

The impact of a strong community, and the contributions of the families and citizens therein, can make all the difference in achieving a high quality of life. The fabric of a strong and healthy community includes people who care about being involved in making the region work – whether by volunteering, voting, or simply focusing on their own families. The decisions of each individual play a part in shaping our society, and contribute to building the foundation for a sustainable place to live for generations to come.

“York City is much more than just a historic part of our region. With 100 million dollars in new investments occurring simultaneously, it’s a significant generator of economic activity. We also have a multifaceted economy. With a base of commercial, residential, retail, arts and culture and entertainment, we have a very well-rounded downtown – and that is critically important to our success. A downtown that is built on any one area will not be sustainable in the long term. York City is phenomenal for a city its size – and we’re working to continue to build on our diverse strengths.”

Eric Menzer
Director of Economic Development, City of York

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The indicators around community involvement can give us a sense of who we are, and how we feel about where we live. The actions that residents take in their communities show that they feel they have a stake in what happens – and believe that what they do can make a difference.

County Voting

Many people who choose not to participate in elections, especially local ones, have a sense that they are disconnected from their region, or that their vote simply doesn’t matter. But a high voter turnout shows that citizens care about the way in which our leaders govern. It is the most effective way for individuals to communicate what’s on their minds, and what they believe is important.

The percentage of York County registered voters who cast ballots in the gubernatorial elections in 1994 and 1998 is comparable to the percentage across the state. From 1994 to 1998, there was a 21.4 percent decrease in the number of people who voted (F. 1).

Candidates Running for Office

Civic involvement can also be measured by looking at the number of citizens run-

ning for elected office. Since 1991, the number of York County residents running for office exceeded the number of elected positions to be filled. However, the gap between the number of residents running and the number of positions has declined since 1993 (F. 2).

Candidates Running Unopposed

Democracy works best when citizens have a choice of candidates. The percentage of candidates running unopposed as a percentage of all candidates decreased from 1991 to 1993, but slowly increased between 1993 and 1997. In 1997,

61 percent of York’s candidates for local office ran unopposed (F. 3).

Church Membership

Membership in organized churches is an indicator of the spiritual well being of a community. In 1990, over half of the county’s population (53.8%) had church membership, a decline from the 1980

percentage of 57.2 percent. York County just slightly trails the state.

Volunteerism

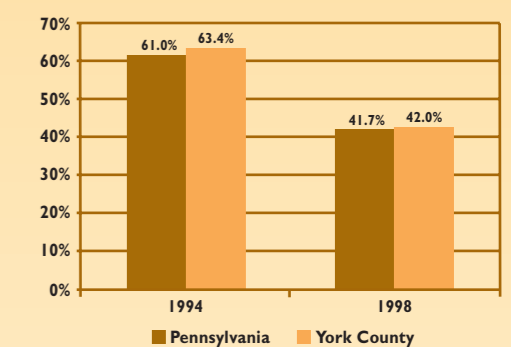
The Volunteer Center of York County is a central resource for information and referral services relative to volunteer opportunities throughout the county. While providing a valuable service for individuals and groups, it represents only

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world.

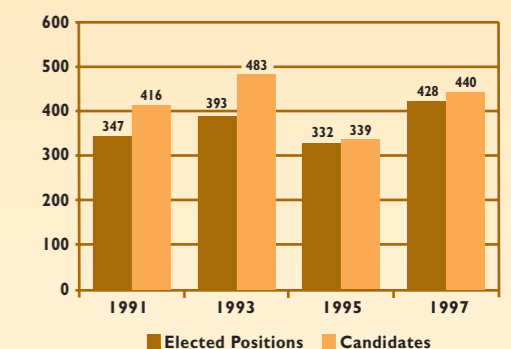
In fact, it is the only thing that ever has.”

