



**UCHRA VAN BUREN COUNTY HEAD START
COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT 2008
REVISED JANUARY 2010**

"HAND IN HAND, TOGETHER WE CAN"

Community Assessment 2008

Revised January 2010

Van Buren County, Tennessee

I. Introduction

A variety of information was obtained in 2009 through a network of data sources and data gathering techniques and utilized for assessment of the Van Buren County community. The percentage of surveys returned was at 81% and the sources used are as listed: (UCHRA), (Burritt Memorial Library), (UT Extension), (Spencer Elementary School), (THP), (Van Buren County Government), (Community Representatives), (Principal - Van Buren County High School), (Van Buren County Sheriff's Department), (Mountain View Newspaper), (Van Buren Board of Education), and (Van Buren County Health Department). The collected data also includes: In-house demographics of enrolled children and families, census reports, Tennessee economic reports, "Kids Count" data and statistics, county-wide employment data, as well as other information from agencies serving children and families. This information will serve as a basis for targeting needs of children and families, choosing program options and determining eligibility for enrollment into the program.

Interviews and data sources from area specialists, maps, resources, charts and graphs will be referred to as inserts. The information contained in the UCHRA Van Buren County Head Start Community Assessment will serve as a basis for targeting the needs of the children and families, choosing program options, and planning for short and long term goals.

Mission Statement

Van Buren County Head Start's overall mission statement is to foster individual development for children, families and staff to sustain positive transitions into the future.

Van Buren County Head Start, recognizing parents as the primary educators of their children, will partner with parents and the community to enrich the lives of children and families by utilizing program outcomes for planning and providing quality comprehensive child development services.

Our grantee's, Upper Cumberland Human Resource Agency, mission is to promote a strong sense of community and family values by administering

programs designed to provide tools, knowledge and resources to improve the quality of life, promote a positive sense of individual self-worth, encourage responsible decision making and provide opportunities for individuals to become productive and independent while giving first priority to the elderly, handicapped and severely economically disadvantaged. We also strive to increase the assistance provided in the region through growth in funding available through the agency and by becoming better known in the community. Additionally, the agency desires to improve its effectiveness in administering its programs through technological advancements to improve its business systems and through staff development.

Philosophy:

Our philosophy, expressed in our mission statement, incorporates these ideals we feel to be critical in maintaining a successful program:

1. We believe that children benefit from an individualized program which increases growth and development by offering a planned educational curriculum focusing on health/nutrition, art, science, math, communication/ social skills, fine/gross motor skills, numeric/literacy recognition and self help skills.
2. We believe that parents, staff and communities must function as a team in fulfilling the potential of every child by: 1.) encouraging parents to participate in the program as volunteers and to help make decisions 2.) forming partnerships with the community and the family to provide services. This partnership will allow us to enrich the lives of eligible families, children with disabilities, children with mental and physical health problems and families who need to be involved in a literacy program.

Based on the program philosophy, UCHRA Van Buren County Head Start's objectives will emphasize the integration of all areas in the program in order to meet the following initiatives for conducting a successful program:

1. Improve children's health and physical abilities by conducting and monitoring needed screenings, follow up visits and link families to a source of continuous health care that is available even after the child leaves Head Start.
2. Provide all children with a safe, nurturing, engaging, enjoyable and secure learning environment that promotes the continuance of their growth and development, to include: 1) physical, 2) social, 3) emotional and 4) cognitive.
3. Supply a variety of materials and planned activities that promote conceptual and communication skills designed to promote individual and group play.
4. Provide continuous opportunities both developmentally and linguistically appropriate for each child's abilities, interests, cultural background, language skills and learning styles.

5. Provide continuous trainings and workshops for staff and parents.
6. Encourage volunteering from Head Start families, community members, grandparents and any other interested community members.
7. Increase community awareness of the Head Start program, of services provided and benefits to the local community, by hosting advisory meetings, joining community child and health councils, participating in community events, and posting articles in the local newspapers and internet venues.
8. Encourage parents to complete and/or continue education and job skills.
9. Partner with other agencies, community members, organizations, businesses, and public schools to meet the needs of the families without any duplication of services.

II. Overview of Services Provided by UCHRA

UCHRA serves 14 counties in the Middle Tennessee region. UCHRA provides essential resources to the counties such as U-Cart transportation for our families and the community, LI-Heap Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, Weatherization Assistance Program, Emergency Services Program, Child and Adult Care Food Program, Child Care Broker Program, Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS, Cumberland Career Center, Families First Employment Program, Dislocated Workers Program and Savings For Us, which is a plan designed to assist the families in saving money for the purpose of buying a home, opening a business or going to school. UCHRA provides:

- **The Homemaker Aide Program and Elderly Chore Service** provides aid to elderly or handicapped people
- **Personal Care Services** which provides bathing, dressing and other personal services to the elderly and handicapped
- **Statewide Home and Community Based Waiver-Home Modifications for the Elderly and Disabled** provides and installs ramps, rails, non-skid surfaces, grab rails and home modifications for the elderly and handicapped.
- **LIHEAP** (Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program) is a program that provides assistance to low income families that need help with utility bills, exhausted their fuel supply or have received cut off notices.
- **Commodities** (Temporary Emergency Food Assistance Program) which distributes surplus foods to the low income.
- **Information and Referral Services** which helps people in accessing services and resources in the community.
- **Weatherization Assistance Program** provides insulation or other weatherization services to low income families.
- **Emergency Services Program** provides emergency food, shelter, energy, prescribed drugs, and homeless prevention to eligible households.

