

# **COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT 2022**

**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.

## **AGENCY OVERVIEW**

### **WHAT IS NIAGARA COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM, INC.**

The Niagara Community Action Program, Inc., known locally as Niagara CAP, is part of a nationwide and statewide network of private, not-for-profit human service agencies that address the needs of the economically disadvantaged. The agency serves all of Niagara County from offices in North Tonawanda, Lockport, and a number of sites in the City of Niagara Falls.

Niagara County is located in the western portion of New York State. It is bordered to the north by Lake Ontario, to the south by Erie County, to the west by Canada and to the east by Orleans County. In Niagara County, there are three cities, twelve towns, five villages and the Tuscarora Indian Reservation. According to Census Data 2020 - 2021, Niagara County has a population of 210,820 (plus or minus) with 523 square miles of land, which 80% is considered agricultural. The number of individuals in poverty status is 27,857 of which 19.9% are children and 9.0% are senior citizens. The medium household income is \$40,502.

Niagara CAP was incorporated in October 1966. At that time, it was designated by the Niagara County Legislature as the county's official anti-poverty agency. Sole responsibility for governing the agency rests with its fifteen member tripartite Board of Directors. A tripartite board consists of equal representation from three sectors, public, private and community (low income). The agency currently operates with a 34 member staff supplemented by approximately 50 volunteers. *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.*

#### **Summary of Programs and Services**

**Nutrition Outreach and Education Program:** The purpose of this program is to increase participation of eligible county residents in the food stamp program. This involves helping people with the preparation and submittal of applications.

**Clothing Distribution:** New and used clothing is received from local merchants and the general public and distributed at no cost to the needy. A "Professional Clothes Closet" is maintained to help clients dress appropriately for job interviews.

**The Weatherization Program:** This program assists families in reducing heat loss in their homes and apartments.

**The Rural Preservation Program:** has been developed to improve the housing conditions of economically disadvantaged rural residents in Niagara County by providing grants for home repair and renovation.

**Back Rent, Mortgage, Utility Assistance:** Niagara CAP provides financial support to families who need assistance in paying their rent, mortgage or utility bills.

**Fair Housing Advocacy:** Niagara CAP serves as Niagara County's Fair Housing Advocate. It is responsible for resolving complaints of discrimination in the sale or rental of housing.

**Family Development Training and Credentialing Program:** This course of study developed by Cornell University provides front-line workers with the skills and competencies to support families and individuals in attaining a healthy self-reliance and interdependence with their communities. Niagara CAP outreach workers are credentialed Family Development Workers.

Community Child Care Clearinghouse of Niagara: This program provides information on a variety of services needed by parents, child care providers, employers, and the general community. Parents are given information about licensed and registered child care centers and family child care homes. Providers can receive information, training, and technical support toward becoming officially registered or licensed family child care providers. Employers and the general public can receive information on registered and licensed providers in the county.

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 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.