Margaret Mead
Cultural Anthropologist
(1901-1978)

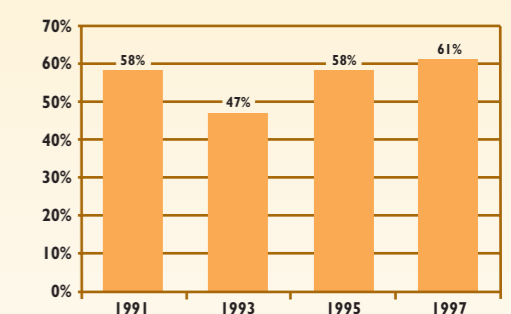
F. 1 PERCENT OF REGISTERED VOTERS CASTING BALLOTS IN ELECTIONS FOR GOVERNOR, 1994-1998

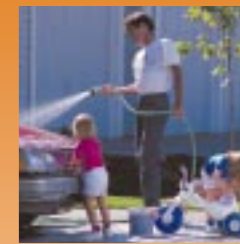
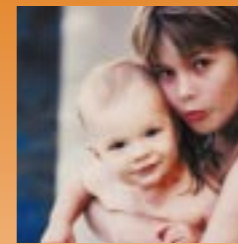
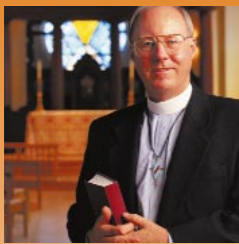


F. 2 COMPARISON OF TOTAL NUMBER OF RESIDENTS RUNNING FOR ELECTED OFFICE TO TOTAL NUMBER OF POSITIONS



F. 3 CANDIDATES FOR LOCAL ELECTED OFFICE RUNNING UNOPPOSED AS A PERCENTAGE OF ALL CANDIDATES





NUMBER OF VOLUNTEER REFERRALS

	1998/1999	1999/2000
Individuals Referred	428	520
Individuals Referred through Groups	1,886	1,589

F.4

a small portion of the amount of volunteer activity. Many individuals contact agencies directly for opportunities and are not reflected in these numbers.

The Center statistics show that in fiscal year 98/99 to 99/00, the number of individuals who volunteered slightly increased, and the number of individuals who volunteered through groups slightly decreased (F. 4).

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE UNITED WAY PER CAPITA DONATIONS 1994-1999

1999	\$5.9 million	\$15.71
1998	\$5.4 million	\$14.71
1997	\$5.3 million	\$14.29
1996	\$5.0 million	\$13.80
1995	\$4.8 million	\$13.35
1994	\$4.6 million	\$13.00

F.5

United Way Contributions

Since 1921, the United Way of York County has conducted an annual campaign in support of health and human service agencies throughout York County. Without its support, many of the agencies would either not be in existence or the level of services would be significantly curtailed.

Since 1994, the level of giving and size of donations have steadily increased. Accounting for the effects of inflation, the increases are from \$4.6 million to \$5.3 million, an increase of 15 percent. Per capita donations have increased by 21 percent (F. 5).

A SEGREGATED SOCIETY



“Metro York has four times as many poor whites as poor blacks and Latinos combined. But more than 80 percent of poor whites live scattered throughout mainstream, middle-class society – while almost 70 percent of poor minorities are isolated in York City’s poverty-impacted neighborhoods.”

David Rusk – from *Renewing Our Community*

a more tolerant and open-minded adult. Diversity has given our country vitality and cultural richness, but problems such as discrimination and racism have thwarted many of its benefits and undermined many opportunities.

The only school district in the county with a significant representation of minority (non-white) students is York City, with over two-thirds of its student population.

Over the past five years, the percentage of minority students in each district has increased. However, the increase has been 3 percent or less with the exception of York City with a 6 percent increase (F. 5).

Hate Crimes

Hate crimes are crimes committed against people because of their race, gender, religion, ethnicity or sexual orientation. The number of hate crimes in a community is evidence of intolerance of groups other than one’s own.