- **Child and Adult Care Food Program** supplements the costs of food for children enrolled in licensed or registered daycare homes.
- **Child Care Development Fund** helps to meet child care expenses for working low income parents and teen parents that are in school.
- **Information and Referral Services** helps families and individuals access services and referrals in their community.
- **Social Service Block Grant** helps to meet child care expenses for parents in secondary training and/or parents of children with developmental delays.
- **Social Service Block Grant (Custody)** helps to meet child care expenses for children who are in State custody.
- **Social Service Block Grant (Non- Custody)** helps to meet child care expenses for foster children.
- **Adult Protective Service (APS) Homemaker**, which assists adults who have been abused, neglected or exploited with household chores, errands, budgeting, etc., to live on their own without fear of further abuse.
- **Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA)**, a network of volunteers appointed by a judge to determine the best possible outcome for abused or neglected children. Many of these children have no voice of their own, and these advocates become their voice so that the children do not get trapped in the maze of the court system, child welfare and temporary shelter.
- **Housing Opportunity for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA)** assists people in all aspects of obtaining and maintaining a home to prevent homelessness and provides many other services.
- **Ryan White Community AIDS Partnership** provides case management and transportation for clients so they can access health care or other support services.

As stated previously, all of these services are available in 14 counties in Middle Tennessee. These counties are: Cannon, Clay, Cumberland, DeKalb, Fentress, Jackson, Macon, Overton, Pickett, Putnam, Smith, Van Buren, Warren and White. UCHRA is mandated to keep in constant contact with the changing needs of the residents in each area.

UCHRA is funded through a combination of funds from federal, state and local organizations.

III. Community Assessment

With the population in Van Buren County being 5,448, of which 1,160 are under the age of 18, one Head Start facility is sufficient in addressing the needs within our service area for preschool children. We do not address the urgent need for care for infants from 0-3 years old. There is no child care for children 0-3 years old in Van Buren County.

In 1991, the inception of Head Start within this county, the location of the center was based on structure availability. Our region is a rural farming area and services are not readily available to the entire community, so transportation is a dire need and is very limited. One of the long range goals is the relocation of the center to a more centralized location within the Spencer city limits, as funding is available. This will enable our services to be more easily available to the entire service content area. The county and its seat are geographically isolated and job-destitute. The data previously shown easily reveals an inclusive correlation with regards to economic stability, child and teen health and community safety, education, and medical and family stability. The geographic location of our area still continues to be a concern to our community with no new employment opportunities to date.

A. Head Start Eligible Children and Families

The Van Buren County Head Start is state licensed to serve 40 children and federally funded for 37, age ranging from three to five years old. As stated by the 2007 Kids Count profile for Van Buren County, there are one thousand one hundred and sixty children under the age of eighteen, with 5.1% of the total population as children aged zero to five, as estimated from the U.S. Census Bureau. The USDA stated in their 2008 Poverty Rate Report that 29.4% of children living in Van Buren County live in poverty. So, the need is apparent for the Head Start program and its continuation of services. The percentages stated above directly reflects services needed in the community and is used in determining long range plans and objectives for these children by providing them with essential services needed to produce a better quality of life.

B. Existing Child Care Programs

The only existing child care in Van Buren County consists of UCHRA Van Buren County Head Start with 40 child care spaces available and Van Buren County Board of Education's Early Bird Preschool with 45 child care spaces available. These existing programs allow for a total of just 85 regulated child care spaces. There is no daycare in the county for any children from 0-3 years old, which is a concern and needed desperately.

C. Children with Disabilities

The percentage of children with disabilities enrolled in Van Buren County Head Start during the 2009-2010 school year equaled 11%. Past years have shown percentages as high as 34%. The Head Start program has never fallen below the required 10%. The current

percentage is projected to increase due to many unknown health effects and factors related to methamphetamines and its use by pregnant mothers and used in homes with small children. The Van Buren County School System provides disability services to 14.3% of their currently enrolled children. They are considered to be learning disabled with speech and language being the main focus at the elementary school level.

D. Family Needs Data

1. Needs of Children and Families

UCHRA Van Buren County Head Start's 2008-2009 Program Information Report shows data that reflects its services provided and the need thereof. PIR data is as follows: 41 families were served last year including those enrolled that withdrew. 37 children were eligible and 4 were over the income guidelines. Children were prioritized according to eligibility, disability and family problems/needs. 36 received Medicaid (TennCare). 14 children were served for the second year and 29 were new enrollees. Income ranged from \$0 to \$43,064 with a median of \$12,324.

Children from two parent homes:

- 8 had one parent working
- 10 had both parents working
- 6 had no parents working

Children from one parent homes:

- 9 had a working parent
- 8 did not have a working parent

The educational status of the family members enrolled is as follows:

- 6 had less than high school education
- 25 had high school diploma or GED
- 9 associates degree, vocational or some college degree
- 1 had advanced degree

Enrollment by ethnicity was as follows:

- 41 white
- 2 multi-racial

Forty two (42) children completed medical screenings and dental examinations. Four children (4) were determined to have disabilities.

Profile of Population/General/Social Demographic Characteristics (Based on 2000 Census Data)

Geographic Area: Van Buren County
Total Population: 5448 (2006 data)

Sex/Age/Number/Percent:

Male: 2729	50.1
Female: 2719	49.9
Under 5: 326	5.1
Age 65 and up: 771	14.4

Race/Number/Percent:

White: 5454	99.0
Black: 7	0.1
Hispanic: 18	0.3
American Indian: 10	0.2
Asian: 4	
Other race: 5	0.1
Two or more races: 28	0.5

Relationships by Percent:

Total Households: 2180	100.0
Householder: 2160	39.6
Spouse: 1297	23.5
Child: 1541	28.0
Own Child Under 18: 1117	20.3
Other Relatives: 235	4.3

Households/Type/Percent:

Families:	74.3
Married Couple Family	59.5
Female Householder	11.0

Personal Income:

Per Capita (2000)	\$17,497
Median Family (2000)	\$34,949
Median Household (2000)	\$28,164
Per Capita Personal Income (2005)	\$24,051
Poverty Rate (2004) Tennessee	15.0%
Poverty Rate (2004) Van Buren Co.	16.5%
- Related children under 18	22.0%

