

NORTH DAKOTA COMMUNITY ACTION ASSOCIATION

NEEDS ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATEWIDE COMPARISONS

1996, 1998, 2003, AND 2006

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INTRODUCTION

This report presents a comparison of needs assessment data gathered for the North Dakota Community Action Association. Findings are presents from the studies conducted in 1996, 1998, 2003, and 2006. The needs assessment surveys varied slightly from one year to the next. As a result, some tables include data from only one, two, or three of the most recent needs assessment studies. In addition, some response categories were modified over the years so that some questions have additional categories while other categories have been deleted.

For 2006, a total of 1,670 respondents were sampled. The 2003 needs assessment study gathered data from 1,379 respondents from across the eight regions. The 1998 study was based on 1,450 respondents and the 1996 study had a sample of 1,761.

FINDINGS

The first six tables in this comparative report present demographic data on the clients. Table 1 presents data on gender.

TABLE 1
GENDER OF RESPONDENTS

<i>Gender</i>	<i>1996</i>	<i>1998</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2006</i>
Male	17.8%	21.5%	21.3%	26.1%
Female	82.2%	78.5%	78.7%	73.9%

The results in Table 1 show a relatively stable pattern of percentages for males and females.

From 1996 to 1998, however, there was an increase of 3.7% in the percentage of males in the study. The overall percentage of males remained stable from 1998 to 2003 but increased by 4.8% in 2006.

Table 2 presents data on age of the clients from each of the three needs assessment studies.

TABLE 2
AGE OF RESPONDENTS

<i>Age</i>	<i>1996</i>	<i>1998</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2006</i>
20 And Under	8.0%	7.4%	8.2%	7.0%
21-25	15.7%	16.4%	19.3%	18.0%
26-30	15.4%	14.0%	16.3%	15.7%
31-40	25.2%	28.7%	24.7%	22.7%
41-55	15.0%	18.6%	20.1%	23.1%
56-65	5.4%	5.2%	6.9%	6.9%
Over 65	12.9%	9.7%	4.5%	6.6%

Although there are variations from one study to another, the magnitude is not great. Perhaps the most notable variation is the decrease in clients age over 65 from 1996 to 2003. There are no notable differences between 2003 and 2006.

Data on marital status from the 1996, 1998, 2003, and 2006 needs assessment studies is presented in Table 3.

TABLE 3
RESPONDENT MARITAL STATUS

<i>Marital Status</i>	<i>1996</i>	<i>1998</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2006</i>
Single	34.1%	33.2%	41.9%	41.8%
Married	30.8%	34.9%	27.1%	27.7%

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Divorced	18.0%	18.0%	18.7%	19.4%
Widowed	10.6%	7.9%	6.2%	5.5%
Separated	4.6%	5.9%	6.0%	5.4%

The results show that the percentage of single clients has increased from 1998 to 2003 while the percentage of married clients has decreased. Divorced, widowed, and separated clients are relatively stable from 1998 to 2003 and into the 2006 study.

Table 4 presents data on single parents for the four needs assessment surveys.

TABLE 4
SINGLE PARENT STATUS

<i>Single Parent</i>	<i>1996</i>	<i>1998</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2006</i>
Yes	41.0%	39.4%	41.1%	37.3%
No	59.0%	60.6%	58.9%	62.7%

The percentage of single parents for 1996, 1998, 2003 and 2006 is very stable around the 40.0% level.

Table 5 presents the findings on level of education for clients in each of the four studies.

TABLE 5
EDUCATION LEVEL

<i>Level of Education</i>	<i>1996</i>	<i>1998</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2006</i>
Some Grade School	3.9%	3.2%	2.0%	2.1%
Completed Grade School	6.2%	5.1%	3.0%	3.0%
Some High School	15.5%	14.8%	15.3%	15.8%
Completed High School	27.9%	32.8%	31.9%	31.9%
Some Technical School	5.7%	7.0%	6.1%	6.6%
Completed Technical School	5.2%	6.4%	5.0%	5.3%
Some College	22.1%	30.6%	25.2%	23.6%
Completed College	11.5%	10.7%	11.6%	11.7%

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Again, there is a great deal of stability in the percentages in each educational level. There is a slight trend that shows a decrease in the percentage of clients with low levels of education (some grade school and completed grade school). Those in the remaining educational categories exhibit little variation with the exception of those with some college as they dropped from 30.6% to 25.2% from 1998 to 2003. The 2006 results mirror the 2003 data very closely.

