Voices, Values and Vision

Recommendations for Action

from

The Special Task Forces

March 2001

Final Report from the 1999 Study Sponsored By:
Centre County Community Foundation
Centre County Council for Human Services
Centre County Government
Centre County United Way
The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation
The Pennsylvania State University
The Borough of State College

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Centre County United Way
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INTRODUCTION

In 1999, the Needs Assessment Task Force concluded a two-year study of human service needs in Centre County. A copy of this report, titled *Voices, Values and Vision from the Public and Human Service Professionals*, is available from the Centre County United Way. An analysis of the data collected indicated that the most severe needs in Centre County fall into five categories:

- Children and Youth
- Those in Personal Crisis
- Employment and Health Care
- Transportation
- Shelter Care

The Task Force recommended that a separate task force of professionals, experienced volunteers, and representatives of funding agencies be organized around each of the five needs. Their charge was to:

- assess the origins of the problem and identify those most likely to have unmet needs;
- review existing programs and identify success and areas needing improvement;
- recommend specific ways resources can be increased to meet the need;
- propose structural and programmatic innovations that would help meet the need; and
- suggest specific steps by which changes could be made.

The five task forces were organized in 2000 under the leadership of the United Way Board. Each task force worked diligently and met numerous times. They identified the key issues and developed specific recommendations for both the public and private sector, which are summarized in the pages that follow.

There are several themes that cut across the recommendations of all task forces. That these issues recur so often is an indicator of the need for special attention.

1. Needs can be met more effectively if there is greater coordination among public and private agencies offering similar or allied services;
2. Low income residents in rural areas of the county are especially challenged in accessing human services;
3. Low-cost early intervention or preventive services are needed to prevent problems from escalating to the point of requiring high-cost services;
4. Continuously educating and informing key leaders on the most severe needs, and services to meet them, is essential to achieve Task Force goals;
5. Offering human services during non-traditional hours is key to success in meeting many of the severe needs;
6. Resources need to be devoted to attracting, training, and retaining qualified staff;

7. There is an overwhelming need for affordable housing, as well as transportation, for low-income working families.

The five task forces have, to the extent possible, formulated recommendations that require little or no funding increases. Meeting needs can be achieved by shifting emphases, reorganization, and cooperative ventures. However, a number of needs cannot be met without new funds. One way of increasing funds to meet severe needs would be to designate a high portion (80%-90%) of new funds for severest needs. In the case of government, designation means allocating efforts to applying for new sources of funds.

Designating new funds or applying for new funds is a relatively painless way to fund severe human service needs. While it increases the work of those allocating and applying for funds, it does not substantially decrease funding for clients. We recommend that County and Borough Government, and Centre County Community Foundation form a council or committee dedicated to identifying new sources of funding and formulating a plan for dedicating new funds toward severest needs. This committee or council should report on the change in funding for severe needs on an annual basis.

Alan Booth, Co-Chair  
1999 Needs Assessment Task Force

Mildred Cornelison, Co-Chair  
1999 Needs Assessment Task Force
Glossary
FREQUENTLY-USED ABBREVIATIONS

ABRAXAS  – Drug and alcohol long-term treatment center
BB/BS   – Big Brother/Big Sister program of the Centre County Youth Service Bureau
CATA    – Centre Area Transportation Authority
CDBG    – Community Development Block Grant program of State College Borough
CDFC    – Child Development and Family Council of Centre County, Inc.
CTC     – Communities That Care (youth-serving initiatives in Centre Region and Centre County)
D&A     – Centre County Office of Drug and Alcohol
MH/MR   – Centre County Office of Mental Health and Mental Retardation
MPO     – Metropolitan Planning Organization
PICCC   – Private Industry Council of Centre County, Inc.
Skills  – Skills of Central Pennsylvania, Inc.
Recommendations
for
Children and Youth

CONCLUSIONS FROM THE ORIGINAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT STUDY

Greatest priority was placed on issues impacting the lives of Centre County’s children and youth. More services and resources appear to be needed for the care of children whose parents are working or going to school, children in need of adult role models, and children who are abused and/or neglected.
CHILDREN AND YOUTH TASK FORCE
COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Norma Keller, Task Force Chair
Centre County Youth Service Bureau

Eleanor Beaver, Centre County United Way

Kathy Clayton, Strawberry Fields, Inc.