Education:

Less than 9th grade	797	21.3%
High school grad or GED	1586	42.4%
Some college, no degree	400	10.7%
Associate degree	42	1.1%
Bachelor's degree	191	5.1%
High school dropout rate (2000)		17.9%

Employment and Labor Force: Unemployed:

2006 unemployment rate:	8.0%	
2001 unemployment rate:		7.8%
2004 youth unemployment rate:		45.5%

Infant/Child/Teen Health by Subject and Percent:

Age 6 and under on WIC (2006)	36.0%
Adequate prenatal care (2006)	68.8%
Pregnancy rate per 1000 ages 10-17 (2005)	68.0%
Pregnancy rate per 1000 ages 10-14 (2005)	5.5%
Percent of live births to unmarried parents (2005)	23.5%
TennCare enrollees under 21 (2006)	38.9%

Child/Teen Well Being:

State custody for children under 20 (2006)	6.6%
Children remaining in state custody (2006)	8.0%

Child Care Services/ Ages/Available Slots:

Van Buren County Head Start (ages 3-5)	40
Van Buren Public School System (ages 3-5)	45

Primary Indicators that Affect Children by Percent (2006):

Low birth weight babies:	9.6%
Infant mortality rate per 1000:	19.2%
Child deaths ages 1-14:	0.0%
Teen deaths:	0.0%
Substantiated child abuse per 1000	9.5 %
Children under 18 receiving TANF	3.2%
Children under 18 receiving food stamps	26.4%
Percentage of children participating in free/reduced lunch program (2006) :	58.3%

Health Care Facilities:

Van Buren County Health Department

Medical Professionals:

Dr. Chris Rayala
Cameron Heady P.A.

Van Buren County Health Council Priorities:

Tobacco use/smoking
Teen pregnancy
Heart conditions

Diabetes
 Obesity
 Cancer
 Dental health
 Teen alcohol and drug abuse
 Adult alcohol and drug abuse

Living Conditions in Van Buren County (2000 census):

Total housing units:	2453	100.0%
Units in Structure:		
1 unit, detached:	1711	68.8%
1 unit, attached:	20	.8%
2 units:	12	.5%
3 or 4 units:	23	.9%
5 to 9 units:	30	1.2%
10 to 19 units:	7	.3%
Mobile home:	639	26.0%
Boat, RV, van, etc.	11	.4%

Total Occupied Housing Units	2180	100.0%
Lacking complete plumbing facilities:	52	2.4%
Lacking complete kitchen facilities:	36	1.7%
No telephone service:	157	7.2%

Housing Units by Heating Fuel

Utility gas	443	20.3%
Bottled, tank or LP gas	473	21.7%
Electricity	936	42.9%
Fuel oil, kerosene, etc.	45	2.1%
Wood	283	13.0%

Specified Owner Occupied Housing Units by Value

Less than \$50,000	437	42.1%
\$50,000-\$99,999	493	47.5%
\$100,000-\$149,999	55	6.4%
\$150,000-\$199,999	26	2.5%
\$200,000-299,999	8	0.8%
\$300,000-\$999,999	0	.0%
\$1,000,000 or more	8	.8%
Median:		\$55,600

Child Poverty Data by Living Arrangement:

All poverty households w/ related children (2005):	27.1%
Poverty level w/female head of house w/related children under 18 (2000):	45.0%

children under 5 (2000):	39.4%
Children under 18 receiving food stamps (2006):	26.4%
Grandparents as caregivers	132

Household/Family Income Data (2000):

	<u>Households</u>	<u>Families</u>
Less than \$10,000	15.0%	9.3%
\$10,000-\$14,999	11.4%	9.7%
\$15,000-\$24,999	17.4%	15.2%
\$25,000-\$34,999	15.5%	15.9%
\$35,000-\$49,999	17.9%	22.3%
\$50,000-\$74,999	17.6%	21.6%
\$75,000-\$99,999	2.1%	2.4%
\$100,000-\$199,000	1.6%	1.5%
\$200,000 or more	1.5%	2.1%

The gap between rural and urban economics in America is growing. Fewer and fewer jobs, with much of them lower paying, and rising cost of living, such as food, housing, utilities and gasoline are wreaking havoc on rural areas of the country. Rural workers typically earn less wages than their urban counterparts. With so few jobs in Van Buren County, workers have to travel farther to work, and the rising cost of gasoline is having a devastating impact on the family income. Of the poorest 250 counties in the US, 244 are rural (Center for Rural Strategies, 2003). People that work with children in rural areas must struggle with the same issues that urban providers do: abuse and neglect, education, health, crime, and all the while struggling with the complexities of rural situations: there is a shortage of funding and resources. With the dramatically rising cost of goods, food, gasoline and utilities, the situation is only getting worse for people who are already struggling. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the unemployment rate for Tennessee in December 2009 was 10.9% with Van Buren County at 15.5%.

Poverty has a terrible impact on children and families. It effects the economic security, health, education and general well being of children. Compared to children living above the poverty line, children living below the poverty line are more likely to have difficulty in school, become delinquent, are more likely to become teen parents, and as adults, earn less and be unemployed more often.

The statistics shown in this assessment point out that children living in households headed by a female are living in poverty more than children in 2 parent homes (Kids Count). The statistics also indicate that too many children in Van Buren County are disadvantaged when it

comes to income.

2009 Poverty Guidelines for the 48 States and DC

Family Size	Poverty Guideline
1	\$10,830
2	\$14,570
3	\$18,310
4	\$22,050
5	\$25,790
6	\$29,530
7	\$33,270
8	\$37,010

For families with more than 8 persons, add \$3,740 for each additional person.