Table 6 provides an overview of the levels of income reported by clients in the needs assessment studies.

TABLE 6
LEVEL OF INCOME

<i>Annual Income</i>	<i>1996</i>	<i>1998</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2006</i>
Less Than \$5,000	28.6%	24.5%	23.8%	24.5%
\$5,000 To \$9,999	29.1%	28.2%	27.8%	24.3%
\$10,000 To \$14,999	17.1%	20.7%	17.9%	16.9%
\$15,000 To \$19,999	7.3%	9.5%	10.2%	12.5%
\$20,000 To \$24,999	5.4%	7.2%	8.4%	8.6%
\$25,000 To \$34,999	3.3%	5.5%	7.3%	7.1%
\$35,000 To \$49,999	1.7%	2.3%	2.8%	3.6%
\$50,000 Or Above	0.9%	2.0%	1.8%	2.4%

The data on annual income also show a great deal of stability. There is very little variation across the four studies.

Table 7 presents data from the 1998, 2003 and 2006 question that stated, “The list provided below includes needs that are basic to the well-being of people and families. Please circle a number for each area in terms of needs for you or a member of your household. Circle 1 if the area is a need (IS), 2 if it is not (NOT), or 3 if the category does not apply to you (NA).” Fifteen needs were presented to the respondents. Table 7 presents the responses from this *Statewide Comparative Results: 1996, 1998, 2003, and 2006*

question in rank order by highest percentage for the year 2003. The data in the 2003 column also shows the percentage increase or decrease for each need from 1998 to 2003. The 1996 survey employed a different question which stated, “In which of the following areas will you need agency assistance during the next year?” Comparisons between the 1996 and recent needs assessment surveys must be made with reserve because of the change in question wording.

TABLE 7

RANKING OF NEEDS THAT ARE BASIC TO WELL-BEING

<i>Needs</i>	<i>1996*</i>	<i>1998</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2006</i>
Food	67.4%	54.8% (-12.6)	54.3% (-0.5)	51.1% (- 3.2)
Utilities	N/A	N/A	N/A	40.4% (-)
Dental Health Care	48.3%	48.0% (-0.3)	44.3% (-3.7)	40.0% (- 4.3)
Clothing	31.1%	35.0% (+3.9)	39.9% (+4.9)	35.2% (- 4.7)
Employment	25.3%	33.3% (+8.0)	38.6% (+5.3)	33.0% (- 5.6)
General Health Care	50.6%	38.2% (-12.4)	37.9% (-0.3)	32.6% (- 5.3)
Referrals/Info About Available Assistance	25.9%	31.9% (+6.0)	32.7% (+0.8)	27.1% (- 6.6)
Housing/Shelter	44.2%	27.6% (-16.6)	32.0% (+4.4)	31.9% (- 0.1)
Education	23.7%	27.2% (+3.5)	31.3% (+4.1)	25.3% (- 6.0)
Transportation	31.6%	26.7% (-4.9)	29.2% (+2.5)	31.3% (+ 2.1)
Budgeting Skills Training	14.5%	25.4% (+10.9)	27.0% (+1.6)	25.6% (- 1.4)
Child Care Services	27.0%	24.5% (-2.5)	24.5% (0.0)	17.9% (- 6.6)
Legal Services	18.2%	19.0% (+0.8)	21.7% (+2.7)	18.8% (- 2.9)
Family Or Individual Counseling	18.1%	20.2% (+2.1)	21.2% (+1.0)	17.9% (- 3.3)
Immediate/Crisis Assistance	16.2%	18.3% (+2.1)	20.8% (+2.5)	18.1% (- 2.5)
Income Tax Preparation	N/A	14.9%	16.1% (+1.2)	20.1% (+ 4.2)
Access To Alcohol Or Drug Counseling	N/A	N/A	N/A	9.8% (-)

According to the results in Table 7 there are no dramatic increases or decreases in specific needs

Statewide Comparative Results: 1996, 1998, 2003, and 2006

from 1998 to 2003. The needs that showed the greatest increase include employment (5.3%), clothing (4.9%), housing/shelter (4.4%), and education (4.1%). Only one need had a meaningful decrease and that was noted for dental health care (-3.7%). Despite that decrease it still remained as the second ranked need on the list. The 2006 data do not show any large increases or decreases. The three largest decreases include referrals/info about available assistance (-6.6%), child care services (-6.6%), and education (-6.0%).