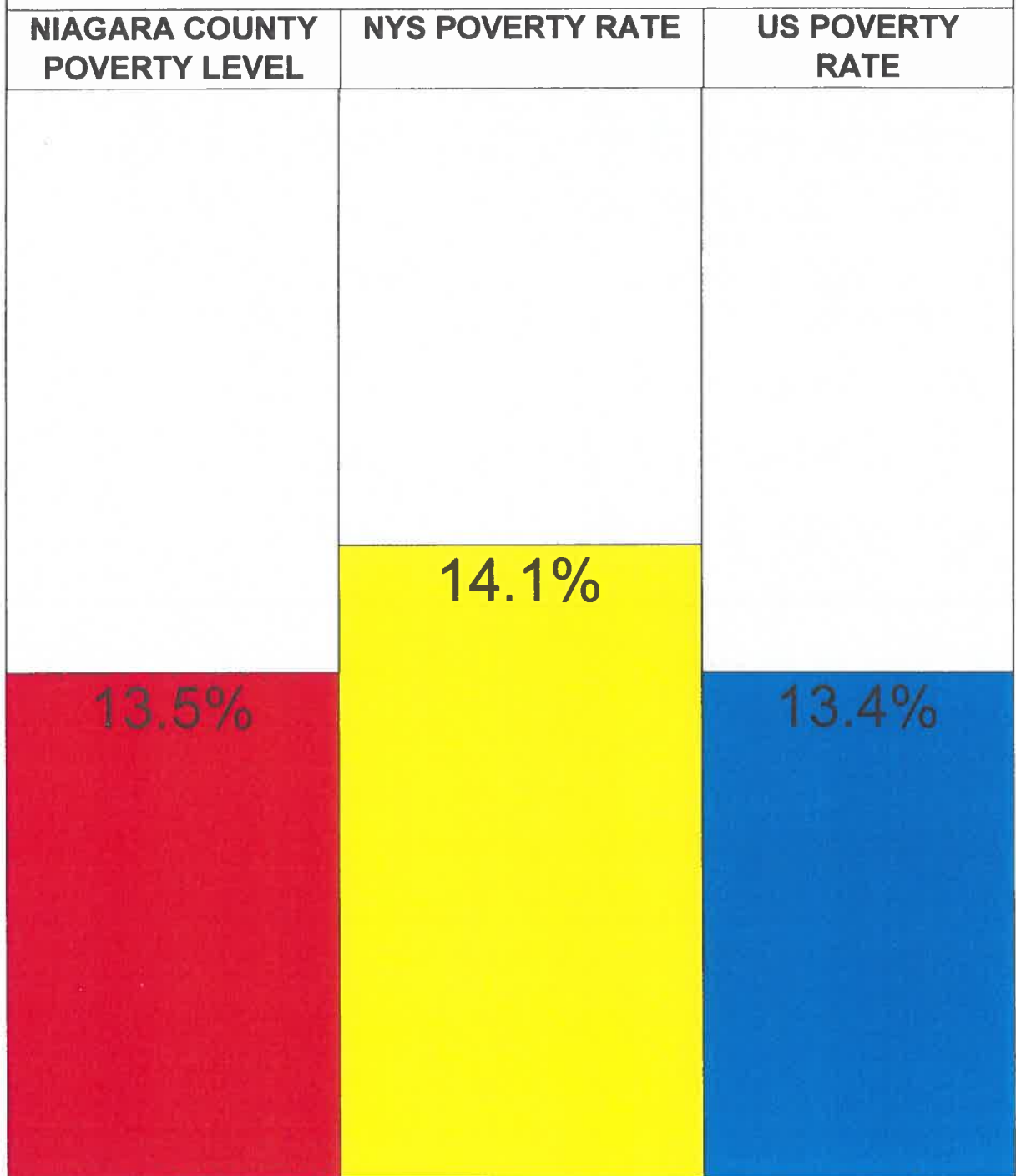
### **Description of Data from Needs Assessment**

To analyze our service area, Niagara Community Action Program, Inc. received 145 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 2020 - 2021, and the New York State Community Action Association's Poverty Report 2021. The Niagara County Census 2020 - 2021 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.

**SERVICE AREA OF  
NIAGARA COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM, INC.**



# POVERTY REPORT 2021



Prepared by the New York State Community Action Association 2021 and statistics.com

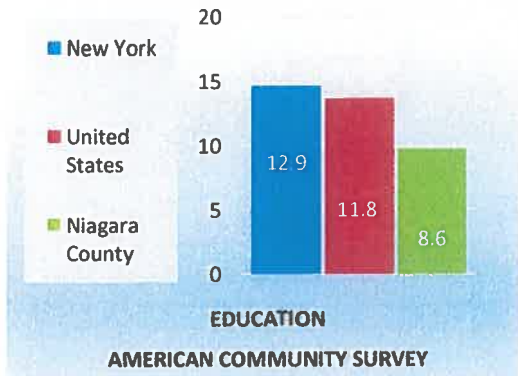
# **NIAGARA COUNTY POVERTY PROFILE**

POPULATION STATISTICS FOR POVERTY STATUS WAS 210,820

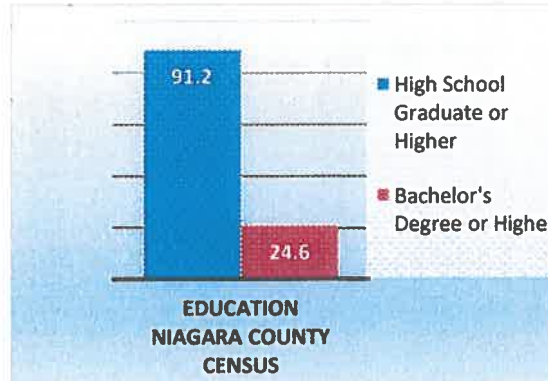
# OF INDIVIDUALS IN POVERTY	27,857
% OF INDIVIDUALS IN POVERTY	13.5%
# OF CHILDREN IN POVERTY (UNDER 18)	8,305
% OF CHILDREN IN POVERTY	19.9%
# OF ADULTS 25+ IN POVERTY	16,784
% OF ADULTS 25+ IN POVERTY	11.3%
# OF SENIOR CITIZENS 65+	3,432
% OF SENIOR CITIZENS (AGE 65+)IN POVERTY	9.0%



**Comparison Regarding Education & Poverty**



The American Community Survey 2019 states that 8.6% of Niagara County residents have No High School Diploma, New York State has 12.9% and the United States has 11.8%.