IV. Issues of the Community as Defined By Community Leaders and Institutions in Van Buren County

Issues defined as a result of a community wide survey:

1. Adult unemployment
2. Lack of affordable health insurance
3. Youth drug abuse
4. Adult drug abuse
5. Youth alcohol abuse
6. Adult alcohol abuse
7. Shortage of recreational programs
8. Shortage of affordable housing for families
9. Illiteracy
10. Underemployment

Other significant information regarding community statistics includes data from Van Buren County General Sessions court dockets and information. From June 2007 through March 17, 2008, 1037 court cases were heard.

Falling under Group A offenses (as determined by the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation) are offenses such as assault, homicide, sexual offenses, kidnapping and drug/narcotics arrests. Group B offenses include bad checks, DUI domestic disputes, etc.

Group A offenses during this time in Van Buren County reflected the following: There were 26 drug related cases, a significant drop from the previous year. We hope that with the vigilance of Head Start, this number will continue to decline. UCHRA Van Buren County Head Start prioritizes drug awareness education in our community by incorporating information in parent classes, networking with the Middle

Tennessee Meth Task Force which brings a portable display to Head Start activities and events, and informational flyers and brochures provided to families. There were 10 assault cases and no murder or sexual assault cases.

Group B offenses include mostly cases of public drunkenness, DUI, worthless checks, speeding and 13 cases of domestic violence, which is also down from the previous time period.

The UCHRA Van Buren County Head Start is continually striving to assist our families and the community and help with the concerns of people we serve. In the past two years we have implemented a job fair but the downturn of the economy was so severe there was no community business participation. Many of the employment agencies that had previously participated in the Job Fair were no longer in existence. The few still open were unable to attend as there were no jobs available. We will continue to provide this service to the community annually, as circumstances improve and allow. In addressing the health care situation, CoverKids no longer is accepting applications. UCHRA Van Buren County Head Start will continue to advocate for health and dental care not only for our families but the community as well. We did host a RAM (Rural Area Medical) clinic in 2009. This organization brings in volunteers of professionals in areas of primary medicine, vision and dentistry to provide free services to people in the community. Citizens received free eye screenings and glasses on site, and dental services such as cleanings, fillings and extractions. To address the drug and alcohol problems, we have a partnership with the Meth Task Force, organize classes and provide literature. Concerned about the lack of recreational programs, we have worked in conjunction with other organizations to provide low cost activities. The shortage of affordable housing is a real problem locally, and the UCHRA Van Buren County Head Start keeps in contact with the local housing authority and keeps informed of any openings in the housing that becomes available. Very familiar with the illiteracy problem in our community, Head Start advocates for reading programs. We have 17 literacy programs at Head Start. Through these programs, we emphasize the importance of reading to the families and strive to get the whole family involved. We also have a partnership with the local Adult Education to get parents enrolled to obtain their GED. UCHRA not only values the education of the children we serve, we also value it for the parents and community where they live, and include local state colleges and trade schools to further the education of citizens so they can get better jobs. This also addresses the issue of underemployment, which is also a concern of the community.

Head Start continually strives to accommodate the needs of any culture, making us more accessible to our community. We also introduce different cultures into the classroom with activities, stories and food in order to increase cultural awareness.

V. Community Resources

TennCare: The number one provider of insurance to our area and with a reported 170,000 cuts from enrollment (as reported in the *Capitol Insider* April 30, 2007) across the state, maintaining affordable insurance is an issue to our community. Beginning on April 1, 2007 TennCare incorporated assistance from two managed care organizations, AmeriChoice and AmeriGroup, to serve approximately 170,000 Middle Tennesseans. TennCare enrollees in the entire region now have a choice between MCOs to manage their care rather than only one plan for almost all of Middle Tennessee, according to the State of Tennessee Bureau of TennCare. TennCare is Tennessee's managed-care Medicaid program serving approximately 1.2 million low-income children, pregnant women and disabled Tennesseans, with an annual budget of 7 billion dollars. Tennessee developed Cover Tennessee which has three components:

- AccessTennessee: health insurance plan for seriously ill adults who have been turned down by other insurance companies.
- CoverTN: guarantees affordable basic health coverage for eligible employees of small businesses.
- CoverRx: offers affordable medication to low income, uninsured Tennesseans.

Although TennCare has been revised, there are still issues at hand regarding insurance for the unemployed and for people whose jobs do not include health insurance. Many people in Tennessee and in Van Buren County still have no health insurance coverage, and the state programs are still financially out of reach for many of these citizens.

Tennessee Department of Children's Services: Provides case management and social services to children adjudicated dependant/neglect, unruly or placed on Juvenile Justice Probation. In 2007, 7171 children in Tennessee were remanded to State custody. Eleven (11) of these children were from Van Buren County, up from ten in 2006. Ten (10) children remained in state custody. In the same year, there were 46 reports of child abuse and 2 substantiated both down from the previous year (60 reports, 13 substantiated). There were 71 cases referred to Juvenile Court, up from 55 the previous year.

Tennessee Department of Human Services: Provides services including Families First, Food Stamps, TennCare and Emergency Services. Although these services are provided as a resource to the families and community, Head Start has become a liaison for resources needed and used.

Cumberland Family Care Clinic: A newly opened facility that offers one private physician, Dr. Chris Rayala. Physician's Assistant, Cameron Heady, is there on Wednesdays. These providers accept TennCare and Medicaid.

Employment

Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development stated the unemployment rate for the state was 4.9% in January 2008. By December 2008, the rate had jumped to 7.6% and by December 2009, the unemployment went to 10.9%. The rate for Van Buren County was 6.2% as of December 2007. This jumped to 10.6% in December 2008 and then skyrocketed to 15.5% by December 2009. Forming a partnership with the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development, employment opportunities will be easily accessible in the form of postings located at the Head Start Center and through requested information, all readily available for the parents/guardians and the community. Unfortunately, as you can see from the statistics, there is little opportunity for jobs in our area.