Table 8 presents data from the question, “Please tell us how much of a problem the following barriers are to you and your family in seeking or gaining assistance with your basic needs. Circle a 1 if it is not a problem at all (NP), 2 if it is somewhat of a problem (SP), or 3 if it is a big problem (BP).” Barrier categories are presented in rank order based on the highest percentage indicating that a category was somewhat of a problem/a big problem (percentages for those two categories were combined in the table) for the 2003 needs assessment year.

TABLE 8
RANKING OF BARRIERS TO SEEKING OR GAINING ASSISTANCE
WITH YOUR BASIC NEEDS: SOMEWHAT OF A PROBLEM/BIG PROBLEM

	1996	1998	2003	2006
Can't Afford Fees Or Costs (Co-insurance, etc)	58.4%	53.7% (-4.7)	43.9% (-9.8)	47.2% (+ 3.3)
Not Eligible/Don't Qualify For Assistance	47.5%	45.4% (-2.1)	38.4% (-7.0)	43.3% (+ 4.9)
Don't Know Where To Go For Help	36.8%	40.0% (+3.2)	33.8% (-6.2)	34.9% (+ 1.1)
Services Available During Limited Hours	35.9%	33.4% (-2.5)	30.3% (-3.1)	31.4% (+ 1.1)
Inadequate Transportation/Distance	45.0%	38.1% (-6.9)	30.2% (-7.9)	38.1% (+ 7.9)
Pride (Don't want to ask for help)	40.8%	39.3% (-1.5)	29.8% (-9.5)	35.5% (+ 5.7)
Don't Know The Guidelines/Rules Of Eligibility	38.6%	34.3% (-4.3)	27.7% (-6.6)	31.4% (+ 3.7)
Programs Not Available In The Area	35.5%	34.4% (-1.1)	26.6% (-7.8)	28.1% (+ 1.5)
Too Much Trouble/Red Tape	37.7%	35.5% (-2.2)	25.1% (-10.4)	29.8% (+ 4.7)
Poor Health/Disabilities Make It Difficult To Get There	23.3%	19.2% (-4.1)	20.6% (+1.4)	25.5% (+ 4.9)
Had A Prior Bad Experience	24.6%	23.9% (-0.7)	20.3% (-3.6)	24.7% (+ 4.4)
Concern About Confidentiality	32.2%	27.0% (-5.2)	19.8% (-7.2)	19.7% (- 0.1)
Lack Of Child Care	24.1%	21.3% (-2.8)	18.8% (-2.5)	18.1% (- 0.7)

Statewide Comparative Results: 1996, 1998, 2003, and 2006

Can't Read	7.0%	6.3% (-0.7)	8.8% (+2.5)	10.5% (+ 1.7)
Drug Or Alcohol Usage	N/A	N/A	N/A	13.1% (-)

In general, the table shows that the barriers have been declining from 1996 to 1998 and again in 2003. Only two barriers, poor health/disabilities and can't read, increased from 1998 to 2003 and the increase was relatively small at 1.5% and 2.5% respectively. The largest decreases included: too much trouble/red tape (-10.4%), can't afford fees or costs (-9.8%), pride (-9.5%), inadequate transportation/distance (-7.9%), programs not available in the area (-7.8%), concern about confidentiality (-7.2%), not eligible/don't qualify for assistance (-7.0%), don't know the guidelines/rules of eligibility (-6.6%), and don't know where to go for help (-6.2%). In total, twelve of the fourteen barriers declined in percentage of responses from 1998 to 2003. In 2006 there were no notable decreases and few notable increases. The barrier of inadequate transportation/distance increased by 7.9% and pride increases 5.7%.