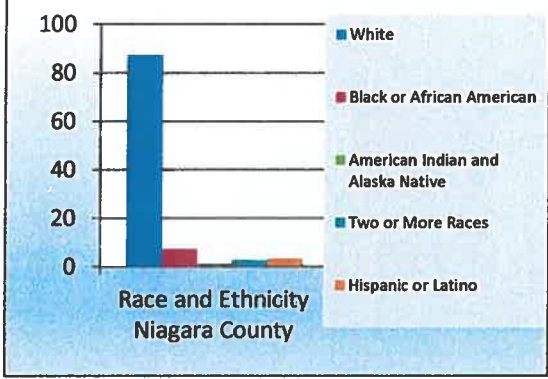
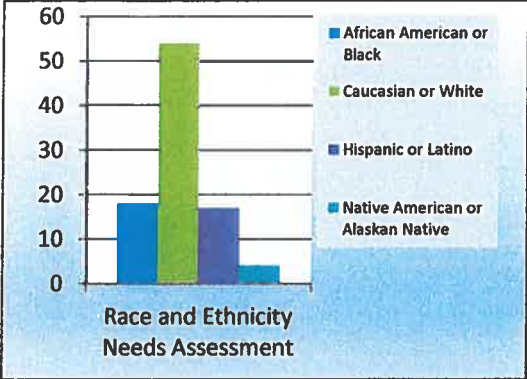


Niagara County Census 2015 - 2019 states that 91.2% of Niagara County residents have graduated high school or higher and 24.6% have a Bachelor's Degree or higher.

<b><u>EDUCATION &amp; POVERTY</u></b>	
% of 25+older with a High School Degree Only	33.1%
% of these individuals in Poverty	13.1%
% of 25+ with at least Bachelor's Degree	24.7%
% of these individuals in Poverty	4.4%

*Poverty Report 2021 NYS Community Action Association*

**Comparison of the Needs Assessment and  
the Niagara County Census Regarding  
Race and Ethnicity**



2021 Needs Assessment tabulation states that 54 clients are Caucasian or White, 18 are African American or Black, 17 are Hispanic, Latino or Spanish and 4 are Native American or Alaskan Native.

Niagara County census for 2021 indicates that 87.5% are White, 7.4% are Black or African American, 1.2% are American Indian or Alaska Native, 3.3% Hispanic or Latino and 2.7% are two or more races.

**Race & Poverty**

% of Whites in Poverty	10.2%
% of African American in Poverty	37.9%
% of Hispanics/Latinos in Poverty	36.8%

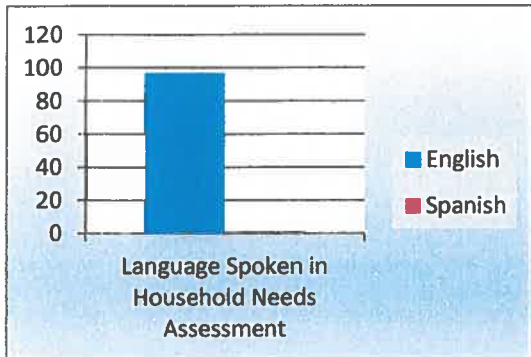
*Poverty Report 2021 NYS Community Action Association*

**Gender & Poverty**

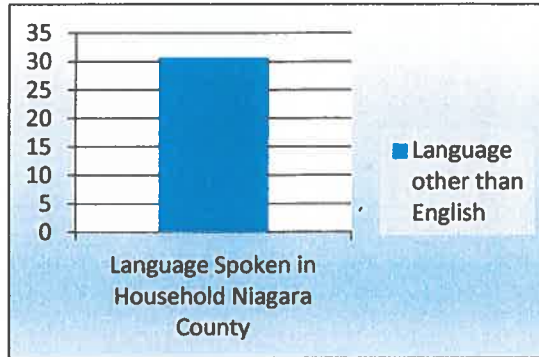
Median Male Income (High School Diploma)	\$42,756
Median Female Income (High School Diploma)	\$25,290
Families - Female Head of Household w/Children living in Poverty	38.2%