Dennis Ditmer, State College Family YMCA

David Immel, Centre County Prison
Centre County United Way Board Liaison

Tom King, State College Police Chief

Mary Ellen Sabatino, Bellefonte Area School District

Julie Segal, Centre County MH/MR Program

Ann Walker, Centre County Child Development and Family Council

Terry Watson, Centre County Children and Youth Services
## CHILDREN AND YOUTH TASK FORCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISSUE (Critical Needs)</th>
<th>RECOMMENDATIONS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Insufficient adoptive and foster care homes to meet current, local needs</strong></td>
<td><strong>Public Sector</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Centre County Children and Youth Services continues to raise community awareness through public speaking, advertising, and other recruitment methods</td>
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<tr>
<td>A committee of county service providers continue their current exploration of local therapeutic foster care and small group residential services for children and youth with severe mental health issues</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Private Sector</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Private children and youth providers continue to sensitize community leaders and the public about the continuing, serious need for more adoptive and foster care homes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local groups invite speakers, include articles in newsletters, etc. helping to publicize foster care programs</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Insufficient professionally supervised one-to-one mentoring relationships available to meet early intervention/delinquency prevention needs through Big Brother/Big Sister (BB/BS) Program</strong></td>
<td><strong>Public Sector</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Communities That Care (CTC) Initiatives, which further document the need for increased mentoring services; provide a letter of endorsement to the CTC as they work to expand the BB/BS Program through state funding</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inform County Commissioners and State College Borough CDBG Program of needs assessment findings which document the need to expand mentoring services; request consideration of additional funding and/or funding sources</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Private Sector</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Raise funds in support of BB/BS special activities and education funds; sponsor activities for children and for youth participants in BB/BS; encourage community volunteer to become mentors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inform Centre County United Way of needs assessment findings which support the need for expanded mentoring opportunities; request consideration of additional funding and/or funding sources</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Insufficient resources to address the critical needs of children with severe mental, behavioral or emotional problems</strong></td>
<td><strong>Public Sector</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Consider school co-funding of school-based mental health initiatives to supplement current County Mental Health/Mental Retardation programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Submit written communication to County MH/MR Advisory Board and County Commissioners, documenting the severity of needs identified in needs assessment review process and urging support of expanded resources for these children</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Private Sector</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Increase participation of agencies and organizations in needs-based planning process conducted by county programs to publicly consider the needs of these children</td>
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<tr>
<td>Support community initiatives to expand short-term and long-term family counseling opportunities including written support for upcoming CTC proposals submitted to PA Commission on Crime and Delinquency</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage local businesses and organizations to underwrite the expense of specialized services for children with severe mental health issues</td>
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### ISSUE (Critical Needs, cont'd)

**Insufficient services and resources for children and families in need of quality, affordable, accessible child care while parents work, attend school/training, and/or receive rehabilitation services; insufficient services and resources for child care during non-traditional work hours/days/weeks**

- Increase access to public schools facilities and use of school-based transportation for on-site child care when there is a demonstrated need
- Support Centre Region and Centre County CTC initiatives to fund private providers who will address parent education and child care issues
- Support County planning grant focused on “Building a Quality, Comprehensive Child Care System” led by Child Development & Family Council (CDFC)
- Increase short and long term supplemental funds to support child care for parents pursuing training/education programs and/or rehabilitation services

**Insufficient community-based specialized treatment services for sexually offending youth**

- Support current Children and Youth, MH/MR, and Juvenile Probation efforts to develop in-county specialized treatment services using in-county providers
- Support Centre County Children and Youth Services commendable efforts to maintain ongoing contact with victims and their families, offering support services at several intervals after the abuse has occurred in an effort to break the cycle of abuse

**Insufficient aftercare resources for youth returning from drug/alcohol treatment, including intensive out-patient and case management services**

- Collaborate with In-School Probation Officers and consider their potential involvement in the delivery of services
- Extend length of court-assigned probation services when appropriate to ensure that returning youth participate in important aftercare services
- Encourage County D&A Program to establish a case manager position dedicated to youth aftercare programming

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RECOMMENDATIONS</th>
<th>PUBLIC SECTOR</th>
<th>PRIVATE SECTOR</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>increase access to public schools facilities and use of school-based transportation for on-site child care when there is a demonstrated need</strong></td>
<td><strong>support centre region and centre county ctc initiatives to fund private providers who will address parent education and child care issues</strong></td>
<td><strong>increase supplemental resources for cdfc’s child care safety net program through centre county united way and centre county community foundation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>support county planning grant focused on “building a quality, comprehensive child care system” led by child development &amp; family council (cdfc)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>support new county early child care and education initiative led by cdfc in partnership with centre county united way</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>increase short and long term supplemental funds to support child care for parents pursuing training/education programs and/or rehabilitation services</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>support early childhood consulting on-site (ecco) lead by infant evaluation program</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>support current children and youth, mh/mr, and juvenile probation efforts to develop in-county specialized treatment services using in-county providers</strong></td>
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<td><strong>make the placement of mentors with victims very high priority in big /sister program placements</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>support centre county children and youth services commendable efforts to maintain ongoing contact with victims and their families, offering support services at several intervals after the abuse has occurred in an effort to break the cycle of abuse</strong></td>
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<td><strong>convene a task force to address complex roadblocks which have impeded the county’s ability to provide comprehensive, easily accessible programming</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>collaborate with in-school probation officers and consider their potential involvement in the delivery of services</strong></td>
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<td><strong>refer youth to juvenile mentoring program (jump), a court-sponsored division of the big brother/sister program aftercare programming</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>extend length of court-assigned probation services when appropriate to ensure that returning youth participate in important aftercare services</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Important Needs</td>
<td>RECOMMENDATIONS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insufficient resources for dental, orthodontic, and vision care</td>
<td>• Inform the Centre County Commissioners that these serious, unmet health needs persist despite previous local efforts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient preventive services focused on child rearing techniques and prevention of family management and family conflict issues</td>
<td>• Support Communities That Care (CTC) proposals to PA Commission on Crime and Delinquency intended to fund private providers who will increase the use of currently certified ‘Parents as Teacher’ instructors to provide this valuable preventive service</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient early intervention counseling services for children, youth, and families who experience serious family management problems and family conflict</td>
<td>• Support CTC proposal to PA Commission on Crime and Delinquency to fund private providers to offer no cost/low cost counseling programs to resolve problems that might otherwise lead to entry into the child welfare, mental health, and court systems</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient opportunities for at-risk youth to benefit from specialized programming addressing recreational and personal/social growth needs</td>
<td>• Explore the development of additional school-based activities during non-classroom hours targeted at at-risk youth</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Local Child Care Planning Initiative Task Force on Health, Safety, and Nutrition further explore this issue, develop a resource inventory, review the extent of need, and determine service barriers</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Support Early Childhood Initiative currently under consideration by CDFC and Centre County United Way</td>
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<td>• Reconvene local ‘Parent Educators’ group to coordinate and collaborate on their respective efforts</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Private sector groups could underwrite proven early intervention counseling designed to help children before they must be referred to formal public programs</td>
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<td>• Support groups such as Stand for Children as they work with others to establish a local Skatepark</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Develop delinquency prevention programs that would be available on-site at the Skatepark</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Support more community-based activities during non-school hours targeted at at-risk youth</td>
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Children and Youth Task Force (cont’d)

