

# **COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT 2025**

**NIAGARA COMMUNITY ACTION  
PROGRAM, INC.**

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# NIAGARA COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM, INC.



## MISSION STATEMENT

NIAGARA COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM, INC. IS A COUNTYWIDE AGENCY DEDICATED TO REDUCING POVERTY IN A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT BY INITIATING AND CONDUCTING PROGRAMS OF SELF-SUFFICIENCY. OUR ULTIMATE GOAL IS TO EMPOWER INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES TO REACH THEIR FULLEST POTENTIAL.

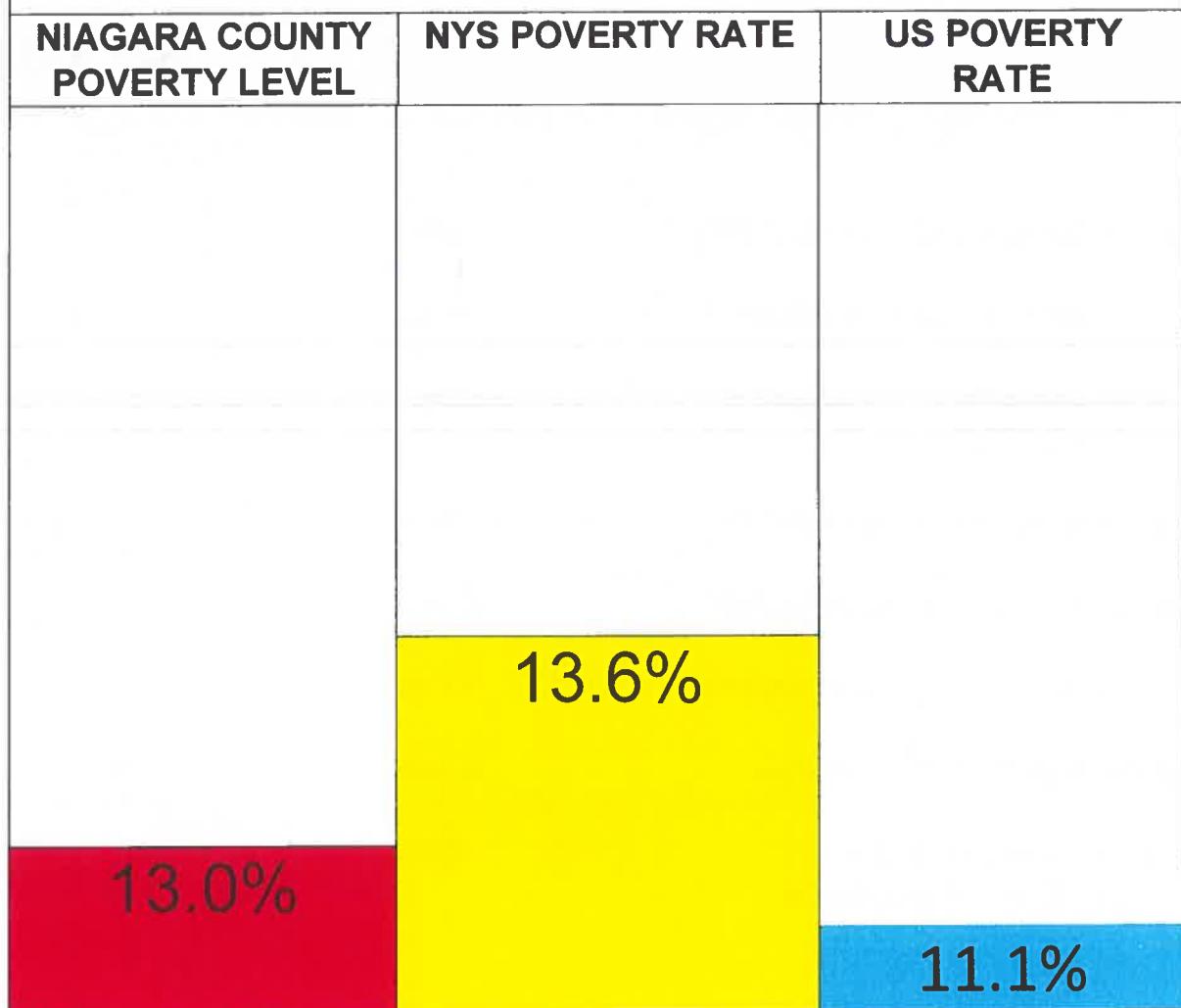
Child Care Registrar Program: This program provides for the registering of family child care homes and school-age child care programs located throughout Niagara County. The responsibilities of the registration monitors include processing initial child care applications and inspecting child care sites. They also investigate complaints, perform routine inspections, and process applications for re-certification. Under the Registrar Program, technical assistance is provided to child care providers on an as-needed basis.