*Poverty Report 2021 NYS Community Action Association*

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

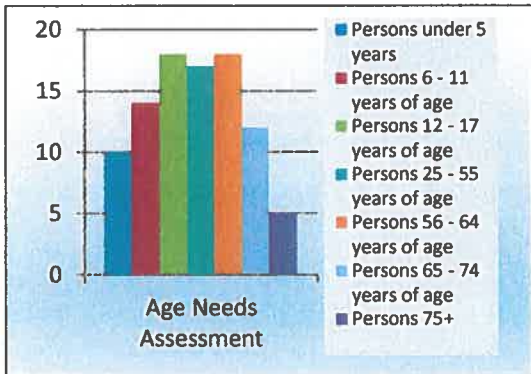


2021 Needs Assessment states that 97 clients speak English in the household, 1 client speaks Spanish.

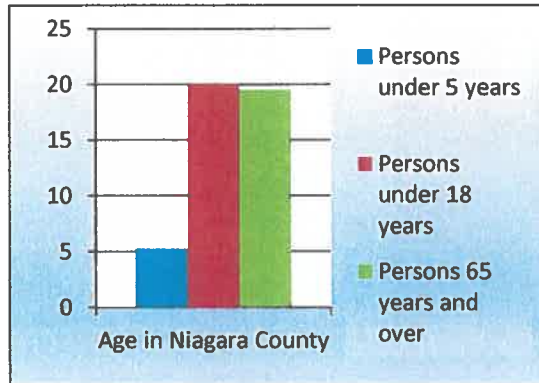


Niagara County Census for 2021 states 30.7 % speak a language other than English in the household.

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

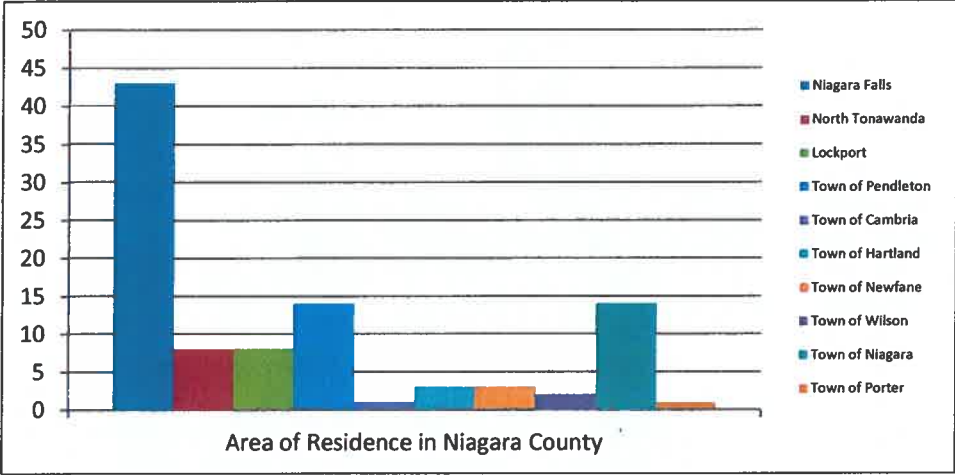


2021 Needs Assessment states that 10 persons in the household are 0 - 5 years old, 14 persons are 6 - 11 years old, 18 persons are 12 - 17 years old, 17 persons are 25 - 55, 18 persons are 56 - 64 years old, 12 persons are 65 - 74 and 5 persons are 75 + years old (numbers reflect all members in household.)

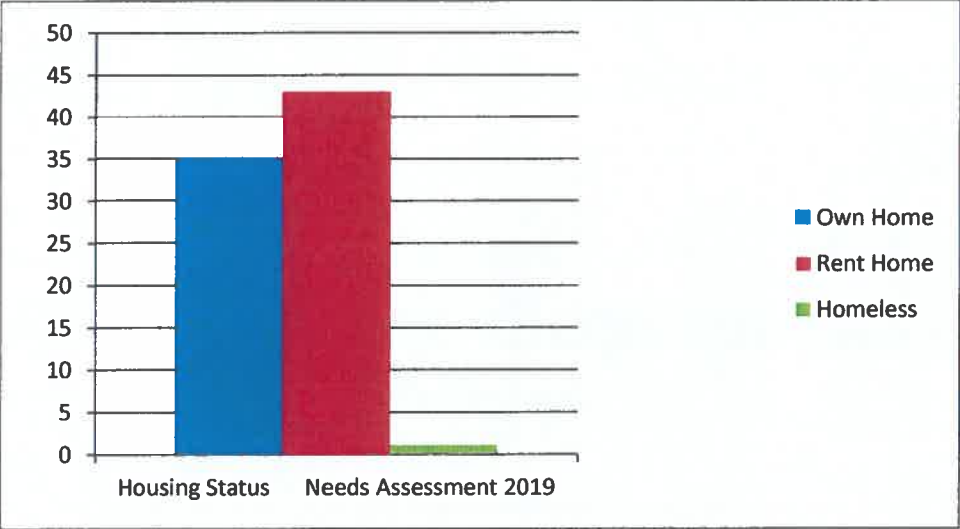


Niagara County Census for 2021 states 5.3% persons are under 5 years, 19.9% are under 18 years and 19.5% are 65 years or over.