Table 9 presents data from the question, "Do you need child care services?"

TABLE 9
DO YOU NEED CHILD CARE SERVICES?

	1996	1998	2003	2006
Yes	N/A	20.9%	20.7%	15.5%
No	N/A	79.1%	79.3%	84.5%

The findings in Table 9 show that the percentage that need child care services was very stable around 20% in 1998 and 2003 but dropped to 15.5% in 2006.

Those who needed child care services were directed to a follow-up question that stated, “Which of the following have you found to be barriers to obtaining child care services?” Table 10 presents data from this question. In Table 10 the data are again presented in rank order in terms of the barriers receiving the largest percentages in 2003.

TABLE 10
BARRIERS TO OBTAINING CHILD CARE SERVICES

<i>Needs</i>	<i>1996</i>	<i>1998</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2006</i>
Cost	N/A	67.3%	79.9% (+12.6)	81.0% (+ 1.1)
Times Service Is Available	N/A	36.0%	55.2% (+19.2)	54.3% (- 0.9)
Quality Of Providers	N/A	30.4%	51.6% (+21.2)	49.6% (- 2.0)
Not Enough Providers	N/A	31.4%	48.4% (+17.0)	49.2% (+ 0.8)
Location	N/A	29.0%	43.7% (+14.7)	42.6% (- 1.1)
Issues Regarding Reimbursement To Provider	N/A	15.2%	37.3% (+22.1)	42.2% (+ 4.9)
Special Needs Child	N/A	7.3%	16.1% (+8.8)	17.1% (+ 1.0)
Other	N/A	6.6%	4.7% (-1.9)	N/A

This battery of questions was only asked in 1998, 2003 and 2006. For 2003, the results show that all of the barriers, with the exception of the “other” category have increased. The largest increase was recorded in the category “issues regarding reimbursement to provider” (22.1%), followed by “quality of providers” (21.25), “times service is available” (19.2%), “not enough providers” (17.0%), “location” (14.7%), and “cost” (12.6%). There were no notable increases or decreases in the 2006 needs assessment.

Statewide Comparative Results: 1996, 1998, 2003, and 2006

Table 11 presents data from the question, “Which of the following activities have you participated in during the past two years?” Table 11 presents responses from this question in rank order by highest percentage of those indicating participation in the activity for 2003.

TABLE 11

ACTIVITIES YOU HAVE PARTICIPATED IN DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS

<i>Activities</i>	<i>1996</i>	<i>1998</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2006</i>
Church Related Groups	37.4%	33.6% (- 3.8)	28.4% (- 5.2)	32.9% (+ 4.6)
Head Start Or Early Head Start	N/A	16.3% (-)	24.3% (+ 8.0)	26.2% (+ 1.9)
Job Skills Training	20.1%	24.8% (+ 4.7)	21.9% (- 2.9)	21.5% (- 0.4)
Adult Education	19.9%	18.4% (- 1.5)	21.4% (+ 3.0)	19.3% (- 2.1)
TANF/TEEM	N/A	17.2% (-)	20.3% (+ 3.1)	20.7% (+ 0.4)
Community Groups	25.3%	22.3% (- 3.0)	19.1% (- 3.2)	21.7% (+ 2.6)
Health/Nutrition Classes	20.2%	19.3% (- 0.9)	17.4% (- 1.9)	18.9% (- 1.5)
College Or Trade/Technical School	N/A	N/A	N/A	16.2% (-)
Community Action Self-Reliance Program	10.7%	11.9% (+ 1.2)	15.3% (+ 3.4)	10.2% (- 5.1)
Parenting Classes	14.7%	16.2% (+ 1.5)	14.9% (- 1.3)	14.6% (- 0.3)
Legal Assistance Services	16.9%	13.6% (- 3.3)	12.8% (- 0.8)	13.7% (+ 0.9)
Career Counseling	N/A	10.9% (-)	10.0% (- 0.9)	10.6% (+ 0.6)

The results show that, for the most part, there is stability in the participation levels from year to year. The highest increase from 1998 to 2003 was 8.0% for Head Start of Early Head Start followed by 3.4% for Community Action Self-Reliance Program. The largest decrease was shown in the church related groups category at 5.2%. The 2006 data show no notable increases

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or decreases from 2003 to 2006.