The number of hate crimes for a five-year period in York County is below the rate for both neighboring Lancaster County and the entire state. Of the 67

counties in Pennsylvania, 12 have higher rates than York County. The county experienced a total of 26 hate crimes during these five years.

Locations of White Supremacist Groups

Another measure of potential conflict in a community is the presence of white supremacist groups. York County is third in the state for activity locations of white supremacist groups. The county also leads all other Pennsylvania counties in the number of white supremacist locations with 24 (F. 7).

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

There are few things more important in the health of a community than the health of its families. What could be more important for our children than to grow up in a nurturing home? The absence of strong family ties has effects that continue from childhood into adulthood and affect many aspects of our society. As functional families decline, other social and community institutions are faced with the task of stepping in to fill the void.

Family Dinner

Studies have shown that family rituals like regular mealtimes together can improve the ability of young children to learn and may even prevent teen problems such as drug use. Dinnertime is an opportunity to increase family bonds, promote family

values, and instill proper behavior. Nearly half of York County families eat dinner together 6 or 7 nights a week. Nearly 30 percent eat dinner as a family 3 to 5 times per week. But over 20 percent of families either eat together only once or twice a week – or not at all (F. 8).

One-Parent Families

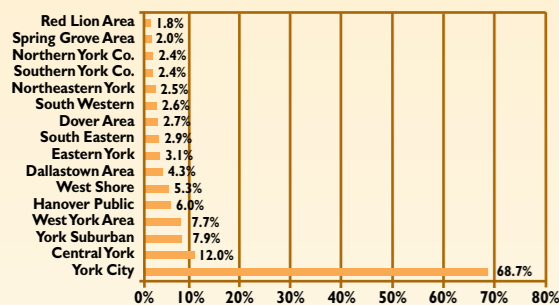
There are far-reaching consequences for children growing up in single-parent households and the communities in which they live. National studies show that almost half of the children in female-headed families are poor, and only about a third receive child support or alimony. One recent study found that youths raised in fatherless families were much more likely to be incarcerated, even after other factors such as poverty were controlled.

Over half of the school age children in York City live in one-parent families – with the rest of the county ranging between 10 and 16 percent (F. 9).

Teen Mothers

The U.S. has the highest rates of teen pregnancy and births in the western industrialized world – which cost the country at least \$7 billion annually. Teen mothers are less likely to complete high school, and more likely to end up on welfare. The children of teenage mothers have lower birth weights, are more likely to perform poorly in school, and are at greater risk of abuse and neglect. The sons of teen mothers are more likely to end up in prison while teen daughters are 22 percent more likely to become teen

PERCENTAGE OF MINORITY STUDENTS BY SCHOOL DISTRICT 1999/2000



F.6

TOTAL HATE CRIMES PER 100,000 POPULATION 1993/94-1997/98

	Number	Per 100,000 Population
York County	26	7.06
Lancaster County	35	7.77
Pennsylvania	1,250	10.38

F.7

Minority Students

Early exposure to cultural and ethnic diversity can contribute to making a child

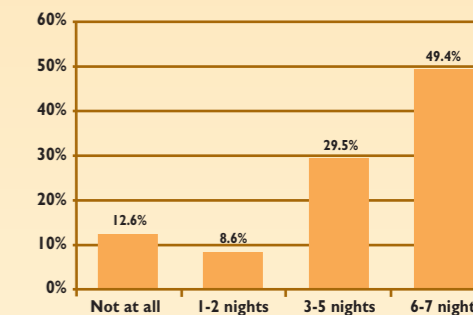
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ACTIVITY LOCATIONS OF WHITE SUPREMACIST GROUPS PER 100,000 POPULATION JAN. 1, 1998-DEC. 31, 1999

	Number	Per 100,000 Population
Potter County	4	23.35
Jefferson County	3	6.50
York County	24	6.42
Lancaster County	2	.44
Pennsylvania	150	1.25