Southeastern Tennessee Regional Correctional Facility: Employs 321 people with 25% being from Van Buren County. Salaries range from approximately \$1,777 to almost \$4,000 monthly. Men mostly occupy the position of correctional officers with salaries averaging almost \$2,300 monthly.

Accument Global Technology: Employs 215 people. These are mostly machine operating jobs. Hourly pay rates are approximately \$14.12 per hour. Approximately 80% of employees are from Van Buren County.

Taft Youth Development Center: Employs 241 people with both hourly and salary positions. These pay rates range from approximately \$1500 per month to \$5500 per month. Men and women equally occupy jobs here. Positions include administration, cooks, janitors and guards. A little over 11% (27) of the employees are from Van Buren County.

Fall Creek Falls State Resort Park: Employs 194 people with hourly and salary positions. Pay rates range from hourly positions such as housekeeping, food service and maintenance at \$7 per hour to salaried staff and management positions up to \$20 per hour. Approximately one-third of these are only seasonal or 6-9 month positions and one-half of totals are held by Van Buren County residents.

Van Buren County School System: Employs 194 people. These include 75 certified personnel with teaching degrees. Of the 194, 131 are regularly scheduled employees with the balance being substitute cooks, teachers, bus drivers, janitors and custodians. Approximately 80% of the staff is Van Buren County residents.

Generations of Spencer: Employs 90 people with approximately 75% of staff from Van Buren County. Hourly rates of pay are \$7.25 to \$8 per hour. Others are comparable rates of LPN and RN staff. Most positions are hourly.

VI. Other Information as Needed

According to Annie E. Casey Foundation's Kids Count National Data Book 2006, Tennessee had slipped to 46th place in regards to child well being. As of 2009, Tennessee still ranks 46 out of 50 states for child well being. In Tennessee, as of 2008, 56% of children lived below 250% of the federal poverty level. The same year, 38% of children from single parent homes lived below the poverty level. In 2008, 22% of children in Tennessee lived in poverty; 18% in the United States overall lived in poverty. In Tennessee, of children under 6, 26% live in poverty; 21% of those under 6 in the United States lived in poverty. These statistics are shocking. The Van Buren County Head Start has a definite impact on the nutritional needs of the children by providing a well balanced breakfast, lunch and snack daily. Van Buren County Head Start also offers a free food bin and commodities (provided by our grantee, UCHRA) information provided on a continual basis to the families and the community. Our program also maintains the Lending House which accepts donations of clothing and household items. The Lending House is open to the entire community and is free.

There were 60 cases of child abuse reported in 2006 in Van Buren County. Van Buren County Head Start monitors children for signs of abuse. We are obligated by law to report suspected cases of abuse. We actively participate in child abuse awareness and education by holding seminars and community projects.

VII. Program Decision Making

Philosophy

Five Objectives of Head Start defined in the Program Performance Standards are:

Objective 1: Enhance children's growth and development.

Objective 2: Strengthen families as the primary nurturers of their children.

Objective 3: Provide children with educational, health, and nutritional services.

Objective 4: Link children and their families to needed community services.

Objective 5: Ensure well-managed programs that involve parents in decision making.

The UCHRA Van Buren County Head Start program is based on the premise that all children share certain needs. Our approach is based on the philosophy that:

1. A child can benefit most from a comprehensive interdisciplinary program to foster development and remedy problems through a broad range of services; in decision making.

There are other factors that enable a developmental approach, which helps children achieve social competencies. The performance standards program, the child's entire family and the community must be involved. The program should maximize the strengths and unique experience of each child. The family, which is perceived as the principal influence in the child's development, is invited and encouraged to be a direct participant in the program.

Recruitment has become more efficient for our center by distributing new door hangers, flyers, newspaper articles, monthly newsletter (enabling enrolled families to dispense program information), program informational sign, online advertising, word of mouth and the knowledge of current and former clients to the

benefit our program is to their children and families. Additionally, reinstating a five day operational schedule instead of the current six hour, four day weekly schedule would be beneficial to families for numerous reasons: many of these families work, or want to work, but have no other child care available for their children. Unfortunately, at this time, there is a severe lack of funding that does not allow for a full week long program. Head Start is beneficial not only to the children's educational needs but to the stability of the family as well. Head Start provides important resources and numerous services to families in servicing through the selection criteria process the families with the highest risk factors. All factors are considered when determining eligibility of a child. The selection process begins with our families. Our program takes into consideration the number of people in the home, the amount of income, the need for child care and any other concerns the family might have in which the Head Start would be beneficial in providing services for. Once we take a closer look at the family, we then observe the needs of the child. Eligibility of the children enrolled is determined by the number of parents in the home, whether the child has a handicap, income status at the time of enrollment, age of the child and other current needs the families may have.

VIII. Summary

The statistics, demographics, and needs defined are endless in regards to the necessity of UCHRA Van Buren County Head Start and its services. Head Start services encompass many areas of need in the family and community. From health services to educational and family resources Van Buren County Head Start is one of the few actual obtainable resources for people in the community. Van Buren Head Start has and continues to participate in many partnerships contributing to maintaining Health, Employment, Education and assists in providing services for maintaining a stable family environment. This is a support system not only for the children that attend but their families and the community as a whole. With true partnerships established evolving around Health Care, Educational, Nutritional as well as the Social and Emotional aspects, Head Start can serve as a foundation and building block for continuous child and family growth, success and well-being.

