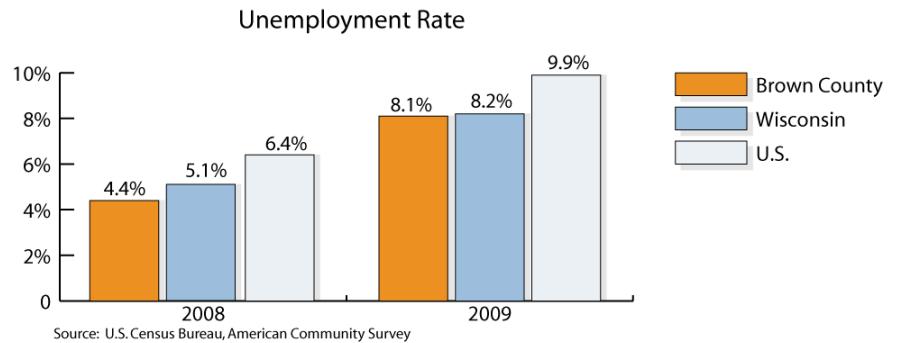


The Recession's Impact on Brown County

Unemployment and Poverty Rates Are Up, Health Insurance is Down in 2009

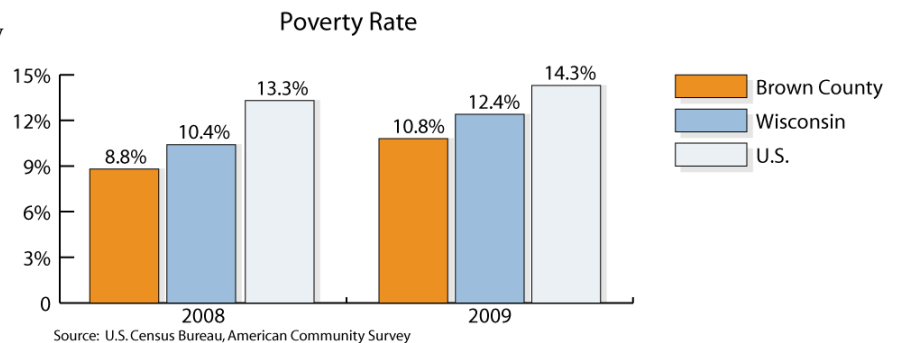
Unemployment Rate in Brown County Has Nearly Doubled

The unemployment rate in Brown County rose from 4.4 percent in 2008 to 8.1 percent in 2009. With this increase, the unemployment rate in Brown County nearly matched the Wisconsin average, which rose from 5.1 percent in 2008 to 8.2 percent in 2009. The increase in Brown County's unemployment rate means that nearly 5,200 more people were out of work in the county in 2009 compared to 2008.



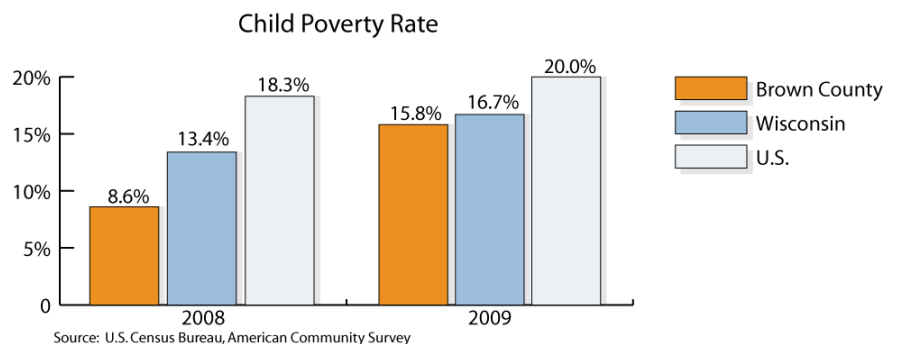
Poverty in Brown County Has Increased

As a result of the recession, the total poverty rate in Brown County increased from 8.8 percent in 2008 to 10.8 percent in 2009. Brown County's poverty rate was lower than the Wisconsin average, which rose from 10.4 percent in 2008 to 12.4 percent in 2009. The statewide poverty level was lower than the national average.