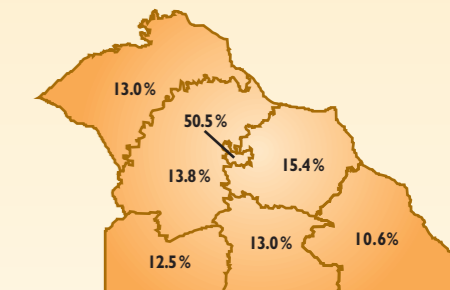
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NUMBER OF TIMES PER WEEK SPENT EATING DINNER WITH FAMILY MEMBERS



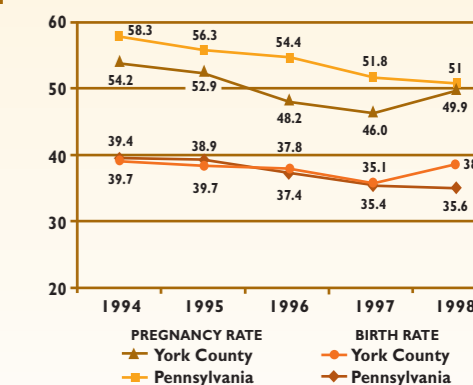
F.10

PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN LIVING IN ONE-PARENT FAMILIES, BY PLANNING REGION



F.11

PREGNANCY/BIRTH RATES FOR TEENAGERS 15-19





A CULTURAL ALLIANCE IS BORN

In 1995, Arthur Glatfelter assembled a group of local leaders and spoke about the importance of arts and cultural organizations in York County and the contribution they make to the heritage, livability and character of the region. It was a rallying cry for businesses to get more involved in working with organizations on a long-term basis. And it was the first step in an effort to make arts and culture recognized as important amenities in the growth of the region. Last year, in its first corporate campaign, the Cultural Alliance raised nearly \$650,000 for its 10 member agencies, giving them more resources than they had ever achieved on their own.

mothers themselves. In York County, the actual number of teen pregnancies decreased by 7.9 percent from 1994 to 1998, but unfortunately, the rate of pregnancies has actually increased from 1996. Our rates are lower than the state's for the five-year period 1994-1998, but the gap is narrowing (F. 10).

LEISURE TIME OPPORTUNITIES

Across the country, more and more regions are realizing that recreation and leisure time opportunities play a significant role in quality of life. These aspects of a community are often factors of consideration for young members of the workforce, either looking to locate elsewhere, or deciding whether to stay where they are.

Recreational Opportunities

York County residents value open land and outdoor activities, which are important for both the physical and emotional health of our residents. Currently, our public parks encompass 9,729 acres. This is the equivalent of 25.8 acres of public land per 1000 county residents – which exceeds the country and state recommended standard for regional parks by 2,198 acres.

The opening of the Heritage Rail Trail County Park gave York County 64 miles of bike trails (F. 11).

WORKPLACE

Residents who live and work in the same area are more likely to identify with and be involved in what's going on in their communities. Long commutes often take time that could be spent with the family, in the neighborhood or volunteering in the community.

Working in York County

The vast majority of employees (77.4%) work in York County. A total of 14.9 percent work outside the county and the remaining 7.7 percent work in another state.

Several Different Yorks Exist

A 1996 study of York County recognized that it is not one homogeneous entity. Over half of the residents of northern York County (59.6%) work outside the county. The Hanover area functions as an independent community. And the southern part of the county has a significant percentage of residents employed in other counties or states. The York County Strategic Plan identifies five distinct areas: North, South, Metro, Hanover and Southeast.

Travel Time

Even with the high percentages working outside the county, few York County residents (8.7%) travel 45 minutes or longer to work. In contrast, over half (52.6%) travel less than 20 minutes.

