.

Poverty: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) (formerly Food Stamp Program)

Monthly Average Food Stamp Eligible Persons by County are shown in Table 44 for fiscal year 2013-2014. According to the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, the total number of eligible households for Erie county is 26,761. The average monthly SNAP (Food Stamp) allocation for the report area is \$252.43.

NOTE: To be Food Stamp Eligible, individuals must meet both resource and income requirements as determined by the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare. Income requirements include both gross and net income. To be eligible to receive food stamps, a person's gross income cannot exceed 160% of the poverty level nor can their net income exceed 100% of the poverty level.

Table 44. Households Receiving SNAP Benefits, 2013-2014

County	Total Households	Households Eligible for SNAP	Total SNAP Payments	Average SNAP Payment per Household
Erie	109,675	26,761	\$6,755,184	\$252.42
Pennsylvania	4,958,427	895,857	\$220,035,487	\$245.61

Source: *Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, 2013-2014* and *United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2013 Data Release, December 2014*.

The 2013 American Community Survey 5-year data is a 5-year average of data collected from 2009 through 2013.

Poverty: Households Receiving SNAP by Poverty Status (ACS)

Table 45 shows that 18,070 households (or 16.48%) received Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) payments, formerly known as food stamps, during 2013. Of those 18,070 households, 47.99% or 8,671 households have at least one working family member and 23.50% or 4,247 are over the age of 60. Nearly 72% of SNAP participant families have either a working member or are over age 60. This strongly refutes the image of SNAP participants as lazy. More must be done to change this image.

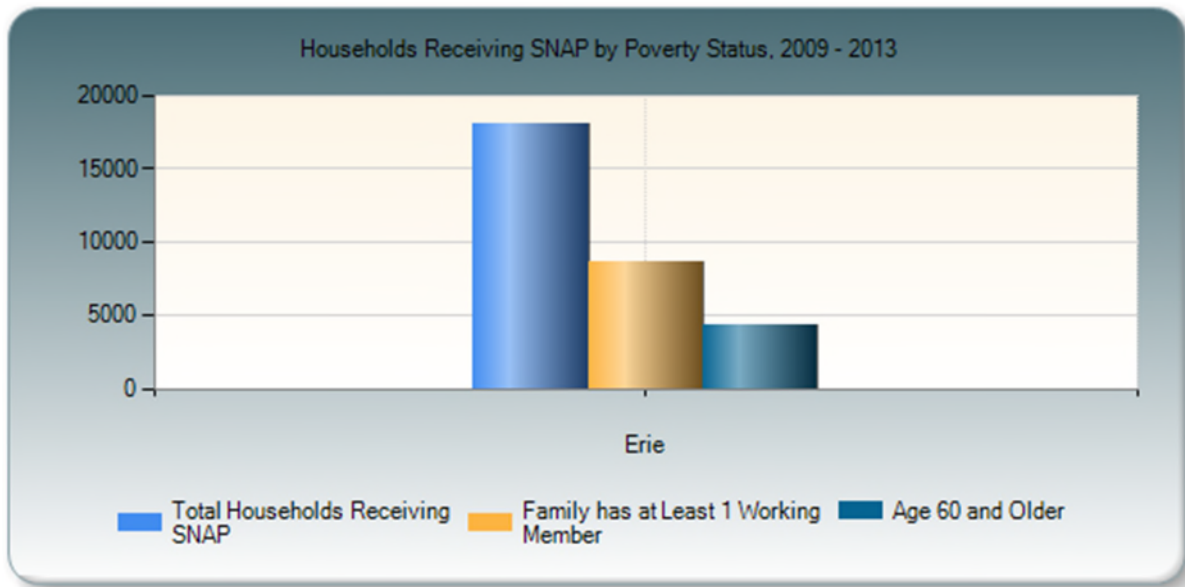


Table 45. Households Receiving SNAP by Poverty Status, 2009 - 2013

County	Total Households Receiving SNAP	%	Income Below Poverty	Income Above Poverty	Family has at Least 1 Working Member	Age 60 and Older
Erie	18,070	16.48%	10,073	7,997	8,671	4,247
Pennsylvania	585,892	11.82%	310,208	275,684	277,359	161,064
National	14,339,330	12.40%	7,498,398	6,840,932	7,896,027	3,723,170

Source: *United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2013 Data Release, December 2014.*

The 2013 American Community Survey 5-year data is a 5-year average of data collected from 2009 through 2013.

Supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP) numbers are for the last 12 months of the five-year average (2013).

Poverty: Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Cash Grants

Table 46 shows the number of approved applications and dollars spent in cash grants for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) which helps low-income families, typically with a one-time payment to help pay their heating bill during the winter months. For the fiscal year 2013-2014, the total approved applications were 12,498 with an average one-time payment of \$218.59. Cash payment amounts include one supplemental cash payment issued during the program year.

