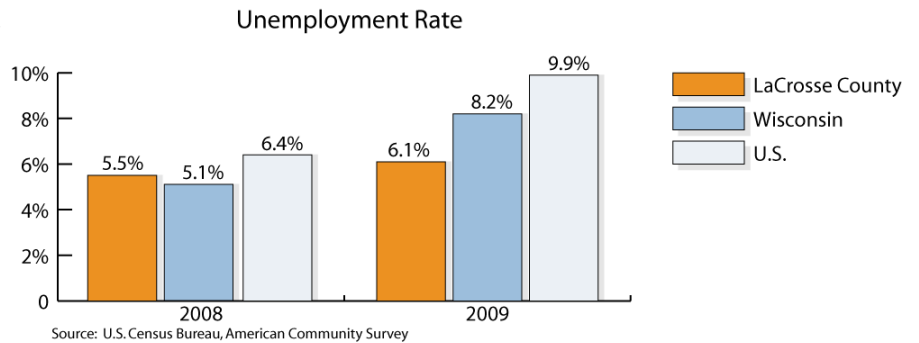


## The Recession's Impact on LaCrosse County

### Unemployment Is Up, Health Insurance Coverage is Down

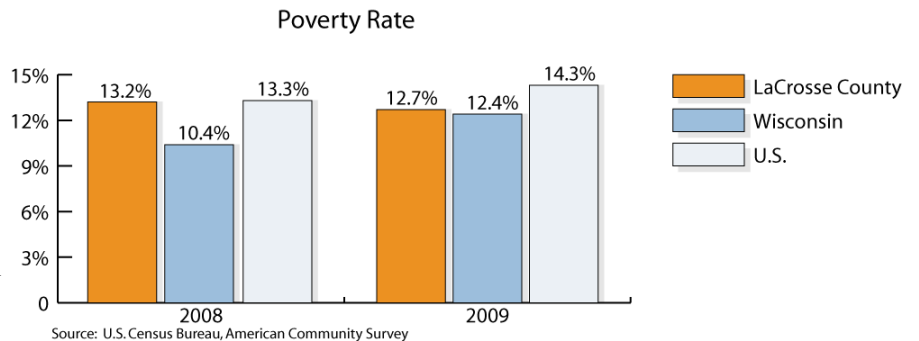
#### Unemployment Rate in LaCrosse County Has Risen

The unemployment rate in LaCrosse County rose from 5.5 percent in 2008 to 6.1 percent in 2009. The unemployment rate in LaCrosse County is lower than the Wisconsin average, which rose from 5.1 percent in 2008 to 8.2 percent in 2009. The increase in LaCrosse County's unemployment rate means that about 430 more people in the county were out of work in 2009 compared to 2008.



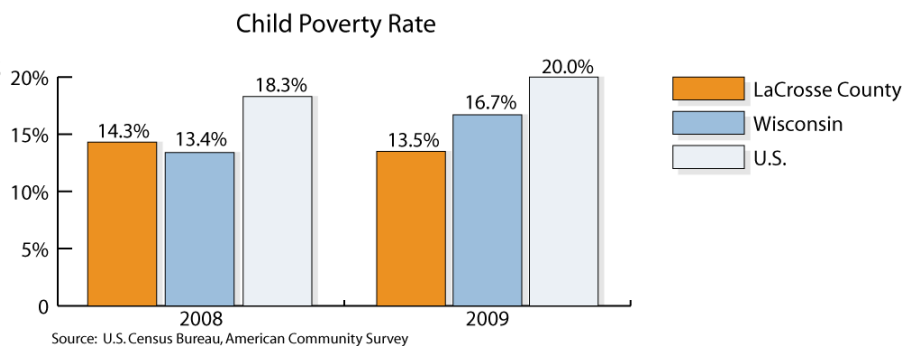
#### Poverty in LaCrosse County Has Stayed About the Same

The poverty rate in LaCrosse County appeared to slightly decrease from 13.2 percent in 2008 to 12.7 percent in 2009. Even after the decrease, LaCrosse County's poverty rate is still slightly higher than the Wisconsin average, which rose from 10.4 percent in 2008 to 12.4 percent in 2009. Both LaCrosse County and Wisconsin have poverty rates that are lower than the national average.