**Information from the Needs Assessment and  
the Niagara County Census Regarding  
Residency**

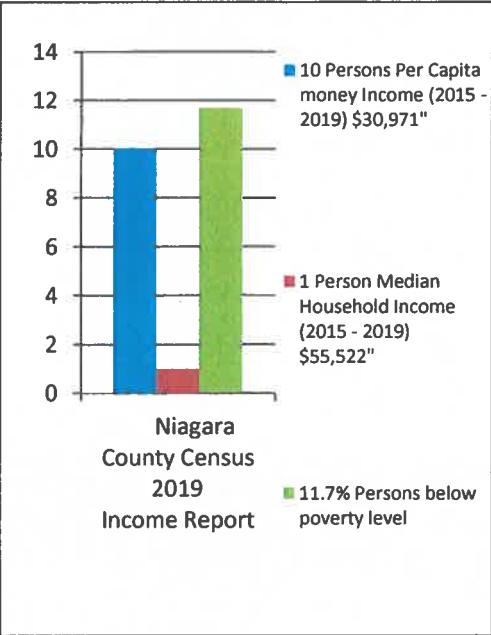


According to the 2021 Needs Assessment 43 clients reside in Niagara Falls, 8 in North Tonawanda, 8 in Lockport, 14 Town of Niagara, 14 Town of Pendleton, 2 Town of Wilson, 1 Town of Porter, 1 Town of Cambria, 3 Town of Hartland, and 1 Town of Newfane.



According to the 2021 Needs Assessment 35 clients own their housing, 43 rent a house, 1 client was homeless.

**Comparison of the Needs Assessment and the Niagara County Census - Estimated Annual Household Income:**



The following happened to clients in the last 12 months:

- 23 Clients fell behind in rent or mortgage
- 31 Clients borrowed money from friends/family for bills
- 15 Clients pressured by bill collectors
- 6 Clients had utilities (water, heat, electric) shut off
- 3 Clients pawned or sold valuables to pay bills
- 3 Clients used a check cashing service



## **HOUSING RESULTS**

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

- 14 Clients - In good shape, needs no repair
- 40 Clients - Need minor repairs
- 27 Clients - Need weatherization measures
- 15 Clients - Need major repairs
- 3 Clients - Need disability access improvements

### Clients List of Housing Problems:

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

**Niagara Community Action Program, Inc. offers the following assistance through the Weatherization Program, the Rural Preservation Program and our Neighborhood Center 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.
• FEMA as well as discretionary funds are used to help with mortgage/rent/ utility payments.

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

**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.

## Food Results

Over the last 12 months , clients report that someone in their household has:

- 50 Clients - Accessed a food pantry
- 25 Clients - Received SNAP Benefits
- 14 Clients - Utilized the school breakfast/lunch program
- 37 Clients - Skipped or cut the size of a meal because there wasn't enough money for food
- 33 Clients - Gone hungry because they were not able to get enough food
- 2 Clients - Receive WIC stipend

### **Niagara Community Action Program, Inc. offers assistance through Neighborhood Outreach Centers by:**

- Partnering with the 42 food pantries, shelters and soup kitchens throughout Niagara County who distribute to needy families.
- Nutrition Outreach and Education Program offers correct and encouraging information regarding the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits and assists eligible residents in applying for needed food stamps.
- Nutrition Outreach and Education Program assists seniors in obtaining Supplemental Nutrition Assistance benefits to maintain ability to live independently in their homes.
- Low Income households obtain Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits in support of family stability.
- Neighborhood Outreach Centers provide emergency food, a clothes closet, budget counseling, asset management, and nutrition education.

Accomplishing National Performance Indicators as follows:

- SRV 5jj Food distribution(Food bags, Food share program, bags of groceries.)
- FNPI 5f Help seniors 65+ maintain an independent living situation.
- FNPI 5a Help individuals demonstrate increased nutrition skills.
- FNPI 5b Help individuals demonstrate improved mental and behavioral health and well-being.