Table 46. Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Cash Grants, 2013-2014

County	Cash Grants		
	Number of Approved Applications	Dollars Spent	Average Grant Amount
Erie	12,498	\$2,731,932	\$218.59
Pennsylvania	397,937	\$92,464,195	\$232.36

Source: *Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, 2013-2014.*

Poverty: Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Crisis Grants

Table 47 shows the number of approved applications for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and dollars spent in crisis grants for energy assistance in Erie County. For the fiscal year 2013-2014, the total approved applications were 3,800 grants for an average grant amount of \$314.06. Crisis funds can be used for two purposes. To repair a furnace or heating system for an eligible household during the winter months if the heating system is not working or if the family has almost run out of their supply of main heating fuel (coal, fuel oil, wood, etc.).

Table 47. Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Crisis Grants, 2013-2014

County	Crisis Grants		
	Number of Approved Applications	Dollars Spent	Average Grant Amount
Erie	3,800	\$1,193,417	\$314.06
Pennsylvania	133,484	\$57,003,287	\$427.04

Source: *Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, 2013-2014.*

GECAC Weatherization serviced or replace 89 furnaces with Crisis funding aiding 244 people.

The last six charts illustrate the safety net that wraps around families in need in Erie. They also demonstrate the vastness of the need and how meager this safety net is. Payments of a few hundred dollars per month are the norm.

Health Care

Health Care: Medicare and Medicaid Providers

The total number of institutional Medicare and Medicaid providers, including hospitals, nursing facilities, federally qualified health centers, rural health clinics and community mental health centers for Erie County is shown in Table 48. According to the U.S. Department of Health and

Human Services, there were 77 active Medicare and Medicaid institutional service providers in the report area in 2014.

Table 48. Institutional Medicare and Medicaid Providers, 2014

County	Total Institutional Providers	Hospitals	Nursing Facilities	Federally Qualified Health Centers	Rural Health Clinics	Community Mental Health Centers
Erie	77	7	20	6	2	0
Pennsylvania	2,780	257	700	205	69	16

Source: *United States Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Provider of Services File, Second Quarter, 2014.*

Health Care: Persons Receiving Medicare

The total number of persons receiving Medicare is shown, broken down by number over 65 and number of disabled persons receiving Medicare for Erie County in Table 49. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services reported that a total of 55,755 persons were receiving Medicare benefits in the Erie County in 2012. A large number of individuals in our society are aware that persons over 65 years of age receive Medicare; however, many of them are unaware that disabled persons also receive Medicare benefits. A total of 12,125 disabled persons in the report area received Medicare benefits in 2012.

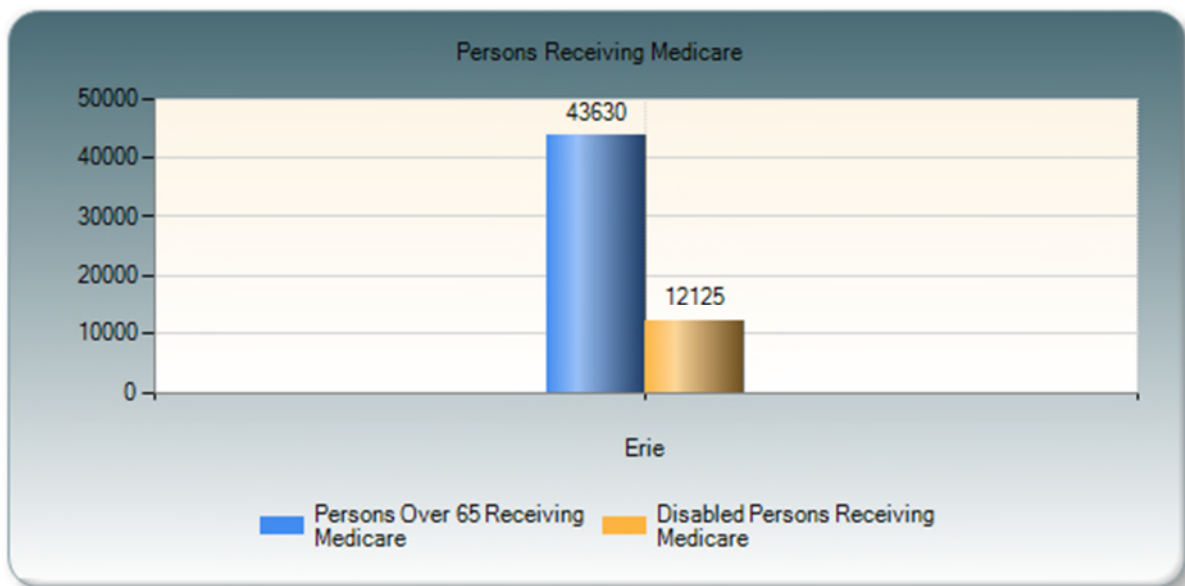


Table 49. Medicare Enrollment by County, 2012

County	Persons Over 65 Receiving Medicare	Disabled Persons Receiving Medicare	Total Persons Receiving Medicare
Erie	43,630	12,125	55,755
Pennsylvania	2,100,850	472,898	2,573,748

Source: *United States Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Medicare County Enrollment Report, 2012.*

Health Care: Child Health Insurance Program (CHIP) Enrollment

Child Health Insurance Program (CHIP) enrollment is shown in Table 50. Total enrollment in Erie County is 3,125 children. The number of enrollees whose household income is no greater than 208% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) totals 2,404, while those enrolled where FPL is greater than 314% equals 60 children.