Infant Toddler Mental Health Program: is a federal program that provides intensive technical assistance and training to child care providers who provide care for infants and toddlers birth to under three years of age. Infant Toddler Mental Health consultation provides support to child care providers to help minimize stress and burn-out and teaches strategies to deal with challenging behaviors in children.

#### **Description of Data from Needs Assessment**

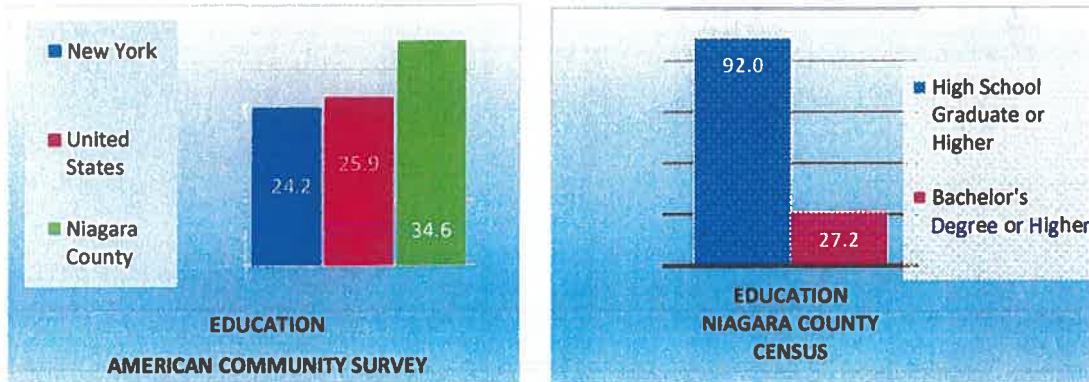
To analyze our service area, Niagara Community Action Program, Inc. received 140 completed client, partnership/government officials, staff and board member surveys. The tallies were then graphed by number of answered questions in each specific area (not all clients answered all the questions on the survey) and compared to the Niagara County Census 2023, and the New York State Community Action Association's Poverty Report 2024. The Niagara County Census 2023 was tallied in percentages for each specific area in question, as well as, the New York State Community Action Association's Poverty Report results. The results from the agency surveys are divided into specific areas according to the questions from the survey. These areas are housing and energy, food and nutrition, health, transportation, children and youth, employment and income. Also, included in this report is the agency's mission statement, a map of the Niagara County service area, and an agency partnership referral listing. The referral listing identifies partners that refer clients to us or we refer to them for complementary services. Our partnerships in the community have allowed us to effectively meet the needs of the individuals and families throughout Niagara County. Follow-up is conducted by our staff with clients that are referred to a partner agency whenever possible.

# POVERTY REPORT 2024



Prepared by the New York State Community Action Association 2024

## Comparison Regarding Education & Poverty



The American Community Survey 2023 states that 34.6% of Niagara County residents have a High School Diploma or equivalent degree. New York State has 24.2% and the United States has 25.9%

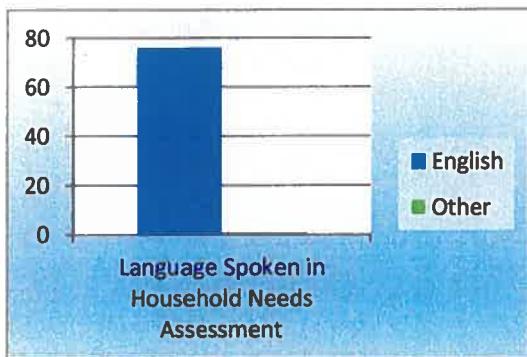
Niagara County Census 2019 - 2023 states that 92.0% of Niagara County residents have graduated High School or higher and 27.2% have a Bachelor's Degree or higher.