## Health Results

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

12 Clients in need of medical care  
22 Clients in need of dental care  
16 Clients in need of prescription drugs  
11 Clients in need of mental health care

*4 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/donations 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:

17 Clients unable to afford gas  
19 Clients unable to afford car repairs  
5 Clients no license or license suspended  
23 Clients no access to transportation  
1 Client no car insurance

Over the last 12 months clients had lack of transportation:

23 Clients response was yes  
46 Clients response was no

Primary mode of transportation:

6 Bicycle  
10 Bus  
39 Car  
24 Walking  
4 Ride with family/friends  
5 Taxi



**Niagara Community Action Program, Inc. offers referrals to:**

- The New York State Unemployment office who offers tokens to eligible clients for the public bus system to get to a job or for a job interview.
- Transportation concerns are addressed by the Greater Buffalo/Niagara Regional Transportation Counsel.
- Help clients with inquiring if their health insurance provides transportation to medical appointments.

**Accomplishing National Performance Indicators as follows:**

**CNPI 3i Increase percent of transportation services in the identified community.**

**Needs Assessment  
Child Care Results**

Over the last 12 months , problems getting or keeping adequate child care:

Problems

2 Weekend care not available

Currently use the following to meet child care needs:

6 After-school programs

13 Parent, family friends, or neighbors

9 Children are old enough to be left on their own

1 Day care center

Client challenges faced with children:

55 Not applicable - no children at home

3 Emotional and behavioral problems

2 Victims of bullying

1 Tobacco/alcohol use

2 Weight or eating habits

**Niagara Community Action Program, Inc. offers the following through the Child Care Resource & Referral Program (CCR&R), Registrar Program, Family Day Care Training and Infant Toddler Mental Health 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.
- Technical assistance and training to child care providers who provide care for infants and toddlers and provide Mental Health consultation to help minimize stress and burn out, teaching strategies to deal with behavior challenges in children.

**Accomplishing National Performance Indicators as follows:**

CNPI 2b 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 5e Providers will show an increase in their knowledge of child development and gain new skills.

### **Jobs Results**

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

- 3 Retired
- 39 Looking for work
- 9 Unemployed/Laid off ( 3 because of COVID-19)
- 5 Reduced hours
- 14 Affected by COVID-19
- 10 Essential Workers
- 5 Working from home/remotely/virtually

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

- 32 Not enough jobs available
- 4 Mental/physical disability
- 5 Transportation
- 6 Caring for children
- 3 Not the right job skills
- 1 Criminal history
- 5 Need proper clothing for work
- 5 Need tools/equipment for work
- 4 Workplace went out of business/closed permanently because of COVID-19 pandemic

**Niagara Community Action Program, Inc. offers Job Readiness/ Employment Assistance through our Neighborhood Outreach offices by:**

- Offering low income individuals the opportunity to participate in job readiness/job training in order to secure and maintain long-term employment in support of family stability.

**Accomplishing National Performance Indicators as follows:**

**FNPI 1b Unemployed adults obtain employment (up to a living wage.)**

**FNPI 1c Unemployed adults obtained and maintained employment for at least 90 days.**

**FNPI 1h Employed participants in a career-advancement related program who entered or transitioned into a position that provided increased income and/or benefits.**

**Income Related Results**

**Estimated Annual Household Income:**

25 - \$0 - \$10,000

30 - \$10,001 - \$20,000

10 - \$20,001 - \$30,000

9 - \$30,001 - \$40,000

1 - \$50,001 - \$60,000

**Niagara Community Action Program, Inc. offers assistance to clients through our Neighborhood Outreach Centers by:**

- Helping low income clients to maintain employment.
- Helping to increase employment income and or benefits.
- Helping with budget counseling and asset management.