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<tr>
<th>ISSUES</th>
<th>RECOMMENDATIONS</th>
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<td>(Basic Neglect)</td>
<td>Public Sector</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inadequate public awareness of the many local services which provide advocacy with legal, educational, and/or human service issues</td>
<td>• Inform all public and private providers of health, legal, education, and human services for children and youth of the perception that more services are needed. • Encourage all service providers to review and expand their public education efforts to ensure that children, youth and families are more aware of service opportunities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Also see: Appendix I. Children and Youth: Public Perceptions/Current Resources/Service Needs)
Recommendations

for

Those in Personal Crisis

CONCLUSIONS FROM THE ORIGINAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT STUDY

Greater efforts and funds need to be devoted to individuals and families facing personal crises. This includes services for disaster victims, and shelter for special populations such as victims of domestic violence, the mentally ill, and individuals with drug and/or alcohol abuse issues.
PERSONAL CRISIS TASK FORCE
COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

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Centre County Women’s Resource Center

Val Barner
Centre County Office of Mental Health and Mental Retardation

Virginia Brown
American Red Cross – Centre Community Chapter

Brenda Fry
Centre County Can Help
Meadows Psychiatric Center

Tammy Gentzel
WellSpring, Inc.

Dennis Heitzman
Penn State University

Cindy Pasquinelli
Strawberry Fields

John Yeager, United Way Board Liaison
Murata Electronics
PERSONAL CRISIS TASK FORCE

Overall gaps, limitations, and unmet needs:
- Lack of long-term affordable housing was one of the highest priorities for all five task forces
- Limitations imposed by State and Federal Guidelines
- Time limitations of other funding sources
- Lack of employment options for clients (supervised and otherwise)
- Lack of child care options
- Lack of dollars for long term chronic Mental Health/Mental Retardation clients (e.g., therapy, medication, monitoring, and the staff to do this in the community)
- Inadequate supervision to serve clients in less restrictive settings
- Inadequate resources to serve clients with a criminal history, violent behaviors, Drug & Alcohol clients, and clients who are non-compliant

General recommendations emerging from Task Force deliberations:
- Increase private donations to the individual agencies, to the United Way Campaign, and to the Centre County Community Foundation
- Increase collaboration among community agencies and government entities
- Increase housing and employment options for clients with long term needs
- Increase grant writing opportunities and the skills necessary to write them

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLIENT ISSUES</th>
<th>RECOMMENDATIONS</th>
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</table>
| Current programs are unable to serve clients with limited abilities in sheltered setting | Public Sector: Additional funding for MH/MR clients for the Choice Rental Assistance Program, Shelter Plus Care Program, and Community Residential Rehab Program  
| Current programs can only help those clients with mild to moderate problems | Private Sector: Request Centre County Community Foundation create a fund to help those who, for whatever reason, fall through the “cracks” and are not eligible for help through traditional sources  
| Current programs cannot provide a quick response to personal crisis to avoid long-term system use | Centre County Office of Adult Services, Office of Aging, and Base Service Unit work in conjunction with Social Security to develop and fund a representative payee program for clients unable to manage their own resources  
| Shelter and housing providers conduct a survey of existing public and private providers to determine if another type of shelter should be created to serve clients who do not qualify for existing services | Develop a collaborative centralized screening system -- phone or face-to-face, or within each agency  
| Develop a screening system to determine the appropriateness or triage of clients |  