We take pride in the fact that we are dedicated and devoted to the maximum outcome of the families and community. The Van Buren County Head Start continually:

- ✚ revises our community resources
- ✚ seeks and creates new resources
- ✚ performs additional home visits, above the mandate
- ✚ develops fun and educational classroom activities (letters of the week, word boxes)

- ✚ provides 17 additional literacy programs (BSK program, home activities, book swap, first book program, journals, book fairs)
- ✚ encourages Male Involvement, which is very important in the life of a child. Children that have no positive male influence are more apt to incur more life problems such as delinquency, suicide, drug and alcohol abuse, and a high drop out rate.
- ✚ strives to achieve a stable and productive lifestyle by offering additional trainings on concerns within the community (domestic violence, stress management, parenting)
- ✚ offers transportation (medical, dental or events involving the children and parents which require travel)
- ✚ maintains Lending House (provides free clothing, household items to anyone that needs assistance in the community)
- ✚ provides donations to families in need (washer, dryer, stove, refrigerator)
- ✚ cultivates additional areas of health consisting of onsite health services (dental, vision, hearing and speech screenings)
- ✚ assists families and others in the community with job training and procurement through providing information and contacts with educational opportunities and job services
- ✚ develops additional committees providing information (i.e. Pandemic Flu, Community Advisory Board which preserves family life and enhances the welfare of children)
- ✚ requires staff to frequently attend trainings to enhance their job performance which enables our program to offer better services
- ✚ seeks innovative ways to become more efficient. We have implemented a website for parents to get information, reducing printing costs. We also have on the site a section for the Board of Directors to access information and documents. We have a new calling system which allows us to instantly phone parents and staff about activities or alerts such as closing for inclement weather. We have even added a Facebook page for instant updates in our program. All of these measures help to cut costs and allow us to divert finances to more beneficial aspects of the program.

UCHRA Van Buren County Head Start strives to provide a healthy safe environment and a support system which will strengthen families and to produce successful children by providing resources to resolve issues and concerns. The Van Buren County Head Start has an impact on the families and community, but the most important aspect of our program is to work diligently toward bestowing our children with a caring, positive start to life.

IX. Maps, Charts, Appendices as Required

Sources:

Bureau of Labor Statistics

Kids Count Data

USDA Data Poverty Rate

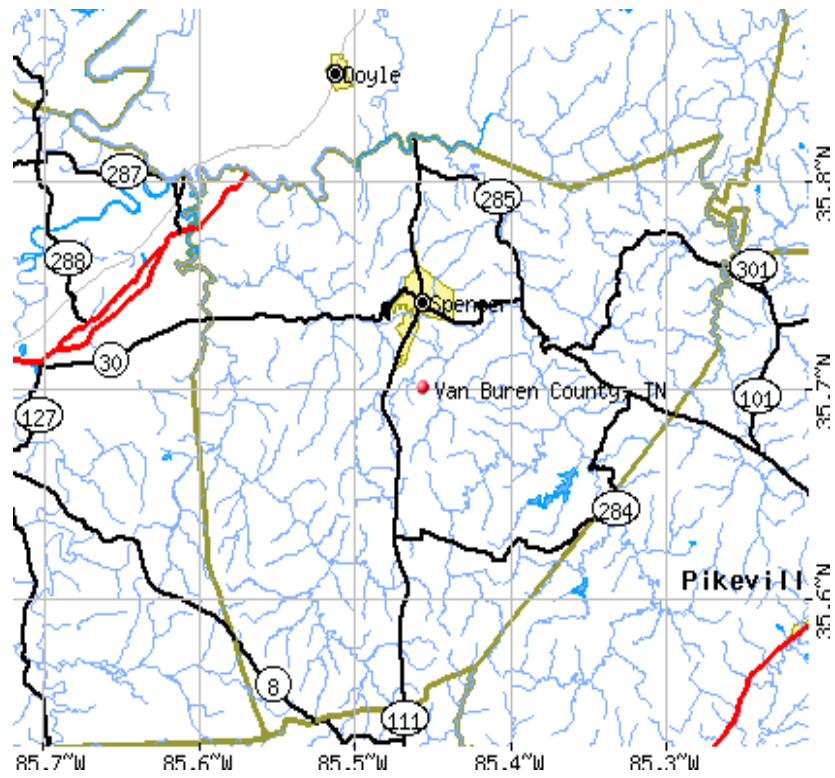
Tn. gov

United States Department of Labor

U.S. Census Bureau

Van Buren County Circuit Court Clerk

Upper Cumberland Human Resource Agency























KIDS COUNT overall rank (Number) – 2009


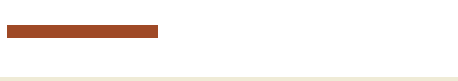



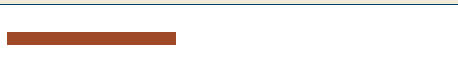
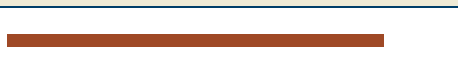

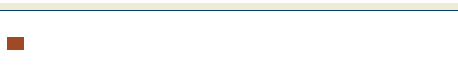
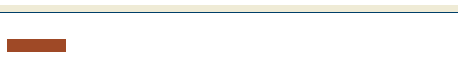
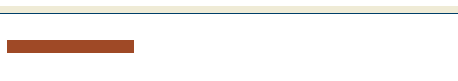


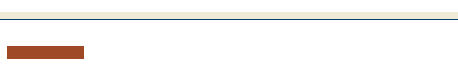

Data Provided by: National KIDS COUNT Program

TOOLBOX:

Scale: 1 - 50

United States	N.A.	
Alabama	48	
Alaska	35	
Arizona	40	
Arkansas	47	
California	20	
Colorado	22	
Connecticut	4	
Delaware	29	
Florida	36	
Georgia	42	
Hawaii	18	
Idaho	26	
Illinois	24	
Indiana	31	
Iowa	6	

Kansas	13	
Kentucky	41	
Louisiana	49	
Maine	12	
Maryland	25	
Massachusetts	5	
Michigan	27	
Minnesota	2	
Mississippi	50	
Missouri	33	
Montana	30	
Nebraska	11	
Nevada	39	
New Hampshire	1	
New Jersey	9	
New Mexico	43	
New York	17	
North Carolina	37	
North Dakota	7	
Ohio	28	















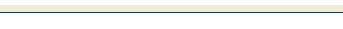





Oklahoma	44	
Oregon	19	
Pennsylvania	23	
Rhode Island	15	
South Carolina	45	
South Dakota	21	
Tennessee	46	
Texas	34	
Utah	3	
Vermont	8	
Virginia	16	
Washington	14	
West Virginia	38	
Wisconsin	10	
Wyoming	32	
District of Columbia	N.A.	
Puerto Rico	N.A.	
Virgin Islands	N.A.	