In 1998, 2003, and 2006 the clients were asked the question, “Please indicate which of the following you feel are barriers to finding employment.” Table 12 presents data from this question presented in rank order by the highest percentage for the 2003 needs assessment study.

TABLE 12
BARRIERS TO FINDING EMPLOYMENT

<i>Barriers</i>	<i>1996</i>	<i>1998</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2006</i>
Low Wages	N/A	22.6%	48.2% (+25.6)	48.5% (+ 0.3)
Jobs Not Available	N/A	31.5%	46.3% (+14.8)	37.8% (- 8.5)
Lack Of Training Or Experience	N/A	32.0%	34.3% (+ 2.3)	33.5% (- 0.8)
Work Hours	N/A	17.3%	32.7% (+15.4)	32.3% (- 0.4)
Transportation	N/A	17.8%	23.9% (+ 6.1)	27.8% (+ 3.9)
Physical Disability/Chronic Health Problems	N/A	13.9%	21.8% (+ 7.9)	23.0% (+ 1.2)
Child Care	N/A	14.8%	21.1% (+ 6.3)	19.4% (- 1.7)
Family Conflicts	N/A	9.7%	20.1% (+10.4)	19.2% (- 0.9)
Mental Health	N/A	N/A	15.8% (-)	20.6% (+ 4.8)
Alcohol And/Or Drug Abuse	N/A	N/A	N/A	9.0% (-)

“Low wages” was the most frequently mentioned barrier in 2003 as it had an increase of 25.6% from 1998. “Work hours” also had a high increase of 15.4% followed by jobs not available at 14.8% and “family conflicts” at 10.4%. None of the barriers decreased from 1998 to 2003. The 2006 results show stability with the exception of the category of “jobs not available” which decreased by 8.5%.

Statewide Comparative Results: 1996, 1998, 2003, and 2006

A follow-up question stated, “Please indicate which of the following you feel are barriers to maintaining employment?” Table 13 presents data from this question in rank order by highest percentage for the 2003 study.

TABLE 13
BARRIERS TO MAINTAINING EMPLOYMENT

<i>Barriers</i>	<i>1996</i>	<i>1998</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2006</i>
Low Wages/Benefits	N/A	27.3%	43.8% (+16.5)	46.3% (+ 2.5)
Work Hours	N/A	18.4%	32.5% (+14.1)	31.1% (- 1.4)
Stress Management/Balancing Family & Work	N/A	NA	26.6% (-)	27.0% (- 0.4)
Transportation	N/A	19.6%	24.5% (+ 4.9)	29.1% (+ 4.6)
Child Care	N/A	19.7%	22.0% (+ 2.3)	19.5% (- 2.5)
Lack Of Permanent Affordable Housing	N/A	NA	21.5% (-)	24.7% (+ 3.2)
Lack Of Opportunity For Advancement	N/A	NA	20.6% (-)	21.7% (+ 1.1)
Physical Disability/Chronic Health Problems	N/A	NA	20.6% (-)	23.0% (+ 2.4)
Mental Health	N/A	NA	15.8% (-)	17.6% (+ 1.8)
Family Conflicts	N/A	15.7%	15.1% (- 0.6)	17.1% (+ 2.0)
Getting Along With Co-Workers	N/A	10.6%	7.0% (- 2.4)	10.9% (+ 3.9)
Getting Along With Supervisor	N/A	11.2%	6.9% (- 4.3)	10.6% (+ 3.7)
Other	N/A	N/A	N/A	9.1% (-)

In 2003 “low wages/benefits” continued to be the most frequently mentioned barrier and it also had the highest increase (16.5%) followed by “work hours” (14.1%). “Getting along with supervisor” had the largest decrease (4.3%) followed by “getting along with co-workers” (2.4%). The barriers were generally stable from 2003 to 2006 as no increase was higher than 4.6%.

Statewide Comparative Results: 1996, 1998, 2003, and 2006