Families who are at or above 200% of the Federal Poverty Level pay in part on a sliding scale for CHIP services.

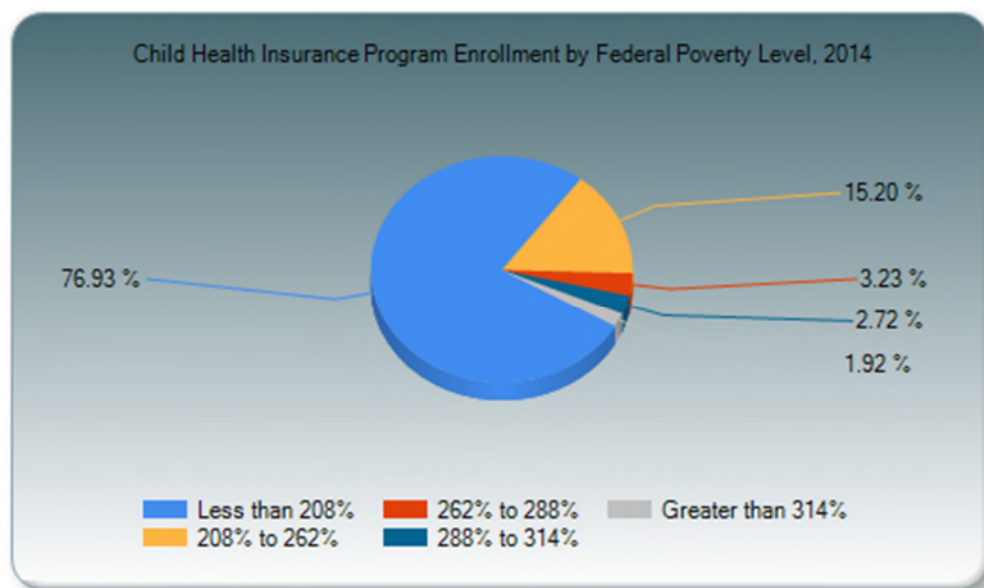


Table 50. Child Health Insurance Program (CHIP) Enrollment, 2014

County	Total Enrollment	Federal Poverty Levels				
		Less than 208%	208% to 262%	262% to 288%	288% to 314%	Greater than 314%
Erie	3,125	2,404	475	101	85	60
Pennsylvania	154,918	115,617	24,506	6,147	5,057	3,591

Source: *2014 Annual Report to the Legislature, Pennsylvania's Children's Health Insurance Program.*

Health Care: Uninsured Population

The uninsured population is calculated by estimating the number of persons eligible for insurance (generally those under 65) minus the estimated number of insured persons. In 2013, the %of uninsured persons was 10.9% in Erie County. Comparatively, the Pennsylvania rate was 11.6% and the national rate was 16.8%.

Table 51. Uninsured Persons, 2013

County	Insurance Population (2013 Estimate)	Number Insured	Number Uninsured	% Uninsured
Erie	226,150	201,394	24,756	10.9%
Pennsylvania	10,339,423	9,136,193	1,203,230	11.6%
National	264,843,216	220,365,245	44,477,968	16.8%

Source: *United States Census Bureau, Small Area Health Insurance Estimates, 2013 (January 2015 release).*

Health Care: Prenatal Care

Prenatal care significantly factors into the health of pregnant women and the birth of healthy babies. In 2012, the total number of women's first prenatal care visit occurring in the 1st trimester of pregnancy was 2,401; the total of first visits during the 2nd trimester was 456; and, for the 3rd trimester the total was 178 first time visits. Women's first prenatal care visit in an unknown trimester totaled 74 occurrences. There were 14 cases in which no prenatal care occurred.