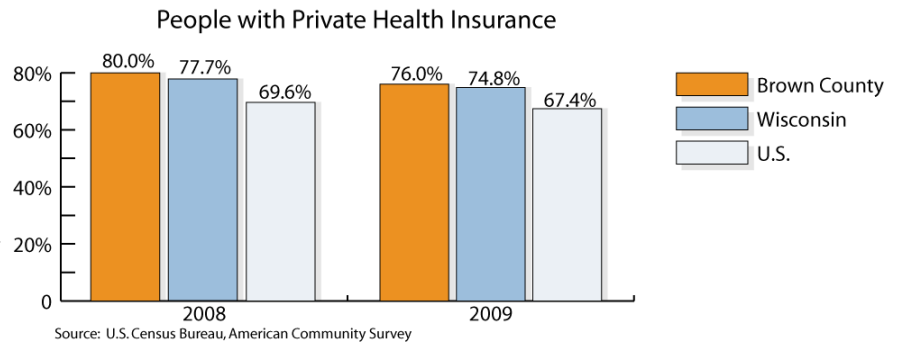
Nearly One out of Six Children in Brown County Now Lives in Poverty

The child poverty rate in Brown County rose from 8.6 percent in 2008 to 15.8 percent in 2009. This increase was far larger than the increase in the statewide child poverty level, which rose from 13.4 percent in 2008 to 16.7 percent in 2009. More than 4,200 additional children slipped into poverty in Brown County between 2008 and 2009, which represents a population greater than the village of Pulaski.



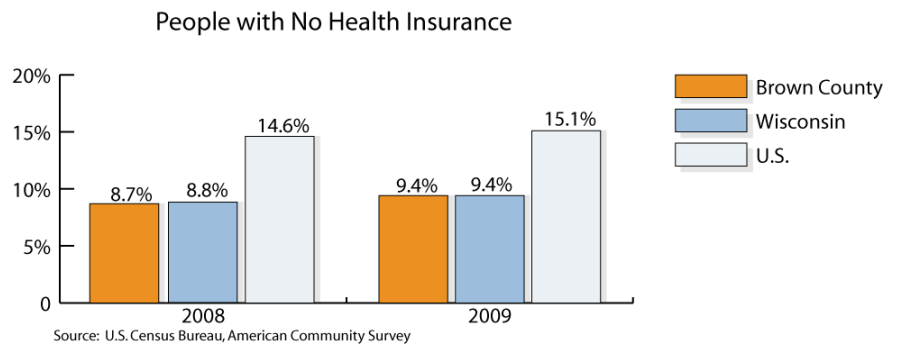
Fewer People in Brown County Have Private Health Insurance

The percent of people in Brown County with private health insurance decreased from 80.0 percent in 2008 to 76.0 percent in 2009. The increase in the unemployment rate impacted health insurance coverage, since most families obtain insurance through their employers. Brown County and Wisconsin in general still had significantly higher rates of private health insurance coverage than the nation as a whole.



BadgerCare Plus Cushions Increase in the Uninsured

The percent of Brown County residents that have no health insurance increased from 8.7 percent in 2008 to 9.4 percent in 2009. This closely mirrored the increase in uninsured people at the state level. The county's BadgerCare Plus enrollment grew by 19 percent in 2009, which kept the large drop in employer coverage from resulting in a much larger increase in the uninsured. Both Brown County and Wisconsin had a much smaller share of their population without health insurance than the national average.



Addressing the Impact of the Recession

Brown County is feeling the impact of the national recession, as steep job loss has pushed many residents into poverty and resulted in the loss of health insurance coverage. These changes are particularly alarming considering they happened over a time period of just one year. Still, by many measures, Brown County's economic situation is better than the national average.

Fortunately, the Recovery Act contained several changes in tax credits for low income families that softened the blow of the recession a little. However, those credits are scheduled to end at the close of the year and Congress will have to vote soon on whether to extend them.

Low-income households were also assisted by increased Medicaid funding in the Recovery

Act, which enabled Wisconsin to preserve eligibility for BadgerCare Plus. Without an extension of federal aid for states and continuation of the state's hospital assessment initiated in 2009, Wisconsin will be hard pressed to avoid sharp reductions in the low-income families served by BadgerCare Plus.

It will take a concerted effort to meet the needs of struggling families in Brown County. Public services like health care, education, and economic support are especially important in times of economic crisis. To help Wisconsin families and communities back on the road to economic recovery, state and federal policymakers will need to employ a balanced approach to closing the budget deficit, while avoiding significant cuts to programs that help families hit hard by the national recession.