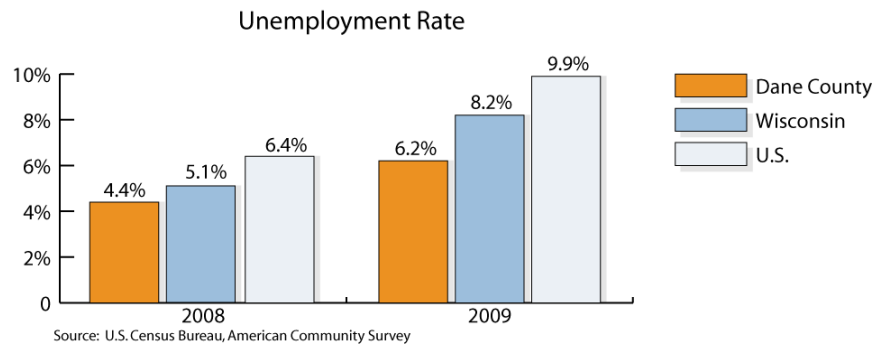


The Recession's Impact on Dane County Unemployment and Poverty Rates Are Up

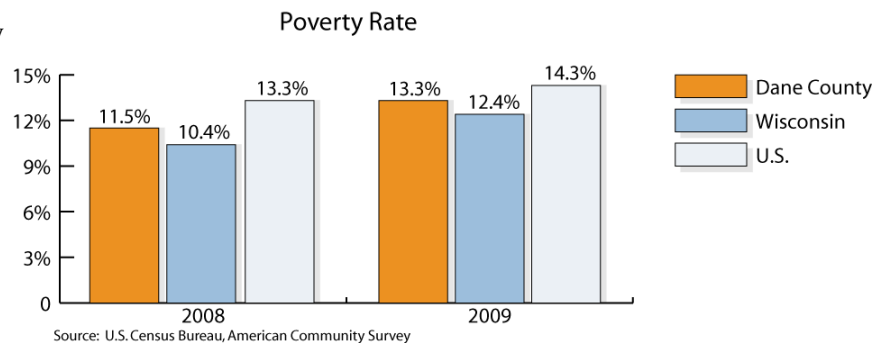
Unemployment Rate in Dane County Has Risen

The unemployment rate in Dane County rose from 4.4 percent in 2008 to 6.2 percent in 2009. The unemployment rate in Dane County is still lower than the Wisconsin average, which rose from 5.1 percent in 2008 to 8.2 percent in 2009. The increase in Dane County's unemployment rate means that about 6,000 more people were out of work in the county in 2009 than in 2008.



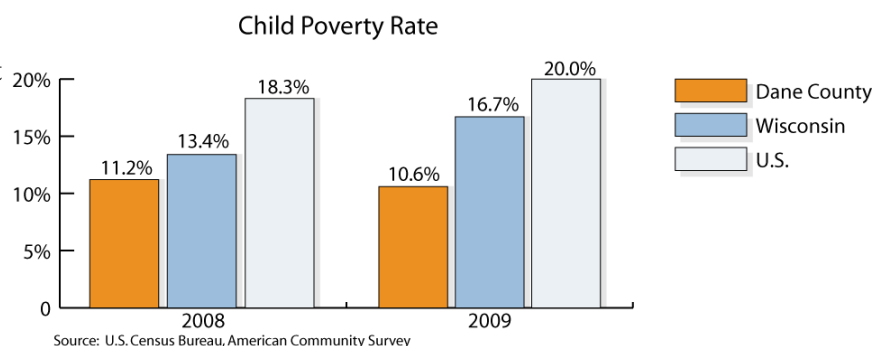
Poverty in Dane County Has Increased

As a result of the recession, the total poverty rate in Dane County increased from 11.5 percent in 2008 to 13.3 percent in 2009. Dane County's poverty rate was slightly higher than the Wisconsin average, which rose from 10.4 percent in 2008 to 12.4 percent in 2009. Both Dane County and Wisconsin had poverty rates that are lower than the national average.



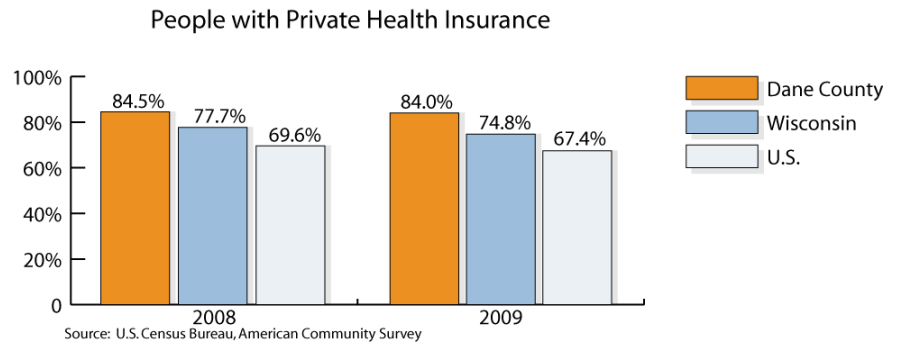
One out of Ten Children in Dane County Lives in Poverty

The child poverty rate in Dane County appears to have decreased from 11.2 percent in 2008 to 10.6 percent in 2009, though that change was not statistically significant. Dane County's child poverty rate was lower than the Wisconsin average, which rose from 13.4 percent in 2008 to 16.7 percent in 2009. Statewide, one in six children lives in poverty in 2009.



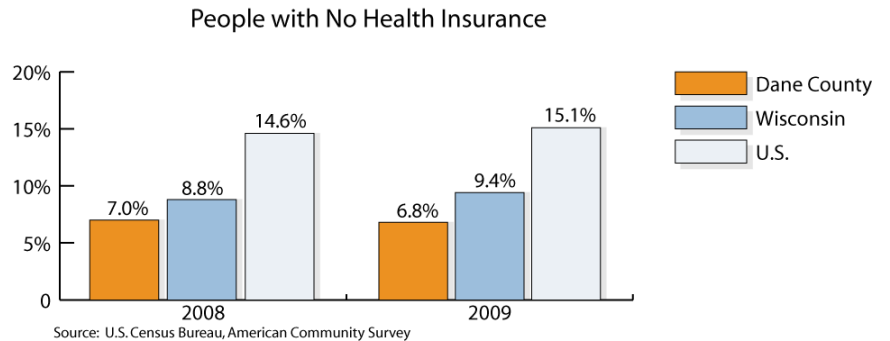
Slightly Fewer People in Dane County Have Private Health Insurance

The percent of people in Dane County with private health insurance appears to have decreased slightly, from 84.5 percent in 2008 to 84.0 percent in 2009. The increase in the unemployment rate impacted health care coverage, since most families obtain insurance through their employers. Dane County and Wisconsin in general still had significantly higher rates of private health insurance coverage than the nation as a whole.



BadgerCare Plus Prevents Increase in the Uninsured

The percent of Dane County residents that have no health insurance decreased slightly from 7.0 percent in 2008 to 6.8 percent in 2009 (not statistically significant). BadgerCare Plus enrollment grew 21 percent in 2009, which helped yield the small decrease in the uninsured. Both Dane County and Wisconsin have a much smaller share of their population without health insurance than the national average.



Addressing the Impact of the Recession

Dane County is feeling the impact of the national recession, as steep job loss has pushed many residents into poverty. This change is particularly alarming considering it happened over a time period of just one year. Still, by many measures, Dane 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 Dane 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.

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