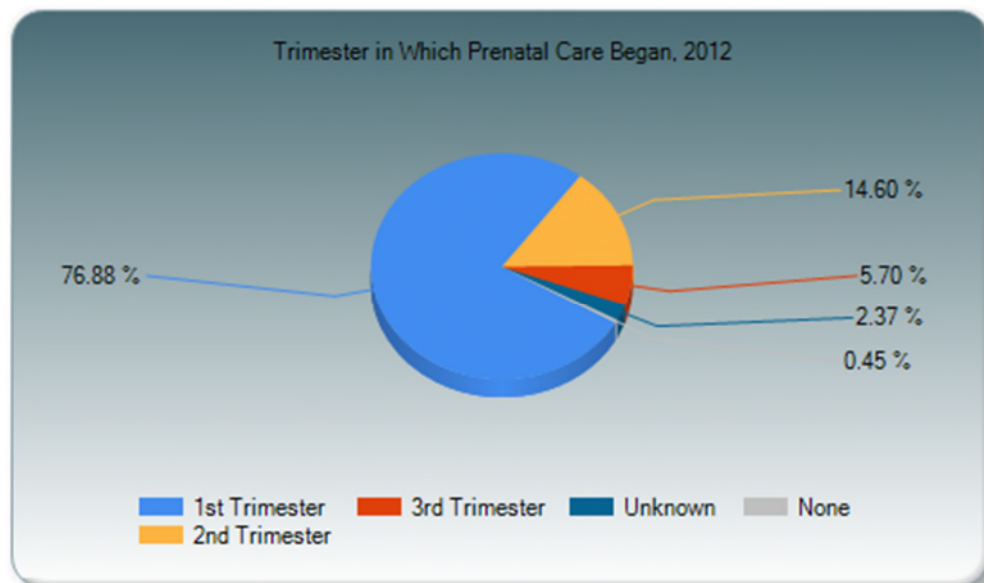


Table 52. Live Births by Birth Weight and Trimester of First Prenatal Visit, 2012

County	First Trimester			Second Trimester			Third Trimester		
	Under 2500 Grams	Over 2500 Grams	Unknown	Under 2500 Grams	Over 2500 Grams	Unknown	Under 2500 Grams	Over 2500 Grams	Unknown
Erie	157	2,240	4	28	428	0	13	165	0
Pennsylvania	7,128	90,284	390	2,428	25,993	100	491	6,358	18

Table 52 (continued). Live Births by Birth Weight and Trimester of First Prenatal Visit, 2012

County	Unknown Trimester			No Prenatal Care		
	Under 2500 Grams	Over 2500 Grams	Unknown	Under 2500 Grams	Over 2500 Grams	Unknown
Erie	11	57	6	4	9	1
Pennsylvania	976	4,539	363	358	1,419	28

Source: *Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Department of Health, Health Statistics and Research, 2012.*

Health Care: Births

Most live births occurred with mothers 20-30 years of age, giving birth to 56.36% of all births in the report area. The second largest group is mothers 30-40 years of age, with 31.96 % of births. Mothers over age 40 represent 2.43 % of births.

Of interest are live births by mothers under the age of 19, who gave birth to 9.25% of all babies in the report area. These births can work against families being self-sufficient. Teen mothers are statistically less likely to continue education through high school and college, without which many may earn only low-income wages. Teen mothers and their children face increased health risk due to lack of education and resources.

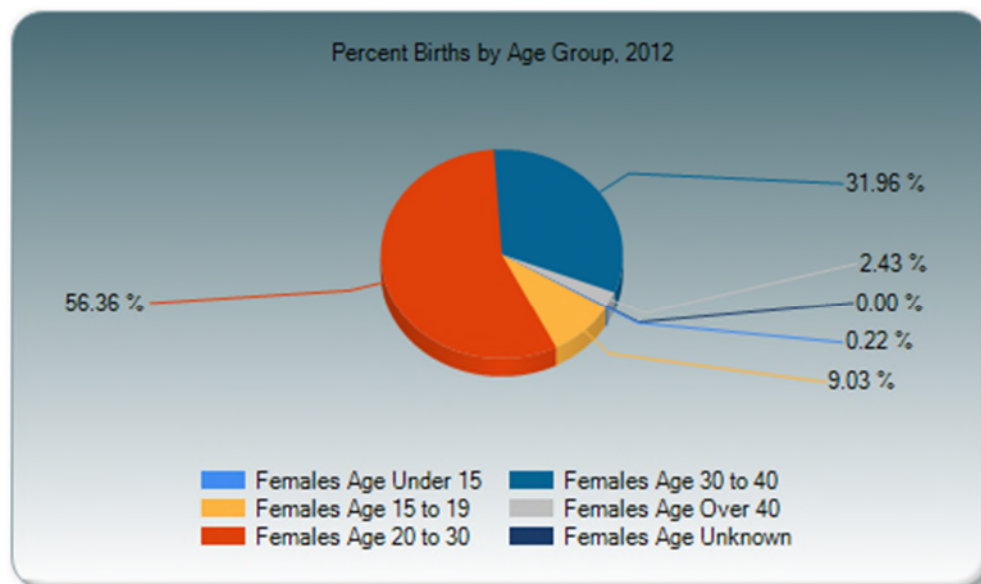


Table 53. Births by Females Age Under 15, and 15 to 19, 2012

County	Total Births	Mother Age					
		Under 15	15 to 19	20 to 30	30 to 40	Over 40	Unknown
Erie	3,123	7	282	1,760	998	76	-
Pennsylvania	140,873	124	9,939	71,397	55,228	4,093	92

Source: *Pennsylvania Department of Health, Bureau of Health Statistics and Research, 2012.*

From 1990 to 2010, the Erie County birth rate for female residents 15 to 19 years of age fell by one third (33.3%), from 49.6 to 33.1 births per 1,000 females aged 15-19 years. Overall, the birth rates for females 15-17 and 18-19 years dropped by 41.0% and 24.5%, respectively. Historically, the fewest three-year total number of births to Erie County female residents 15-19, 15-17, and 18-19 years of age were recorded during the period of 2008-2010. These totals were 1,114, 347, and 767 births, respectively. Birth rates for teens have continued to fall in Erie County since peaking in 1994.