**Accomplishing National Performance Indicators as follows:**

**FNPI 3a Individuals who achieved and maintained capacity to meet basic needs for 90 days.**

**FNPI 3g Individuals who increased their net worth.**

**FNPI 3h Individuals engaged with the Community Action Agency report improved well-being.**

**Niagara Community Action Program, Inc. receives or provides referrals to the following agencies:**

Niagara County Office for the Aging	Gaskill Preparatory School
Niagara County Department of Social Services	National Grid
Niagara County Employment and Training	Opportunities Unlimited, Inc.
Feed More of Western New York	John Duke Senior Center
Niagara Falls Housing Authority	Fidelis
Food Shuttle	North Tonawanda Senior Center
Community Missions, Inc.	NOCO
Cornell Cooperative Extension	Orleans/Niagara BOCES
Heart, Love & Soul	EMPOWER, Inc.
St. John's Outreach	Belmont Housing for WNY
Newfane Community Food Pantry	Niagara University
Divine Mercy	City of North Tonawanda
Catholic Charities	City of Lockport
Salvation Army	City of Niagara Falls
Niagara County Legal Aide	Town of Cambria
New York State Department of Health	Town of Hartland
Pendleton Food Pantry	Town of Lewiston
North Tonawanda Inter-Faith Food Pantry	Town of Lockport
Tuscarora Community Health Care Workers	Town of Niagara
United Way of Greater Niagara	Town of Pendleton
Rose Chiropractic	Town of Porter
St. Joseph's Outreach	Town of Royalton
Summit Outreach	Town of Somerset
St. Vincent De Paul	Town of Wheatfield
Word of Life Ministries	Town of Newfane
Women, Infants and Children	Town of Wilson
Carolyn's House	Niagara's Worksourceone
Pinnacle Community Services	Home Energy Assistance Program
Independent Living of Niagara County	Niagara County Health Department
Sister Helen's Food Pantry	Lockport Family Focus Group
Magdalene Project	Grigg Lewis Foundation
M & T Charitable Foundation	Walmart Niagara Falls
National Fuel	Walmart Lockport
Katz America	Aldi Niagara Falls
Youth Mentoring Services	Aldi Lockport
Boys & Girls Club	Target

And the many partners who support our mission.

Accomplishing National Performance Indicator as follows:

4. Partnerships among supporters and providers of services to low-income people are achieved.

## Summary

The raw data collected throughout Niagara County from the 2022 Comprehensive Needs Assessment conducted by Niagara Community Action Program, Inc. was reviewed, analyzed and discussed by the Board of Directors on January 13, 2022 and February 10, 2022 along with the comparative data from the New York Community Action Association Poverty Report 2021, Niagara County Census 2020 – 2021 and the American Community Survey 2019.

Based on the New York State Poverty Report 2021 conducted by the New York Community Action Association, Niagara County has a population of 210,820 of that population, 13.5% or 27,857 individuals are living in poverty. There are 33 counties in New York State whose poverty rate exceeds 13.5%. However, the population in these counties are considerably less. For example, Cortland County has a population of 47,865 with a county poverty rate of 16.4% and there are 7,272 individuals living in poverty. Another example is Delaware County with a population of 44,995. The county poverty rate is 16.6% or 7,071 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 2019, Niagara County Census 2020 – 2021 and New York State Community Action Association Poverty Report 2021 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 2021 New York State Community Action Association Poverty Report, the median household income for a male with a high school diploma is \$42,756 and a female median income with a high school diploma is \$25,290. According to this data, females make less income than males with a high school diploma. Furthermore, 38.2% of females who are head of household with children are living in poverty.

Our 2022 Comprehensive Needs Assessment data and the 2020 – 2021 Niagara County Census shows English is the primary language spoken in households in Niagara County, therefore, not creating a language barrier.

Our 2022 Comprehensive Needs Assessment and the 2020 – 2021 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.

According to our 2022 Comprehensive Needs Assessment data, most low-income clients in Niagara County reside in the 3 cities of Niagara Falls, Lockport and North Tonawanda. Of those, 35 rent a home and 43 own a home. Our 2022 Comprehensive Needs Assessment data states that 32 clients own a single family home, 40 clients need minor repairs. Of those, 20 clients cannot afford to make needed repairs. Twenty clients cannot afford their heat and electric bills.

As noted, Niagara Community Action Program, Inc. collected raw data from a wide range of sources. They included clients, public officials, faith based organizations, educational institutions, partners, board members and staff to substantiate our findings and provide recommendations.

The data collected by Niagara Community Action Program, Inc. was compared to the data presented in the 2021 New York State Poverty Report, the 2020 – 2021 Niagara County Census and the 2019 American Community Survey. This data confirms the need to continue development of priorities identified in the programs/services of the agency's work plan and strategic plan.

Based upon the agency's mission which is to reduce poverty in a collaborative effort by initiating and conducting programs of self-sufficiency and to empower individuals and families to reach their fullest potential, we continue to provide the following programs/services: emergency food, clothing, budget counseling, asset management, in-house weatherization, grants for home repair, child care referral, training, registration, health and safety start-up items, nutrition outreach, education and advocacy, on-the-job training, fair housing, back rent/mortgage/utility payments, and landlord/tenant resolution. Our clients are networked from one service to another (depending upon need) for complete one-stop shopping or out to partner organizations for complementary services.