### EDUCATION & POVERTY

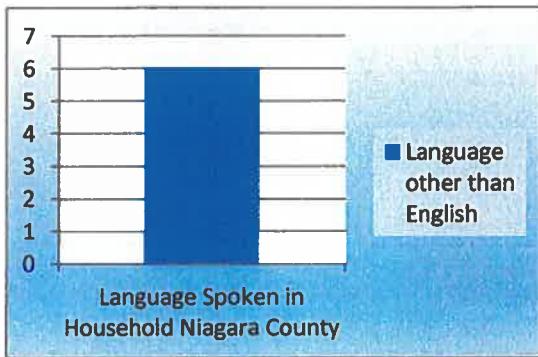
% of 25+older with a High School Degree Only	31.8%
% of these individuals in Poverty	14.9%
% of 25+ with at least Bachelor's Degree	27.1%
% of these individuals in Poverty	4.6%

*Poverty Report 2024 NYS Community Action Association*

**Comparison of the Need Assessment and the Niagara County Census Regarding Languages Spoken in Household**

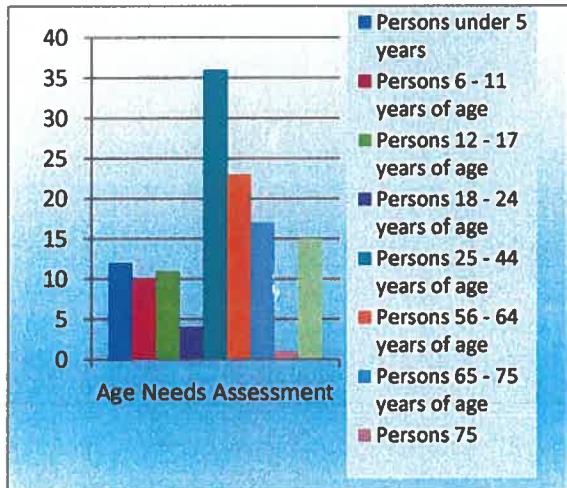


2024 Needs Assessment states that 76 clients speak English in the household, and 1 client speaks another language.

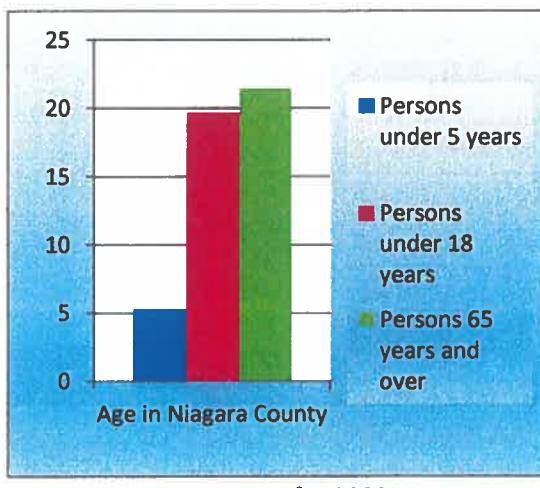


Niagara County Census for 2023 states 6.0 % speak a language other than English in the household.

**Comparison of the Need Assessment and the Niagara County Census Regarding Age**



2024 Needs Assessment states that 12 persons in the household are 0 - 5 years old, 10 persons are 6 - 11 years old, 11 persons are 12 - 17 years old, 4 persons are 18 - 24 years old, 36 persons are 25 - 55, 23 persons are 56 - 64 years old, 17 persons are 65 - 74 and 15 persons are 75 + year old.



Niagara County Census for 2023 states 4.9% persons are under 5 years, 19.7% are under 18 years and 21.4% are 65 years or over.

## **HOUSING RESULTS**

### **Clients Description of the Condition of their residence:**

20 Clients - In good shape, needs no repair  
31 Clients - Need minor repairs  
12 Clients - Need weatherization measures  
11 Clients - Need major repairs  
3 Clients - Need disability access improvements

### **Clients List of Housing Problems:**

61 Clients - Cannot afford to make needed repairs to  
their home  
9 Clients - Cannot afford the heat & electric bills  
3 Clients - Risk of eviction from rented home  
1 Clients - Cannot find housing to rent  
13 Clients - Cannot find affordable housing to buy  
0 Clients - Risk foreclosure on the home they own

**Niagara Community Action Program, Inc. offers the following assistance through the Weatherization Program, Rural Preservation Program and our Neighborhood Outreach offices:**

• The Weatherization Program offers assistance to low income households to help decrease energy costs, making homes more energy efficient.
• The Rural Preservation Program offers assistance to low income households needing home repair in order to maintain their ability to remain in their home.
• The Rural Preservation Program provides information on home maintenance.
• Niagara Community Action Program, Inc. is the Fair Housing Advocate for Niagara County.
• Discretionary Funds are used to help with mortgage/rent/utility payments.