Since 2007, the % of Erie County live births that were to mothers under the age of 18 has dropped from 5.0% in 2007 to 2.8% in 2012. The 2.8% in 2012 marked a historic low for the county. Particularly striking is the decline observed in Blacks - from 14.6% in 2007 to 6.2% in 2012. While these declines signify an overall reduction in teen births, there is still room for improvement as the local %ages lag slightly behind the figures for Pennsylvania.

The high number of pregnant women who smoke in Erie County is a serious concern. In addition to the risks smoking poses to their own health, such as cancer and heart disease, it jeopardizes the health of their babies.

Since 2007, the % of Erie County live births to non-smoking mothers during pregnancy has climbed from 71.6% in 2007 to 78.1% in 2012. The 78.1% in 2012 marked a historic high for the county. Despite this favorable trend, there is room for improvement as Pennsylvania consistently outperforms the county for this indicator.

Teen Live Birth Rates, 1990-2010

Year Number Birth Rate PA Rate Number Birth Rate PA Rate Number Birth Rate PA Rate
Erie County And Pennsylvania 1990-2010

	Ages 15 to 19			Ages 15 to 17			Ages 18 to 19		
	Number	Birth Rate	Pa Rate	Number	Birth Rate	Pa Rate	Number	Birth Rate	Pa Rate
1990	558	49.6	45.2	173	30.7	28.5	385	68.7	65.6
1992	589	52.0	41.5	213	37.8	27.4	376	65.9	60.0
1994	602	52.4	39.6	231	40.5	26.7	371	64.2	57.2
1996	527	45.8	37.4	196	34.3	24.6	331	57.1	54.8
1998	476	39.5	25.6	157	26.2	22.6	319	52.7	52.2
2000	400	36.3	33.9	146	24.1	19.5	254	51.3	24.0
2002	402	35.8	29.4	141	22.8	16.4	261	51.7	48.1
2004	364	31.6	28.2	104	16.4	15.7	260	50.2	46.1
2006	390	33.8	29.5	130	20.5	16.0	260	50.2	48.7
2008	407	35.8	29.9	126	20.6	16.3	278	54.1	48.1
2010	365	33.1	27.0	105	18.1	14.2	260	49.5	43.7

Note: Rates are per 1,000 females for each specified group

Health Care: Leading Causes of Death

Table 55 lists the top five causes of death in Erie County for 2012, along with the number of deaths associated with each cause.

Table 55. Top Five Leading Causes of Death - Erie County

Rank	Cause of Death	Total Number
1	Diseases of Heart	711
2	Cancer	647
3	Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease	166
4	Stroke	154
5	Accidents	116

Source: *2012 Death Statistics, Pennsylvania Department of Health.*

Just over two-thirds of Erie County residents are overweight or obese according to the most recent data available from the Erie County Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey. Erie residents have a higher rate than both Pennsylvania and the United States. Having 68% of residents overweight or obese is too high for good health, any way you look at it

Obesity is an epidemic in our country. The cause for this exponential increase in weight gain across the country in the past decade is a combination of sedentary lifestyles coupled with unhealthy eating habits. There is a very simple solution to this problem: eat less and move more. And yet, the problem, along with waistlines, continues to grow. Those most likely to be overweight or obese include Erie County residents with less than a high school diploma, residents who earn less than \$25,000 a year, and males.

Erie County has traditionally had relatively high rates of smokers. Despite a dip in 2007, the rate of smokers has crept up to 27% in 2013. Even more distressing is the widening gap between Erie County smoking rates and state rates. While Erie County adult smokers have increased to 27% of the adult population, the state rate remains steady at 22% and the nation has dropped to 19%. This is concerning, since smoking causes lung cancer and heart disease and is one of the leading causes of preventable deaths. Erie County residents who are most likely to smoke cigarettes are 18-to-44 year olds, males, those without high school diplomas, and those who earn less than \$25,000 a year.

Health survey data suggest that binge drinking has steadily declined in Erie County over the past few years, but still remains a significant health risk for adults. The CDC considers binge drinking to be a growing national problem.

In Erie County, the %of adults who admitted binge drinking increased in 2013 from the rate reported in 2011, according to the latest data available. Despite this uptick, the binge-drinking rate has fallen from 25% of adults in 2001 to 22% in 2013. Nevertheless, the binge drinking rate among Erie County adults is still higher than the 18% average rate across Pennsylvania and the 17% rate for the nation.

Demographic comparisons of binge drinkers show that men are nearly twice as likely to admit binge drinking than women. And some of the highest rates of admitted binge drinking are found among 18-29 year olds (31%), college graduates (25 %) and adults earning \$50,000 a year or more (31%).

Driving under the influence of alcohol is a serious health and safety issue that remains a concern in Erie County. Although the %of adults who drove at least once in the previous month when they'd had too much to drink has fallen from 6 % in 2007 to 4 %, the rate is still higher than the statewide average.