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<tr>
<th>CLIENT ISSUES (Cont'd)</th>
<th>RECOMMENDATIONS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clients with chronic MH/MR needs who are non-compliant with program rules and regulations</td>
<td>• Establish a public/private committee to find solutions for clients who are non-compliant or who have chronic needs</td>
<td>• Establish a public/private committee to find solutions for clients who are non-compliant or who have chronic needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of stay/treatment limited by funding or regulations</td>
<td>• Work with providers and funders to allow flexibility on case-by-case basis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clients with mild to moderate issues experiencing delays in receiving services</td>
<td>• MH Professionals work together to provide services more quickly for mild to moderate need consumers</td>
<td>• MH Professionals work together to provide services more quickly for mild to moderate need consumers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide clients with chronic MH/MR needs with additional therapy options</td>
<td>• Recruit more therapy specialties to the area</td>
<td>• Centre Community Hospital or the Meadows could evaluate the need to set aside a room for a 24-hour observation facility for clients who do not need immediate hospitalization but should not return to their home without being monitored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited services for clients from the prison system, and lack of services for those who have committed a crime of violence or crime of a sexual nature</td>
<td>• Establish a halfway house in conjunction with Parole and Probation and Centre County Prison • Develop programs with prison staff that could come online with the new prison</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulties working with non-county and international clients</td>
<td>• Work with PSU international group, faith community to help internationals work through challenges of America and Centre County • Create centralized file with information on services (medical, citizenship, etc.) for non-county and non-country clients</td>
<td>• Support creation of centralized file with information on services (medical, citizenship, etc.) for non-county and non-country clients</td>
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## Personal Crisis Task Force (cont’d)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>EMPLOYMENT ISSUES</th>
<th>RECOMMENDATIONS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Job opportunities and options for clients (under educated, under skilled, returning homemakers, and MH/MR clients)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Public Sector</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Encourage clients to work with State Job Center to help find jobs -- on-line and in person</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Training for better jobs</strong></td>
<td>• Encourage PICCC, school districts, South Hills Business School to become more involved in the area of training programs for all levels of ability</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Lack of Job Coaching programs</strong></td>
<td>• School districts establish programs to help clients with limited abilities or clients re-entering the work force acquire skills to support themselves and their families</td>
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<tr>
<th>TRANSIT/LOCATION ISSUES</th>
<th>RECOMMENDATIONS</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Lack of public transportation in outlying areas for weekend and evening travel for work</strong></td>
<td><strong>Public Sector</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Need for funding to purchase cars in running condition and car insurance so low income people in outlying areas can commute to jobs</strong></td>
<td>• County could apply for additional funds through the State and Federal governments for cars and insurance</td>
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### RECOMMENDATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Public Sector</th>
<th>Private Sector</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHILDCARE ISSUES</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>More subsidized daycare</td>
<td>• Pool government and private dollars to fund childcare</td>
<td>• Pool private and government dollars to fund childcare</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evening and weekend childcare for working families</td>
<td>• Local school systems need to develop a course to expand the base of and the training of potential childcare providers</td>
<td>• Pool private and government dollars to fund childcare</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employer on site daycare</td>
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<td>• Major employers should explore funding for on-site daycare</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>FUNDS ISSUES</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Limited funding for all agencies</td>
<td>• Look for new funding opportunities</td>
<td>• Work to increase contributions to United Way, Centre County Community Foundation, and individual agencies</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Research grants and government requests for funding</td>
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<tr>
<td>Funding to purchase medications</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Work with United Way, the Centre County Community Foundation, and other private foundations to establish a pool of money for prescriptions, medical, dental, and vision needs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Funding for medical, dental and vision needs for uninsured</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Contact Four Diamonds Fund at Hershey to see if these needs would be an appropriate use of their fund</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>STAFF ISSUES</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Low pay/high turnover</td>
<td>• Make education of the importance of the human service jobs a priority for local funders and legislators</td>
<td>• Talk to businesses and employment agencies for help with staff training and motivation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Limited staff supervision</td>
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<td>• Contact Penn State for help from Human Resources and the College of Business</td>
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<td>Few opportunities for advancement</td>
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<td>Minimal raises</td>
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<td>Staff morale</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recruitment, training and retention programs for new and ongoing volunteers</td>
<td>• Network with public and private agencies that successfully retain and utilize volunteers</td>
<td>• Network with public and private agencies that successfully retain and utilize volunteers</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Contact school districts Community Service Projects</td>
<td>• Network with AT&amp;T Volunteer Center on campus and with the Volunteer Center</td>
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(Also see: Appendix II. Personal Crisis Services Continuum)
Recommendations
for
Employment and Health Care

CONCLUSIONS FROM THE ORIGINAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT STUDY

There is a need for jobs that pay more than minimum wage and provide benefits such as health insurance. With the absence of health insurance, there is a need for low-cost health care and preventive services so those with modest incomes can obtain needed medical care.
EMPLOYMENT AND HEALTH CARE TASK FORCE
COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Mildred Cornelison, Task Force Chair
Retired, Centre County Office of Human Services Planning

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Pennsylvania Job Center at Philipsburg

Grace Derr
Centre County State Health Center

Carolyn Foust
State College Area School District

Pat Knobloch
Murata Electronics

Tim Maggs
Centre County Board of Assistance

Wanda Sams
Community Development Block Grant

Becky Shrope
Family Health Services

Pam Strouse
Private Industry Council of Centre County

Susan Youtz
Penn State University
# Employment and Health Care

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Public Sector</th>
<th>Private Sector</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Many part-time and full-time minimum wage jobs carry no health insurance coverage</td>
<td>• Work together with the public sector, health professionals, the faith community, charitable foundations, education institutions and other community stakeholders on a community health care collaborative model</td>
<td>• Work together with the private sector, health professionals, the faith community, charitable foundations, education institutions and other community stakeholders on a community health care collaborative model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men, especially in low-income rural areas, are working but have no health coverage and are not eligible for Medicaid or Medicare</td>
<td>• Work together with the private sector to create a mobile preventive health care unit to visit workplaces, rural areas, shopping centers, and heavily populated low-income areas to provide basic health care services and make referrals to appropriate providers</td>
<td>• Work together with the public sector to create a mobile preventive health care unit to visit workplaces, rural areas, shopping centers, and heavily populated low-income areas to provide basic health care services and make referrals to appropriate providers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Services available to uninsured low-income workers are inadequate and/or unaffordable</td>
<td>• Work together with the private sector to create a mobile preventive health care unit to visit workplaces, rural areas, shopping centers, and heavily populated low-income areas to provide basic health care services and make referrals to appropriate providers</td>
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<td>Employers with excellent intentions are not able to provide health coverage benefits to workers without driving up costs of their services and products to uncompetitive levels</td>
<td>• Work together with the private sector to support efforts to educate the public as to what escalating health care costs mean to employers</td>
<td>• Invest in the community health care collaborative to buy into the most basic of health care and prescriptive needs programs for all employees</td>
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<td>Public views health care employment benefits as an entitlement, and is only aware on an intellectual level of the problems of increased costs to employers</td>
<td>• Work together with the private sector to support efforts to educate the public as to what escalating health care costs mean to employers</td>
<td>• Work together with the public sector to support efforts to educate the public as to what escalating health care costs mean to employers</td>
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<td>Centre Community Hospital does not receive federal funding for &quot;charity care.&quot; When the existing $1 million fund being used to provide preventive and primary health care to qualifying uninsured residents is expended, there is no assurance this care will continue at Centre Community.</td>
<td>• Work together with the private sector to establish a fund to assist individuals and/or families facing financially catastrophic health care needs</td>
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Recommendations for Transportation

CONCLUSIONS FROM THE ORIGINAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT STUDY

Transportation for the elderly, handicapped, and rural residents is needed so they can access health care and other human services, or travel to and from work.
TRANSPORTATION TASK FORCE
COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Tammy Gentzel, Task Force Chair
WellSpring, Inc.