Children under age 6 in poverty (Percent) – 2008

Data Provided by: National KIDS COUNT Program

Scale: 11% - 33%

United States	21%	
Alabama	26%	
Alaska	13%	
Arizona	23%	
Arkansas	29%	
California	20%	
Colorado	18%	
Connecticut	14%	
Delaware	14%	
Florida	21%	
Georgia	24%	
Hawaii	12%	
Idaho	20%	
Illinois	20%	
Indiana	22%	
Iowa	18%	
Kansas	18%	

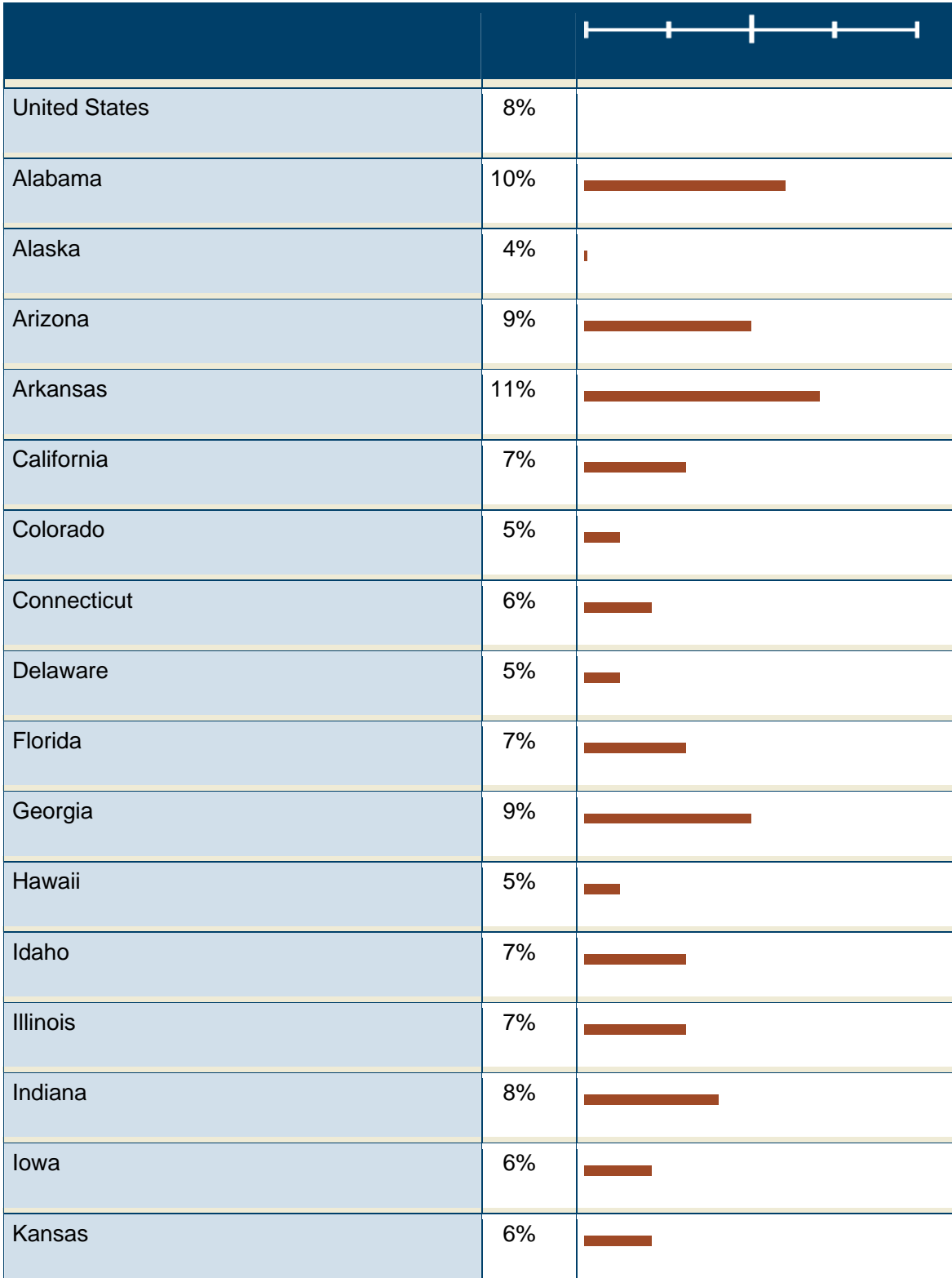
Kentucky	28%	
Louisiana	29%	
Maine	20%	
Maryland	12%	
Massachusetts	13%	
Michigan	22%	
Minnesota	13%	
Mississippi	33%	
Missouri	23%	
Montana	24%	
Nebraska	16%	
Nevada	17%	
New Hampshire	11%	
New Jersey	14%	
New Mexico	29%	
New York	20%	
North Carolina	23%	
North Dakota	19%	
Ohio	23%	
Oklahoma	26%	





















Oregon	21%	
Pennsylvania	20%	
Rhode Island	17%	
South Carolina	26%	
South Dakota	22%	
Tennessee	26%	
Texas	26%	
Utah	11%	
Vermont	15%	
Virginia	16%	
Washington	17%	
West Virginia	30%	
Wisconsin	16%	
Wyoming	14%	
Puerto Rico	58%	
Virgin Islands	N.A.	