Getting adequate regular physical activity continues to be a problem for adults in Erie County. In 2011 (the most recent data for this indicator), 28% of adults in Erie County reported being physically inactive—an increase from 2007 when only 24% of adults in Erie were physically inactive. This rate is higher than the national rate, the statewide average, and the benchmark average for the regions against which Erie is compared. Those most likely to be physically inactive include those Erie County residents who are not high school graduates, who earn less than \$25,000 a year, and who are 65 and old.

Much of the data for the above Health Indicators come from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) Survey. This is included in Erie Vital Signs.
<http://erievitalsigns.org/>

Health Care: Number of Deaths and Death Rate

Number of Deaths and Death Rates are shown in Table 54. Birth and total death crude rates are per a 1,000 person population, while infant and neonatal death rates are per 1,000 live births. (Neonatal death denoting death within one week of a live birth.) Fetal death rates are per 1,000 deliveries (live births + fetal deaths) and exclude induced terminations. (Fetal death refers to stillborn or death after a 20 week gestation period.)

Subtracting the crude death rate from the crude birth rate provides the rate of natural increase, which is equal to the rate of population change in the absence of migration. According to the Pennsylvania Department of Health, Bureau of Health Statistics and Research, there were a total of 3,123 live births in Erie county compared to 2,854 total deaths and 25 infant deaths. The rate of natural increase in the report area during 2012 was 269 lives.

Table 54. Number of Deaths and Death Rate, 2012

County	Live Births		All Deaths		Infant Deaths		Neonatal Deaths		Fetal Deaths	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
Erie	3,123	11.1%	2,854	10.2%	25	8%	17	no data	28	8.9%
Pennsylvania	140,873	11.0%	125,432	9.8%	987	7%	699	%	1,399	9.8%

Source: *Pennsylvania Department of Health, Bureau of Health Statistics and Research, 2012.*

CRIME

Crime: Violent Crime

Occurrences of violent crime within Erie County area are shown in Table 56. According to the 2013 Annual Uniform Crime Report, a total of 4 murders, 376 assaults, 226 robberies and 90 rapes took place within the report area.



Table 56. Homicide, Negligent Manslaughter, Assault, Robbery, Rape, 2013

County	Total Violent Crime	Homicide	Assault	Robbery	Rape
Erie	696	4	376	226	90
Report Area	696	4	376	226	90
Pennsylvania	42,754	611	23,646	14,716	3,781

Erie Times News-- 2014 was not yet three hours old when Erie police were summoned to an eastside tavern on a report of a fight and found one man shot in the buttocks and another man shot in the calf. The January 1, 2014, shooting, which led to criminal charges, would be followed by many more in 2014. An additional 67 people would be wounded by gunfire in the city, a nearly 57% increase over the number of people wounded by gunfire the previous year. Ten people were killed by bullets, double the number of people fatally shot in 2013. Erie police officers responded to 453 reports of shots-fired, and determined that 375 were legitimate incidents. It was more than twice the number of confirmed shots-fired calls in 2013.

Gun violence in Erie, which has steadily increased over the past several years, continues to alarm and anger community members and frustrates those who investigate it. But those leading the charge to combat the violence say progress is being made, and they cite a growing recognition by the greater community of the gun problem plaguing Erie and more people who are stepping forward to help stop it.

Police Chief Randy Bowers said, "Everyone knows the problem is young men who don't know how to deal with disputes other than violence. It's a cultural problem police have tried to address through different approaches, he said.

Bowers and Erie Mayor Joe Sinnott in May announced the launching of a series of police initiatives aimed at getting extra patrols on the street to combat the rash of shootings. They included tapping early into a federal grant to pay for additional patrols in the East Bayfront neighborhood, and sending two of its specialized patrol units out into neighborhoods plagued by gun incidents.

He said that the number of guns taken off the street by officers has increased this year -- 174 were recovered in 2014, compared with 108 in all of 2013. The city also has seen a significant drop in the number of armed robberies involving guns, as there were 67 reported compared with 119 in 2013, according to Erie police and the Pennsylvania Uniform Crime Reporting System. An anti-crime program known as Unified Erie was launched three years ago under the direction of organizers who include Erie County District Attorney Jack Daneri and Assistant U.S. Attorney Marshall Piccinini. It features a three-pronged approach of crime prevention, enforcement and the re-entry of prison inmates into the community.

Piccinini said through the work of Unified Erie, Erie Together (including GECAC) and the United Way of Erie County, there are some "really big steps" being taken on the re-entry initiative. He also credits Erie police for doing "an outstanding job" at being more proactive and reacting to and solving as best they can the number of shooting incidents.

Gun violence has given the citizens of Erie a sense that there city is no longer a safe place to live. This will exacerbate the trend of urban flight. Many initiatives and organization are mobilizing to reduce the incidences of violence in the city

Crime: Property Crime

Occurrences of property crime within Erie County are shown in Table 57. According to the 2013 Annual Uniform Crime Report, a total of 1,702 burglaries, 4,825 incidents of larceny, 35 incidents of arson, and 35 automotive thefts were recorded within the report area.