George Bugyi, United Way Board Liaison
Penn State University

Noreen Byers
Handy Delivery Taxi Service/Centre Ride

Glenn Carter
Community Academy for Lifelong Learning

Mildred Cornelison
Retired, Centre County Office of Human Services Planning

Jane DelVitto
Centre County Assistance Office

Jeff Foreman
Centre County Assistance Office

Ann Gaumond
Centre County Office of Transportation

Jennifer Kusznir
Private Industry Council of Centre County

Hugh Mose
Centre Region Transit Authority

Theresa Davis
Penn State University Transportation Services

Jack Shannon
Board of Supervisors, Rush Township
The Centre County populations with greatest needs are:
Working poor who have unexpected and unmanageable transportation repair or maintenance costs (e.g., higher gas prices).
Elderly and disabled persons who cannot drive themselves.
Youth and disabled persons enrolled in employment transition programs.
Commuters in need of reliable, consistent and flexible carpool matching programs.

The problem areas associated with these population groups are:
Lack of consistent, reliable services for special populations: working poor, elderly, and disabled especially those living in outlying and rural areas and for out of county services.
Lack of coordinated municipal services across the county as a result of municipal fragmentation.
Inadequate infrastructure to deal with intra-municipal and inter-municipal transportation issues: commuters, parking, etc.
Inequitable state funding formulas for public transportation services in rural communities.

<table>
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<th>ISSUE</th>
<th>RECOMMENDATIONS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Transportation roadblocks created by fragmentation of local governments</td>
<td>• Transportation Council of key stakeholders, including human service providers, within the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to coordinate county wide transportation planning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transportation roadblocks created by fragmentation of human services</td>
<td>• Safety net of coordinated human services to address county transportation needs for issues addressed by all five task groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service for the elderly, handicapped, and rural residents that would provide access to health care and other human services, or travel to and from work</td>
<td>• Agencies and county and local governments provide increased: Car-pool matching Shared ride programs Volunteer Provide-a-Ride service • Short term vehicle loan programs • Subsidized car repair • Subsidized auto purchase • Transportation vouchers</td>
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<td>More innovative programs to serve low-income, elderly and disabled individuals and families</td>
<td>• Transportation vouchers • Short-term vehicle loans • Low-cost loans • Subsidized car repair</td>
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<td>• Short-term vehicle loans • Low-cost loans • Subsidized car repair</td>
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<td>• Fund administrative and direct service costs associated with coordination</td>
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<td>• Work with United Way and Centre County Community Foundation to increase funding for innovative and flexible alternative programs such as: Shared ride programs Volunteer Provide-a-ride service Short term vehicle loan programs Subsidized car repair Subsidized auto purchase</td>
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</table>
### Transportation Task Force, cont’d

<table>
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| Working poor have unexpected and unmanageable transportation repair or maintenance costs (e.g., higher gas prices) | **Public Sector**<br>- Agencies and county and local governments provide increased:<br>  - Car-pool matching<br>  - Shared ride programs<br>  - Short term vehicle loan programs<br>  - Subsidized car repair<br>  - Subsidized auto purchase<br>  - Transportation vouchers  
**Private Sector**<br>- Businesses support flexible park and ride programs, worker ride-match programs, and subsidized transportation costs for transition-to-work program participants |
| Inadequate infrastructure to deal with intra-municipal and inter-municipal transportation issues such as commuters and parking | **Public sector support for a program to provide reliable, consistent and flexible county-wide car-pool matching**  
**Private Sector**<br>- Citizens use public transportation and shared-ride programs whenever possible<br>  - Businesses support flexible park and ride programs, car pool and worker ride-match programs |
| Inequities in Pennsylvania’s public transit funding formulas which favor urban areas | **Work with MPOs and Local Development Districts to address these inequities**  |
| Small local municipalities cannot generate the required local match for state/federal transportation grants | **County funding of local match for at least a minimal level of public transportation to rural areas**  |
| Need for long-range plan encompassing new technology and innovative solutions to rural transportation issues | **Key stakeholders group make recommendations to the full MPO regarding allocation of resources, pursuit of new programs, support of existing programs, impact of the development of Corridor O and I-99 on transportation gaps across the county, and coordination with other MPOs and Local Development Districts**  |

(Also see: Appendix III. Transportation Task Force Discussion)
Recommendations for Shelter and Housing

CONCLUSIONS FROM THE ORIGINAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT STUDY

Nursing home care is needed for some low-income elderly, while others need support services to enable them to remain independent; affordable housing is needed for low-income persons; and temporary shelter needs to be provided to adults and families in crisis situations.
SHELTER & HOUSING TASK FORCE
COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Membership is comprised of public and private funders, housing developers, representatives of local government, human service providers, and representatives from Centre County United Way.