## CONTINUING SUMMARY OF THE 2022 COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Further analysis of the data obtained from the 2022 Comprehensive Needs Assessment completed by Niagara Community Action Program, Inc. along with comparative data from New York Community Action Association Poverty Report 2021, the Niagara County Census 2020 – 2021 and the American Community Survey 2019, the following statements regarding age, gender, race and ethnicity are being added to the summary report.

In Niagara County, 19.9% of children under 18 are living in poverty, 11.3% are adults 25+, and 9.0% are senior citizens 65+.

According to gender, females make less income than males with a high school diploma and 38.2% of females who are heads of household with children are living in poverty.

Regarding race and ethnicity, 10.2% are white, 37.9% are Black/African American and 36.8% are Hispanic/Latinos which indicates that Black/African Americans & Hispanic/Spanish experience a high percentage level of poverty living in Niagara County. The data collected also showed 2.7% of the Native American/Alaskan Natives are living in poverty.

The data collected and analyzed identifies groups by race, ethnicity, gender and age in Niagara County that are experiencing living in poverty.





# APPENDIX

## Mobile Safety Net Team – John R. Oishei Foundation – Findings for Niagara County City of Niagara Falls 2019

### Strengths

- 114 Service Providers in the City of Niagara Falls
  - There are at least 4 providers in each of 16 categories of programs and services listed.
    - Information/Referral
    - Education/Training
    - Youth Programs
    - Health/Wellness
    - Mental Health/Addiction
    - Food
    - Financial Literacy
    - Clothing
    - Crime/Safety
    - Housing/Utility
    - Senior Programs
    - Veteran Services
    - Legal
- Nearly half or more of providers offer education and training, youth activities, health/wellness programs.
- Most service providers are located in high poverty neighborhoods within one mile of thousands of individuals living in or near poverty.
- Nearly 90% of providers are within ¼ mile of a bus stop.

### Gaps in Services

- Compassionate service delivery is largely missing.
- Early intervention services for young children.
- Identified substance abuse.
- Affordable flexible childcare.

### Barriers in Connecting with Residents

- Human services delivery is not closely enough aligned with economic development.
- Lack of awareness by residents. Sometimes residents have misperceptions and believe they are ineligible for services they qualify for.
- Multiple barriers to work.
- Transportation.

## Town of Newfane 2019

### Strengths

- Nearly two dozen service providers are located in Newfane.
- Services for children are most common.
- Most providers are located within one mile of hundreds of residents living in or near poverty.
- Information and referral is one of the most common services in Newfane.
- Programs that offer food are perceived by providers as some of the strongest programs in the community.

### Gaps in Services

- There are few if any options in Newfane for getting places for those without a car.
- Providers and/or residents do not know who does what or where to go for services.
- No housing for the homeless, no free legal services, no teen parent programs, no resources for mental health and addictions.

### Barriers in Connection with Residents

- Transportation is the largest barrier that providers say residents face in connecting with helpful programs and services as well as jobs.
- Connecting with target audiences and disseminating helpful information to residents often challenges providers.
- Fragmented information systems create barriers to more coordinated, efficient service delivery.

## City of Lockport 2020

### Strengths

- About 60 service providers are in Lockport.
- Mental health or addiction services are available at 24 sites.
- More than half of the providers offer education programs for children and adults.

### Gaps in Services

- Transportation is a need in Lockport.
- Providers and residents say affordable housing is a top need.
- There are limited childcare options.
- Need a wider range of high-paying jobs.

### Barriers in Connecting with Residents

- Mental health services are underutilized.
- Lack of information sharing leads to confusion about existing program.
- Critical health needs go untreated due to high costs.
- Residents in need often do not meet income eligibility requirements for assistance.

Niagara Community Action Program, Inc. is a part of representatives of public and private human service providers throughout Niagara County taking part in focus groups to gather a perspective on needs, barriers and strategies for improving client services and help the at-risk population become more self-sufficient. Niagara Community Action Program, Inc. is a part of the following focus groups:

- Continuum of Care
- Niagara Falls Housing Sub Committee
- Human Services Coalition
- Health Equity Task Force
- Workforce Development One-Stop Partners
- Lockport Family Focus Group
- Workforce Investment Board
- Lockport Human Services
- Tonawanda Human Services
- HUB – North Tonawanda

By attending these focus groups, Niagara Community Action Program, Inc. learned the demographics of the county, the at-risk population, their needs and urgent concerns, the utilization of service benefits and the barriers to support services. All information is used to improve the landscape of services providing insights and recommendations.