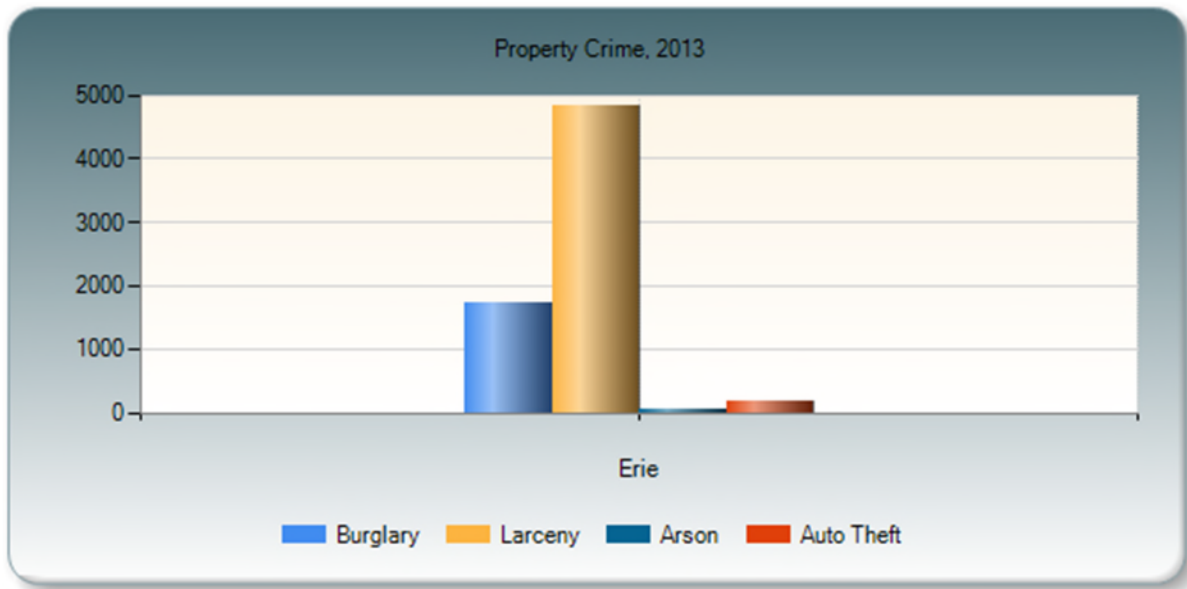


Table 57. Burglary, Larceny, Arson, and Auto Theft, 2013

County	Total Property Crime	Burglary	Larceny	Arson	Auto Theft
Erie	6,734	1,702	4,825	35	172
Pennsylvania	264,163	51,860	196,877	1,684	13,742

Source: *Crime in Pennsylvania Annual Uniform Crime Report 2013, Pennsylvania State Police.*

Crime: Number of Persons Held in County Jails

Table 58 shows number of prisoners and rates for prisons and jails in Erie County in 2013. Estimated populations come from the U.S. Bureau of the Census, and County Prisoner counts are based on average in house daily population. Incarceration rate calculations are based on the number of offenders incarcerated in the state prison system for each committing county. There was an average in house daily population of 666 county prisoners, which results in a rate of 23.76 prisoners for every 10,000 persons living in this report area. This is less than the state rate of 28.05.



Table 58. Number of Persons Held in County Jails, 2013

County	Estimated Population	Total Prisoners Number	Total Prisoners Rate Per 10,000	State Prisoners Number	State Prisoners Rate Per 10,000	County Prisoners Number	County Prisoners Rate Per 10,000
Erie	280,294	1,962	70.00	1,296	46.24	666	23.76
Pennsylvania	12,773,801	87,341	68.38	51,512	40.33	35,829	28.05

Source: 2013 Monthly Population Reports, Pennsylvania Department of Corrections, Bureau of Planning, Research and Statistics.

Crime: Juvenile Court Referrals

Court referrals for Erie County in 2013 are shown in Table 59. While the total number of referrals was 710, only 146 were sentenced to probation.

Table 59. Juvenile Court Referrals, 2013

County	Total	Withdrawn / Dismissed	Referral to Another Agency	Informal Adjustment	Consent Decree
Erie	710	129	13	185	48
Pennsylvania	28,951	4,055	1,878	4,685	4,631

Table 59 (continued). Juvenile Court Referrals, 2013

County	Deferred Adjudication	Probation	Placement	Transfer to Criminal Proceedings	Other
Erie	12	146	148	2	27
Pennsylvania	1,482	4,982	2,134	102	5,002

Source: Pennsylvania Juvenile Delinquency Data Analysis Tool. Developed for the Pennsylvania Juvenile Court Judges' Commission by the National Center for Juvenile Justice, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 2013.