Members

Ron Quinn, Task Force Chair
Housing Transitions
(Transitional Housing sub-committee chair)

Val Barner
Centre County MH/MR Services

Ellie Beaver
Centre County United Way

Kim Beck
Community Action
(Shelter sub-committee chair)

John Haas
United Way Board liaison

Andy Haines
S&A Homes

Kendra Hicks
Centre County Women’s Resource Centre

Lu Hoover
Borough of State College – Planning & Community Development
(Permanent Housing sub-committee chair)

Susan Keller Hoover
PSU Gerontology Centre
(Permanent Supportive Housing sub-committee co-chair)

Irene Imler
Strawberry Fields

Bob Ott
Centre County Office of Adult Services

Members (cont’d)

Susan Romanini
Wynwood House Assisted Living
(Permanent Supportive Housing sub-committee co-chair)

Jennifer Scanlon
Centre Community Hospital

Susan Smith
Private Consultant

Jane Taylor
Centre County Office of Aging

Other Contributors include:

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Centre Crest

Rita Brooks
Centre County Housing Authority

Natalie Wert
Centre County MH/MR

Evelyn Wald
House of Care

Yvonne Poorman
Skills

Mark Theiss
Youth Services Bureau

Brent Frank
Aids Project

Nancy Stuck
Interfaith Mission
HOUSING CONTINUUM MODEL
IDENTIFIES CURRENT SHELTER SERVICES & HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

*For a visual method of segmenting existing programs/services, and distinguishing the distribution of resources along the housing continuum, please see Appendix IV.*
Emergency Shelter

Short-term housing for homeless families and individuals, victims of domestic violence, and runaway youth

GAPS AND LIMITATIONS

Existing shelter services/programs are typically denied to:

- Mental Health (MH) consumers with acute mental health service needs requiring intensive supervision;
- Persons who have a dependency on and are actively using drugs or alcohol (D&A consumers);
- Persons being released from prison with criminal histories that include conviction for a crime of violence or a crime of a sexual nature;
- Transients and persons wishing to relocate to Centre County without employment or resources.

Public funding for the operation of existing shelters remains limited. Lack of new funding sources creates difficulty in creating new service initiatives.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Local professionals within mental health and drug and alcohol agencies, along with shelter providers, explore:
  - The development of a pilot project that would expand the service capacity of existing shelters to benefit consumers who may have been deemed ineligible. Additional staffing and support services would be required.
  - The development of specialized emergency shelter services providing immediate response for the residential needs of homeless Mental Health (MH) or Drug and Alcohol (D&A) consumers who do not meet designated thresholds for hospitalization.

- Community shelter/housing case management services and criminal justice professionals should develop a program whereby each has a working knowledge of the opportunities and limitations of the others' services, and the facilities and professionals within each system that can expedite requests for pertinent information. This would address the following service gaps for persons within the criminal justice system:
  - Those who have been convicted of a specific crime that is cause for denial of service;
  - Those persons recently released from prison and in need of shelter.

- Explore the following options for those individuals not eligible for present shelter service:
  - The expansion of the hotel voucher program. Currently the system provides for two or three nights of motel stay. Up to two weeks of motel stay should be considered. A modest increase in funding from existing resources would be necessary.
  - The development of a new shelter facility for homeless persons who will not participate in a goal oriented program. Resources may be available through the Salvation Army, which has expressed an interest in expansion into Centre County.

- Public and private funding organizations need to be aware of:
  - Funding has remained flat for the operation of homeless programs and services. To assure present program continuation, as well as addressing above recommendations, funds will need to be identified.
  - The need for close coordination between public and private funding organizations as to each other's resources and limitations.
**Transitional Housing**

A housing option that acts as a "bridge" between emergency shelter and a more autonomous living arrangement with a service limit of between one and two years.

### CAUSES AND LIMITATIONS

- Lack of affordable permanent housing alternatives creates increased demand for existing transitional housing.
- Length of stay may not be sufficient to serve families who are enrolled in specific educational or employment programs.
- Person ineligible for emergency shelter are also ineligible for transitional housing.
- Transitional site development is often restricted due to lack of public transportation near site and public fear of residential "programs".
- Uncertain long-term funding and difficulty in attracting qualified entry-level residential staff can threaten program stability.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

**Recommendations requiring the cooperation of the public and private sectors:**

- Key community leaders participate in the planning process to encourage the development of affordable permanent housing options.
- Public education in addition to careful planning is necessary when considering placement of a program. Community leaders need to be involved in the initial planning and then willing to "step up" and publicly support programs that are considered essential.*
- Human service organizations should pool efforts to attract and retain employees. Efforts could include joint professional development opportunities geared to entry-level staff and a "career day" that focuses exclusively on human service providers.*
- Funding for transitional housing is largely single-source funding for three to five years, with no guarantee beyond this period. If funding is not renewed, emergency financial assistance or a shift in financial support by local funders should be considered. The creation of an "emergency fund" and establishment of a process to evaluate such a crisis would address this problem.

**Recommendations for the public sector to address:**

- Transitional housing providers should formally engage funding sources to consider a more flexible approach to length of stay, whereby length of stay requirements would be influenced by the service needs of the consumer.
- Current transitional providers need to be challenged to find a means to serve more persons currently considered ineligible.* This may require referring agencies to share additionally in the program oversight responsibilities. It may require the creation of a new transitional housing program for those individuals not eligible for current services.

*Resources to initiate these recommendations could be available through the Centre County Affordable Housing Coalition and/or the Centre County United Way, and in some cases in conjunction with case management.
Permanent Supportive Housing

A housing option that includes nursing home care, personal care, Family Self-Sufficiency rental assistance for low-income families, on-going rental assistance for special need populations, and supervised living arrangements for special need populations.

**CAPS AND LIMITATIONS**

Availability of supportive housing services for special needs populations (MH/MR, D&A, criminal justice) is very limited and typically has restrictive qualifications.

Waiting lists persist for developmentally disabled persons seeking in-home support services and community residential placement.

Supportive housing specifically for low-income persons is time limited.

Nursing Home care:
- A shortage of service exists for the low-income population.
- Pennsylvania’s In-Home Skilled Nursing Care funding structure impedes its use by Centre County residents.
- Waiting lists exists for Dementia Care in Centre County nursing homes.
- A total of 714 Skilled Nursing beds are provided by 8 nursing homes. Medicaid certifies only 4 facilities.