### **Accomplishing National Performance Indicators as follows:**

CNPI 4a Number of safe and affordable housing units developed in the identified community.

CNPI 4b Number of safe and affordable housing units maintained and/or improved through WAP or other rehabilitation efforts in the identified community.

FNPI 4h Improve energy efficiency and/or energy burden reduction in their homes.

FNPI 5f Maintain an independent living situation for seniors (65+)

FNPI 5g Maintain an independent living situation for individuals with disabilities.

FNPI 4 e Avoid eviction or foreclosure.

### Health Results

Over the last 12 months, clients report a household need:

12 Clients in need of medical care  
15 Clients in need of dental care  
15 Clients in need of prescription drugs  
9 Clients in need of mental health care  
3 Households do not have health insurance

### Niagara Community Action Program, Inc. offers assistance by:

- Helping low income families obtain health insurance/health care services.
- Using discretionary funds to help with needed prescription drugs or other types of emergencies.

Accomplishing National Performance Indicators as follows:

FNPI 5b Individuals demonstrate improved physical health and well being.  
FNPI 5c Individuals demonstrate mental and behavioral health and well being.

### Transportation Results

Over the last 12 months, clients experienced:

8 Clients unable to afford gas  
11 Clients unable to afford car repairs  
5 Clients no license or license suspended  
17 Clients no access to transportation  
5 Clients no car insurance

Over the last 12 months clients had lack of transportation:

15 Clients response was yes  
52 Clients response was no

### Primary mode of transportation:

4 Bicycle  
1 Bus/subway  
42 Car  
13 Walking  
18 Ride with family/friends  
1 Taxi

**Niagara Community Action Program, Inc. offers the following through the Child Care Resource & Referral Program, Registrars Program, Family Day Care Training and Child & Adult Care Food Program**

- CCR&R offers low income parents/care givers appropriate and affordable day care and before/after school care referrals in order to gain/maintain employment.
- Low income providers are offered training/technical assistance necessary to become self employed childcare providers.
- CACFP offers a reimbursement to family day care providers who provide low income children with nutritious meals.