Crime: Number of Persons Leaving Correctional Facilities

The number of persons leaving correctional facilities are shown in Table 60. According to the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole, Statistical Analysis and Evidence-Based Program Evaluation Office a total of 2,490 people were discharged in 2014 to Erie County, with 2,439 successfully discharged. The 97.95% success rate is more than the state rate of 69.65%. For the purposes of this report, a successful completion is when an offender under the supervision of probation/parole agency who has reached their maximum sentence date and are released from supervision.

Table 60. Number of Persons Leaving Correctional Facilities, 2014

County	Offenders Discharged	Successful Discharges	% Successful Discharges
Erie	2,490	2,439	97.95%
Pennsylvania	123,992	86,361	69.65%

Source: *Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole, Statistical Analysis and Evidence-Based Program Evaluation Office, 2014.*

AGING

Erie County is home to 59,283 persons over age 60. Males make up 44.8% of the population and females represent 55.2%. The median age is 70.1, and the racial break out is: 95.1% white while 3.5% are black, and .9% Hispanic. 56.9% are now married and 22.9% are widowed with 12.6% divorced, 6.6% never married.

Of this population 13.2% have less than a high school education, 45.5% graduated high school, 20.2% have some Collage or an associate degree, 21.1% hold a bachelor's degree or higher. 31.9% have some form of disability. 25.8% are in the labor force while 74.2% are not.

The senior population in Erie is reasonably well off with only 9.1% below poverty level, 10.4% between 100% and 149% of the Federal Poverty Level and 80.5% at or above 150% of the poverty level. A majority 76.6% of seniors own their own homes with 23.4% renting. Only 20.8% of home owners have costs over 30% of their income for housing while 51.2% of renters are in this at risk category.

The shrinking center city has a higher concentration of poor and senior citizens. This presents a challenge for the caregivers and the organizations that provide supportive services. A thriving community must include independence, dignity and health and well-being for our older residents. Nearly 25% of seniors are still working in order to afford medicine, rent and food. Therefore, these seniors, mostly women, require job training and placement.

DESCRIPTION OF AAA NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The Area Agency on Aging (AAA) for Erie County, Pennsylvania, 2012-2016 plan builds upon the experience and knowledge of the Greater Erie Community Action Committee (GECAC), the designated AAA for Erie County since 1974. The Plan summarizes the areas of need expressed by older Pennsylvanians, their families, advocates, and representatives of agencies serving

older people and people with disabilities in the Erie area. The methodology for gathering public input into this Aging Four Year Plan included: focus groups held with AAA staff, community professionals providing services to older adults and consumers, survey results tabulated from 500 respondents; public hearings held at Erie West Senior Center and at North East Senior Center; and other community forums, such as the Erie County Department of Health Community Needs Assessment focus group.

This plan was established with public input from consumers, professionals and government sources. It takes a community approach to providing services to seniors to include not only those provided by the AAA, but also supportive and collaborative local community-based organizations including private service providers, faith-based entities, paid and unpaid caregivers, non-profits, public funded supports, and individuals willing to volunteer. The plan for the Area Agency on Aging focuses on meeting the needs of those with the greatest economic and social need from the more than 55,000 older persons in Erie County.

Through the series of focus groups and surveys, it has been determined that the needs of older persons in Erie County mimic those of the state and nation and include the following:

Responses on the 2016 Aging Consumer Needs Survey

- 1. 19.9% Need for more recreation facilities for seniors**
 - 2. 19.4% Need assistance with home support services**
 - 3. 18.1% Need for social events and community involvement**
 - 4. 16.3% Assistance paying bills (utilities, medications and healthcare)**
 - 5. 15.4% Need for companionship/ friendly visitor**
-

Identification of resources that could be accessed

The progressive models of evidenced-based care as indicated in the Affordable Care Act (Health Care Reform) of March 2011 include the following tenets: Person Centered, Aging in Place, and communities that encourage the development of Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities.

The goal is to reinforce the supports that family, friends and neighbors can provide so that community entities, such as faith-based organizations, non-profits and other public, private and non-profit organizations, have the common mission to assist older adults maintain independence, thrive in the community and live in decency and dignity.

To this goal GECAC provides supports through the neighborhood-located senior centers and Senior Corps programs - Foster Grandparent Program and Retired and Senior Volunteer Program – that recruit more than 700 Erie older adults to be involved in the community to assist with children's education, local nonprofits and other entities beneficial to the community. Although we realize that volunteers cannot do everything, volunteers certainly are vital to enable local agencies to continue to provide essential services while public funding diminishes.

The shrinking center city has a higher concentration of poor and senior citizens. This presents a challenge for the caregivers and the organizations that provide supportive services. A thriving

community must include independence, dignity and health and well-being for our older residents. Nearly 25% of seniors are still working in order to afford medicine, rent and food. Therefore, these seniors, mostly women, require training and placement.

Older adults require protection from abuse and advocates that will assist them in obtaining services and benefits. To keep seniors living independently in their own homes, they require recreational and social activities as well as nutritional meals, safety checks and resources for caregivers.

As the elderly population continues to grow across the county, the need for supportive service also continues to grow. As evidenced by the nearly 200 person wait list (December 2015) for aging in-home services, more resources are needed to address this growing demand.