Personal Care facilities:
- Of the 640 personal care beds in Centre County, only 69 are eligible for SSI/Medicaid reimbursement.
- Only one of 16 Personal Care facilities is specifically designed to provide assisted living to persons with dementia.
- Placement of persons representing special needs populations is difficult. This is primarily due the provider’s concern that additional staffing may be required.

Administration of permanent supportive housing programs is staff intensive. Paperwork and changing regulations make it difficult to initiate new programs.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

(See following page)
### Permanent Supportive Housing

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Develop and build a Mainstream and Section 811 housing facility. Resources necessary for this effort would include matching monies from local funders.

- Strategically examine the need to expand additional supportive housing options for low-income and special need populations. Involve housing organizations that are not traditionally seen as supportive housing program/service providers. The Supportive Housing Subcommittee and the Centre County Affordable Housing Coalition could help initiate this action.

- Review and recommend improvements in the reimbursement structure for services delivered to special need populations.

- Nursing Home care:
  - Rates for services requires review for both inclusiveness of care items and the type of beds certified through the Dept. of Health’s determination process;
  - Reimbursement structures need to be revised to provide a higher level of reimbursement for beds serving special needs populations;
  - More Alzheimer’s/Dementia care beds are needed in Centre County;
  - Encourage efforts that promote on-going public awareness of services offered by PA’s Aging program.

- Personal Care facilities:
  - There is a need to pursue higher reimbursement levels from the Commonwealth so more low-income persons can afford Personal Care Services;
  - Pursue the creation of a higher reimbursement structure for special needs Assisted Living Care when additional staffing is required.

- Support the need for adequate staffing level for the administration of supportive housing programs.
Permanent Housing

Permanent Housing includes First-Time Homebuyer programs, Section 8 Voucher Program, Rural Development, Veteran's Affairs, and Section 42 Housing.

GAPS AND LIMITATIONS

Lack of public/consumer awareness of housing programs that assist lower income families in securing permanent housing. Existing programs can appear to be complicated and often are.

Lack of housing development within certain areas of Centre County. Geographical restrictions of funding for homeownership programs, and the rising costs of single-family homes, all contribute to limiting the options available to lower-income families seeking home ownership.

A lack of community awareness, misinformation, and fear of unchecked sprawl hinders the development of rental housing that targets lower-income families.

Lack of developable land within the State College Borough is an impediment to the creation of housing stock that would benefit families seeking affordable housing.

Lack of funding to provide security deposits assistance, the growing list of landlords unwilling to accept Section 8 vouchers, and market rents influenced by PSU student housing needs, all make it difficult for working persons with lower incomes to live within the Centre Region.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Develop a booklet listing the various permanent housing programs. This Booklet will include standard information on each program available within Centre County.

- Establish an ongoing permanent housing committee that will meet at least every six months to discuss service gap issues. In addition, this group could provide input on regional planning issues relating to housing development.

- The permanent housing committee and housing program/service providers should become more visible within the community. This includes creating opportunities to educate the general public on issues relating to affordable housing.

- Prepare information for distribution at various service agencies (e.g., food banks) and businesses. This information could also be included in the Council for Human Services newsletter.

(Also see: Appendix IV. Housing Services Continuum of Centre County)
### Public Protection/Current Resources/Service Needs

#### Report of Children and Youth Task Force

**Appendix I**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Needs</th>
<th>Current Resource Inventory</th>
<th>Public Perception of Need</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Emotional problems:</strong> children and youth with severe mental behavioral or disorder (RTD) need emotional support, counseling services, and therapeutic programs to address the root causes of their issues.</td>
<td><strong>Support groups:</strong> PHP's Support Groups, Mental Health Support Services, Community Health Centers, School-Based Health Centers.</td>
<td><strong>12</strong> special programs focused on emotional needs, including: <strong>#12:</strong> school-based mental health initiatives; <strong>#13:</strong> PHP's Support Groups, Mental Health Support Services, Community Health Centers.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Medical issues:</strong> children and youth with severe medical needs (CHD) need medical support, counseling services, and therapeutic programs to address the root causes of their issues.</td>
<td><strong>Support groups:</strong> PHP's Support Groups, Mental Health Support Services, Community Health Centers, School-Based Health Centers.</td>
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### Service Needs

- Transportation to access services.
- Increased family communication.
- Community-based individual and family counseling.
- Disenfranchised community to provide early intervention.

### Current Resource Inventory

- Practice therapist and faith-based program.
- Community health fair.
- Transitional living program.
- Family service agency.
- Family support services.
- Child development program.
- Family and youth services program.
- Childcare social services.

### Public Perception of Need

1. Children need counseling to help them deal with their problems.
2. Children need counseling to help them deal with their problems.
3. Children need counseling to help them deal with their problems.

### Financial

- 13 children who need low cost care, while...
- 16 children and youth needing residential care because they are...
### Current Resource Inventory

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Personal Crisis Continuum

Appendix II
Appendix III

Transportation Task Force Discussion

Transportation issues cannot be considered in a vacuum. Issues affecting the five areas of need identified by *Voices, Values and Vision*, e.g., needs pertaining to children and youth, shelter and housing, transportation, underemployment and healthcare, and people in crisis exacerbate one another. This committee strongly recommends that providers representing each of these areas work together to formulate solutions.

As policy makers allocate resources to these areas, it is important to note the severity of transportation gaps and the barriers they create to accessing medical and mental health care, employment, day care, and adequate nutrition.