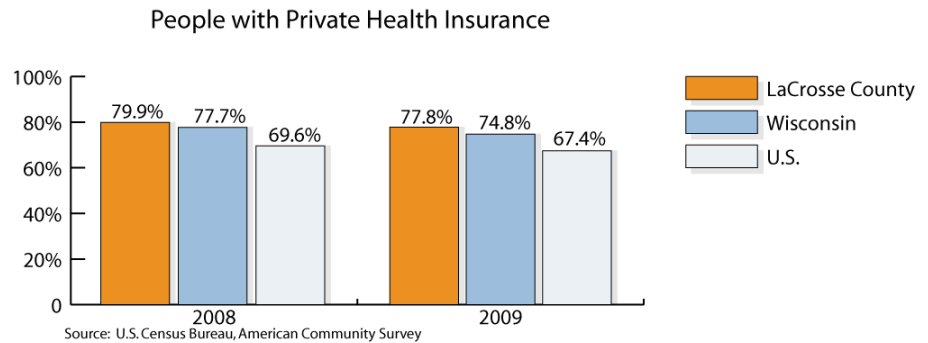
#### Nearly One out of Seven Children in LaCrosse County Lives in Poverty

The child poverty rate in LaCrosse County decreased slightly from 14.3 percent in 2008 to 13.5 percent in 2009. LaCrosse County's child poverty rate is lower than the statewide level, which rose from 13.4 percent in 2008 to 16.7 percent in 2009. Statewide, one in six children lived in poverty in 2009.



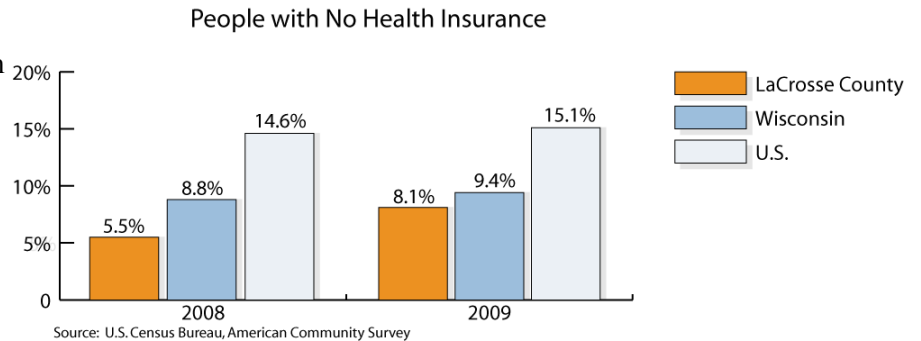
## Fewer People in LaCrosse County Have Private Health Insurance

The percent of people in LaCrosse County with private health insurance decreased, from 79.9 percent in 2008 to 77.8 percent in 2009. The increase in the unemployment rate impacted health insurance coverage, since most families obtain insurance through their employers. LaCrosse County and Wisconsin in general still have much higher rates of private health insurance coverage than the nation as a whole.



## Number of People Without Health Insurance Has Increased

The percent of LaCrosse County residents that have no health insurance increased from 5.5 percent in 2008 to 8.1 percent in 2009, but remains well below the average rate in the state (9.4 percent). Both LaCrosse County and Wisconsin have a much smaller share of their population without health insurance than the national average.



## Addressing the Impact of the Recession

LaCrosse County is feeling the impact of the national recession, as job loss has forced the loss of health insurance coverage. This change is particularly alarming considering it happened over a time period of just one year. Still, by many measures, LaCrosse 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 LaCrosse 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.