

How are Racine County and Wisconsin Faring in the Recession?

Racine County and the rest of Wisconsin have not been isolated from the effects of the recession. In this year's KidsCount initiative, we take a look at the impact of the recession on families, drawing on key indicators to show how families in Racine County and across the state have been affected.

Unemployment

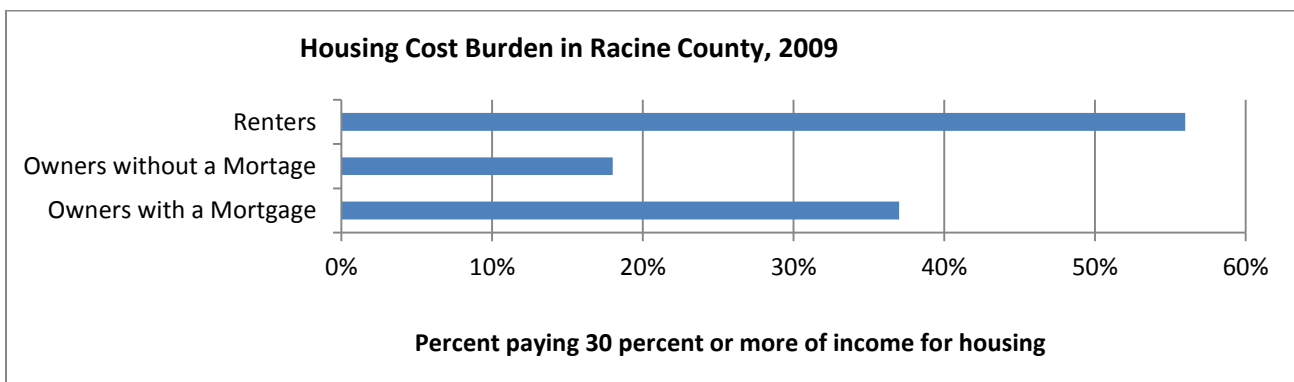
In Wisconsin, unemployment reached a recent high of 9.2% in 2009, and is currently at 7.4%. In Racine County, unemployment reached a recent high 12.1% in 2010, and is currently at 9.4%. This significant loss of jobs has led to hardship for many Wisconsin families, especially those who were already living in or near poverty. In 2010, 10% of children in Wisconsin, 129,000 in total, had at least one unemployed parent.

Housing

The recession, along with unscrupulous mortgage lending practices, drove many out of their homes due to foreclosure. Since 2007, more than 5 million children nationwide have been impacted by foreclosure. In Wisconsin alone, an estimated 59,000 children have seen their home go into foreclosure over that time period.

From 2000 to 2010, foreclosures in Wisconsin increased by 363%, while foreclosures in Racine County increased by 399%. From 2009 to 2010, there was a 22% increase in home foreclosures in Racine County, while statewide home foreclosures increased 3% over the same period. 1,409 Racine County homes went into foreclosure in 2010. Only two counties, Dane and Milwaukee, had more foreclosures in 2010.

According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, "Families who pay more than 30 percent of their income for housing are considered cost burdened and may have difficulty affording necessities such as food, clothing, transportation and medical care."¹ The graph below shows that many Racine County residents, including more than half of renters, spend more than 30% of their income on housing.



Source: American Community Survey, 2009. The median monthly housing costs for mortgaged owners was \$1,478, nonmortgaged owners \$538, and renters \$727. Thirty-seven percent of owners with mortgages, 18 percent of owners without mortgages, and 56 percent of renters in Racine County spent 30 percent or more of household income on housing.

Child Poverty

Children in Poverty are less likely to finish high school and more likely to have developmental delays and poor health. Often, the effects of child poverty are long lasting if not permanentⁱ. Unfortunately, child poverty rates in Wisconsin and Racine County have increased as a result of the economic recession.

In 2009, 18% of children in Racine County were living in poverty, while 13% were in poverty in 2008. Statewide, 17% of children were living in poverty in 2009, compared to 13% in 2008.

The table below contains key indicators that demonstrate just how Wisconsin and Racine County residents have been affected by the recession.

KidsCount Indicators	Racine County			Wisconsin		
	2000	2009	Change 2000-2009	2000	2009	Change 2000-2009
Children living in Poverty	12%	18%	50%	12%	17%	42%
Single Parent Families	3,190	4,336	36%	171,709	204,076 (2010)	19%
Unemployment	3.9%	10.4%	167%	4%	9%	125%
Low Birth weight	7.3%	8.6%	18%	6.53%	7.12%	9%
Births to Teens (per 1000 females 15-19)	52.91	40.22	-24%	35.7	29.6	-17%
Infant Mortality (per 1000)	6.42	7.36	15%	6.6	6.01	-9%
Birth to Mothers without HS Degree	20%	19%	-5%	16%	14%	-13%
Births to Single Mothers	37%	47%	27%	30%	38%	27%
Births to Mothers with First Trimester Prenatal Care	81.0%	80.0%	-1%	83.9%	83.4%	-1%
Student Dropouts (1999-2000 & 2009-10 school years; Racine Unified School District only)	475	439	-8%	6,916	6,434	-7%
Student Dropouts as Percent of All Students (1999-2000 & 2009-10 school years; Racine Unified School District only)	5.02%	4.57%	-9%	1.70%	1.60%	-6%
Participation in Free and Reduced Lunch	25%	42%	68%	26%	34%	31%
FoodShare Participation (per 1000)	37	140 (2010)	278%	37	131 (2010)	254%
MA/BadgerCare Recipients (per 1000)	179.4	334 (2008)	86.2%	180.7	315 (2008)	74.3%
Tax Filers Receiving Federal EITC	10.4%	13.8% (2008)	33%	9.30%	12.5% (2008)	34%
Average Federal EITC Return	\$1,591	\$1,990 (2008)	25%	\$1,848	\$2,407 (2008)	30%
Child Mental Health Hospitalizations (per 1000 children)	7.9	8.6 (2008)	9%	5	5.6 (2008)	12%
Child Preventable Hospitalizations (per 1000 children)	6	3.9 (2008)	-35%	6.2	4.5 (2008)	-27%

ⁱ <http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/affordablehousing/>

ⁱⁱ http://www.cga.ct.gov/coc/pdfs/poverty/2004_poverty_report.pdf