**Accomplishing National Performance Indicators as follows:**

**CNPI 2d** Low income households will enroll their children in before/after school child care programs

**CNPI 2a** Low income households will enroll their infants, toddlers, preschoolers in affordable child care programs

**FNPI 1b** Low income providers become registered and self-employed child care providers

**FNPI 5e** Providers will show an increase in their knowledge of child development and gain new skills

**FNPI 5b** Low income children will receive nutritious meals

**Jobs Results**

**Adults currently employed in household (18+):**

73 Unemployed

17 Retired

11 Looking for work

**Clients reasons for not finding/keeping a job:**

27 No problems, have a job

5 Mental/physical disability

0 Transportation

4 Caring for children

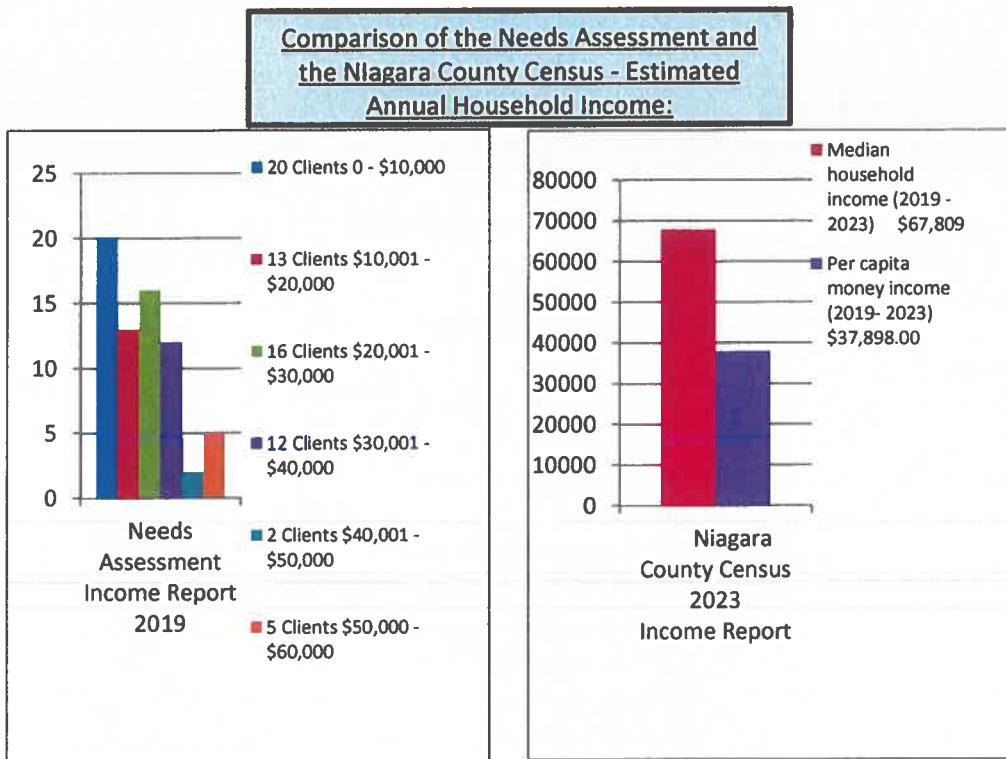
2 Drug/alcohol problems

7 Not the right job skills

0 Criminal history

2 Need proper clothing for work

2 Need tools/equipment for work



**The following happened to you in the last 12 months:**

- 9 Clients fell behind in rent or mortgage
- 16 Clients borrowed money from friends/family for bills
- 8 Clients pressured by bill collectors
- 5 Clients had utilities (water, heat, electric) shut off
- 4 Clients pawned or sold valuables to pay bills
- 1 Client used a check cashing service
- 2 Client's car, appliance, or furniture repossessed
- 0 Clients had gambling losses

Niagara Community Action Program, Inc. uses different methods to encourage self sufficiency through our Neighborhood Outreach offices.

- The Family Development Philosophy was developed and taught to our staff by Cornell University.
- This philosophy helps staff look at family strengths and help the family build on these strengths to set goals to achieve self sufficiency.
- Another program the agency uses is Every Person Influences Children (EPIC).

Accomplishing National Performance Indicators as follows:

2. The conditions in which low-income people live are improved.
6. Low-income people, especially vulnerable populations, achieve their potential by strengthening family and other supportive systems.

## **Summary**

The raw data collected throughout Niagara County from the 2025 Comprehensive Needs Assessment conducted by Niagara Community Action Program, Inc. was reviewed, analyzed and discussed by the Board of Directors on January 16, 2025 and February 13, 2025 along with the comparative data from the New York Community Action Association Poverty Report 2024, Niagara County Census 2023 and the American Community Survey 2023.

Based on the New York State Poverty Report 2024 conducted by the New York Community Action Association, Niagara County has a population of 212,230. Of that population, 13.0% or 27,046 individuals are living in poverty. There are 44 counties in New York State whose poverty rate exceeds 13.0%. However, the population in these counties are considerably less. For example, Cortland County has a population of 46,755 with a county poverty rate of 12.9% and there are 5,575 individuals living in poverty. Another example is Delaware County with a population of 44,637. The county poverty rate is 14.8% or 6,295 individuals who are living in poverty. Even though the percentage of poverty in these examples is close to the percentage in Niagara County, the population of impoverished in Niagara County far exceeds the examples in these other counties. This confirms the need for programs/services that promote self-sufficiency and independence.

Comparative data regarding Education and Poverty from the American Community Survey 2023, Niagara County Census 2019 – 2023 and New York State Community Action Association Poverty Report 2024 suggests that when higher education decreases, there is the possibility of an increase in the rate of poverty. Through educational support services and strong partnerships with schools and universities in Niagara County, impoverished individuals are encouraged to pursue higher education.

Also, based on the 2024 New York State Community Action Association Poverty Report, the median household income for a male with a high school diploma is \$44,029 and a female median income with a high school diploma is \$27,790. According to this data, females make less income than males with a high school diploma. Furthermore, 35.3% of females who are head of household with children are living in poverty.

Our 2025 Comprehensive Needs Assessment data and the 2022 – 2023 Niagara County Census shows English is the primary language spoken in households in Niagara County, therefore, not creating a language barrier.

Our 2025 Comprehensive Needs Assessment data and the 2022 – 2023 Niagara County Census regarding age and poverty reflect that there are more children under the age of 24 living in poverty. Acknowledging this data, we have partnerships with local schools, universities and other community-based organizations to address childhood poverty.