ACCESS TO THE INTERNET

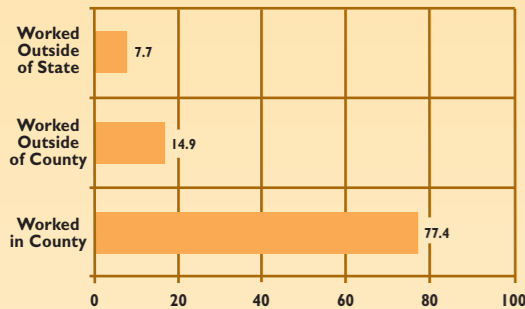
The Internet is a valuable tool for obtaining information and resources on an endless variety of topics. Numerous initiatives have been launched at the state and local levels, often through libraries and other community centers, to make the Internet accessible to all.

York On-Line

In 2000, about a third of our residents (32.6%) did not have access to the Internet. Over a fourth (28.6%) only have access from their homes and another 10.6 percent can access the Internet from work. The remaining 28.1 percent of York County residents are able to gain access from both home and work.

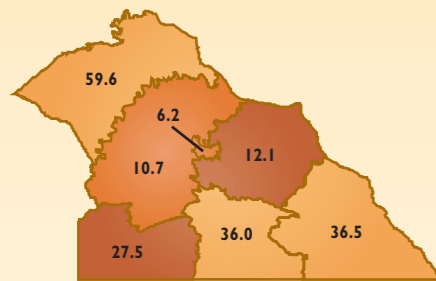
RESIDENTS BY LOCATION OF WORKPLACE
TOTAL WORKERS = 174,782

F. 12



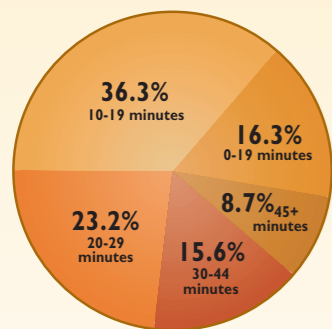
PERCENT OF WORKERS WHO WORK OUTSIDE OF THE COUNTY BY PLANNING REGION

F. 13



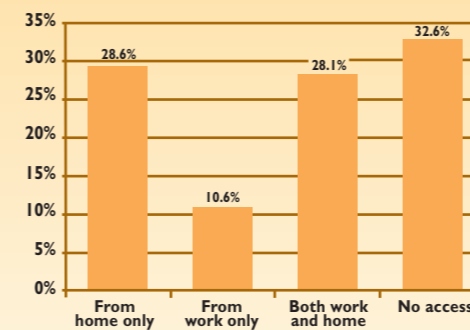
WORKERS BY TRAVEL TIME TO WORK
TRAVEL TIME BY PERCENTAGE OF WORKERS

F. 14



INTERNET ACCESS

F. 15



OUR COMMUNITY...

York residents are active in volunteer work, organized churches and supporting the United Way agencies throughout the region. However, there are warning signs around segregation of minority communities and residents, a high number of hate crimes and activity of white supremacist groups.

More than two-thirds of the students in the York City school district are minorities, an increase of 6 percent over the past five years. All other districts, with the exception of Central, have minority students representing less than 10 percent of their student bodies.

OUR FAMILIES...

There are potential long-term risks around some aspects of the family, especially in York City.

In the entire county, 17.4 percent of school age children are in single parent households. This is somewhat less than the 21.3 percent in single parent families in the state. However, half of the school age children in the city live in single parent families.

York County's pregnancy rate for teens, 15 to 19, plateaued in 1996, and actually increased from 1997 to 1998. In contrast, the pregnancy rate for Pennsylvania, while slightly higher than York's, has been consistently declining since 1994.

OUR FREE TIME...

The community is fortunate to have easy access to parks and arts and culture. Our county park system exceeds the standard for acres per resident. Opportunities for exposure to the arts and culture are plentiful.

With the successful creation of the Cultural Alliance and the continued development of the Heritage Rail Trail County Park, our community can expect to enjoy the availability of parks and arts and culture in the future.

OUR WORKPLACE...

The majority of residents work in York County and have relatively short commute times. However, the northern and southern parts of the county have a much higher percentage of residents working in other counties or other states.