The members of this task force recommend that a safety net of coordinated services be developed to address the diversity of transportation needs across the county. With the understanding that the current Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) will be expanded to encompass the entire county in the near future, the task force recommends that the MPO create a council comprised of key stakeholders to resolve transportation roadblocks created by fragmented municipal services and fragmented human services. This Transportation Council would be responsible for making recommendations to the countywide MPO regarding allocation of resources, pursuit of new programs, support for existing programs and coordination with other MPOs and Local Development Districts. The initial members of this council should include, but need not be limited to, executives and staff of the Centre County Office of Transportation (CCOT), Centre Area Transportation Authority (CATA), Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PADOT), all relevant municipal planners, and transportation providers and funders in the social service sector, e.g., Volunteer Center of Centre County and Centre County Public Assistance Office. This task force recommends that the Council on Transportation be charged with:

1. Expansion of existing, outcomes-based programs such as carpool matching, Shared Ride, Volunteer Provide a Ride, and subsidized individual transport and automobile purchase by coordinating existing and advocating for additional resources sufficient to meet existing and future needs.
2. Exploring the development of more innovative programs to serve low-income, elderly and disabled individuals and families such as transportation vouchers, short-term loan vehicles, low-cost loans, and subsidized car repair.
3. Developing a long-range plan that encompasses new technology and innovative solutions to rural transportation issues.
4. Working with other MPO’s and Local Development Districts to address the inequities that exist in Pennsylvania’s public transit funding formulas.
5. Assessing the impact of the development of Corridor O and Interstate 99 on transportation gaps across the county.

While Pennsylvania has one of the foremost transit assistance programs of any state in the nation, over 90% of the funds go to the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) in the Philadelphia area and Port Authority Transit (PAT) in Allegheny County. The rationale is that 90% of the transit riders are concentrated in these two areas. However, this approach ignores the simple fact that it is much more expensive to transport small groups of passengers who must travel for miles in rural areas than it is to haul thousands of riders for short distances in major urban areas.

Across the remainder of the state there are similar inequities. The formulas that allocate funding among the small urban areas such as State College are largely based on historical precedent, which puts growing areas like ours at a disadvantage. The problem is even more pronounced in the rural areas. The legislation that governs transit assistance programs identifies which counties get funding, and Centre is not among them. As a result, while the residents of Chester Hill in Clearfield County get the benefits of rural transit service, their counterparts across the county line in Philipsburg do not.

These inequities have persisted largely as a result of transit systems’ fear of losing any of their existing funding. For instance, the current recipients of rural transit assistance funds have resisted allowing any new areas to join the program, presumably because the more ways the pie gets sliced, the smaller each piece is going to be. Likewise
Transportation Discussion (cont'd)

SEPTA, PAT and certain other transit systems have effectively blocked any consideration of changes to the current funding formula, apparently because they fear the negative consequences of a more up-to-date formula.

In Centre County we have a microcosm of what is happening statewide - the urban area gets the lion's share of the state funding available to support public transportation. It is this committee's understanding that at the time CATA was established there was little interest in public transportation outside of the Centre Region. As a result the program got started under the auspices of the Borough of State College, and was later expanded to include the four surrounding townships. Meanwhile the CCOT has evolved into the provider of special needs transportation.

Overcoming the present institutional and financial barriers will be a very challenging proposition, for several reasons. On the governance side, simply expanding CATA to countywide would require a reorganization of the Transit Authority, CATA’s policy-making body. Where now each member municipality simply appoints one Board member, some structure would have to be developed to provide for representation from the 20+ municipalities outside of the Centre Region. Increasing the size of the CATA policy body would also diminish the influence of the individual members, which could be seen as a significant negative by the incumbents.

In 1997, the majority Commissioners and the CATA Board attempted to merge the CCOT and CATA. Barriers ranging from institutional, to organizational culture, to political, to economic differences in the two groups prevented any substantive progress. Overcoming the present barriers will prove to be challenging. The issue of representation equitable or at least satisfactory to all participants must be addressed. Finally, issues related to labor, contracted services, pay for service, subsidized service, and hours of operation would also need to be integrated or acknowledged in a manner satisfactory to the institutional structure and organizational culture of both CATA and CCOT.

The end result is, in our view, a very inequitable distribution of transit resources. For example, if a person lives in the Centre Region, where CATA operates, he or she receives a very high level of service. Centre Line bus service operates seven days a week, and for seniors and persons with disabilities the Centre Ride dial-a-ride program offers curb-to-curb service at very modest fares. On the other hand, for the person who lives in one of the outlying areas must access a "patchwork" of programs that are intensely regulated and, therefore, difficult to access "on-demand."

On the financial side, state and federal funds specifically available for rural transit service in Centre County are so limited and regulations and standards so restrictive that for practical purposes they can be considered unavailable. Even if they were accessed on a larger scale, or if CATA were to divert some of its urban funds to rural use, there would be a requirement for local match. CATA's Articles of Agreement stipulate that any service outside of the urban area must be fully self-supporting, i.e. not require any local tax subsidy from the Centre Region. Although the local share requirement is quite modest, it is not realistic to expect that the small rural municipalities will be able to collectively generate the required matching funds. Even if they were, allocating the local match among them would be a daunting task.

The only realistic alternative, then, is for the County to provide the local match. While County funding of public transportation is commonplace throughout the Commonwealth, Centre County has no such tradition. In fact, it appears that historically the Commissioners have tried very hard to ensure that the CCOT operates on a break-even basis, even though by so doing they effectively limited service to only clients of various government programs. Although the current Commissioners seem more willing to consider funding the required local match for rural bus service, their commitment will no doubt be limited by the other major financial needs currently facing the County.

Providing public transportation in the rural areas of the County will be inherently costly. Distances are large, the population is spread out, and travel patterns are very diverse. Unlike in State College, where CATA is able to transport large numbers of riders short distances to and from the Penn State campus, in rural areas there will be small numbers of riders traveling large distances to many different destinations. Nonetheless, with state and federal assistance and innovative programming from human service providers, at least a skeletal level of rural public and service transportation should be achievable.