Children in extreme poverty (Percent) – 2008

Data Provided by: National KIDS COUNT Program

Scale: 4% - 14%



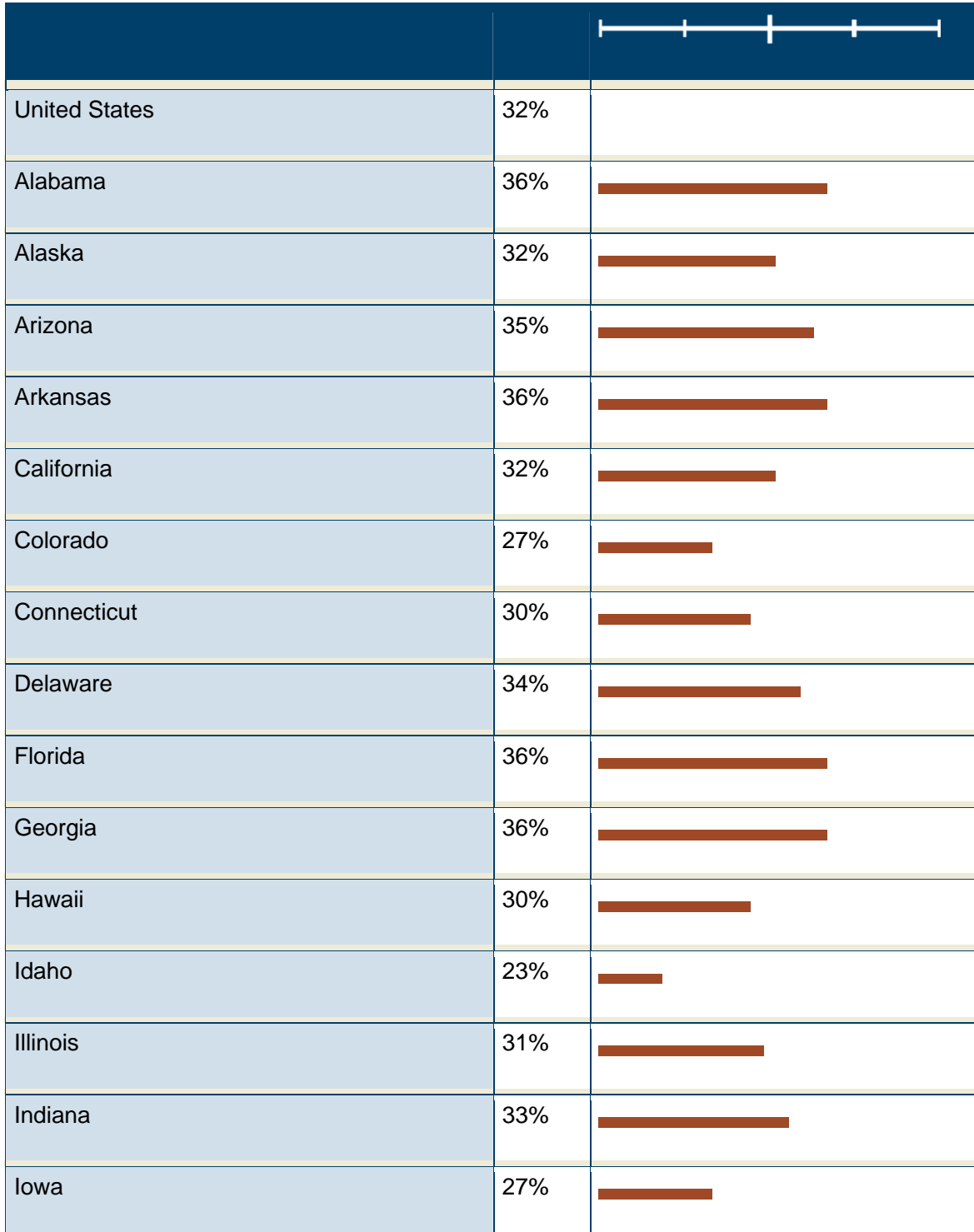
Kentucky	12%	
Louisiana	11%	
Maine	7%	
Maryland	5%	
Massachusetts	5%	
Michigan	9%	
Minnesota	5%	
Mississippi	14%	
Missouri	8%	
Montana	8%	
Nebraska	5%	
Nevada	6%	
New Hampshire	4%	
New Jersey	6%	
New Mexico	10%	
New York	9%	
North Carolina	8%	
North Dakota	8%	
Ohio	9%	
Oklahoma	9%	





















Oregon	7%	
Pennsylvania	7%	
Rhode Island	7%	
South Carolina	10%	
South Dakota	9%	
Tennessee	9%	
Texas	9%	
Utah	4%	
Vermont	6%	
Virginia	6%	
Washington	6%	
West Virginia	11%	
Wisconsin	6%	
Wyoming	5%	
Puerto Rico	36%	
Virgin Islands	N.A.	
















Children in single-parent families (Percent) – 2008

Data Provided by: National KIDS COUNT Program
TOOLBOX:

Scale: 18% - 45%



Kansas	28%	
Kentucky	33%	
Louisiana	43%	
Maine	31%	
Maryland	33%	
Massachusetts	29%	
Michigan	32%	
Minnesota	25%	
Mississippi	45%	
Missouri	32%	
Montana	29%	
Nebraska	26%	
Nevada	33%	
New Hampshire	25%	
New Jersey	28%	
New Mexico	40%	
New York	34%	
North Carolina	34%	
North Dakota	24%	
Ohio	34%	

Oklahoma	33%	
Oregon	30%	
Pennsylvania	32%	
Rhode Island	34%	
South Carolina	39%	
South Dakota	30%	
Tennessee	35%	
Texas	33%	
Utah	18%	
Vermont	32%	
Virginia	30%	
Washington	28%	
West Virginia	33%	
Wisconsin	29%	
Wyoming	29%	
Puerto Rico	53%	
Virgin Islands	N.A.	

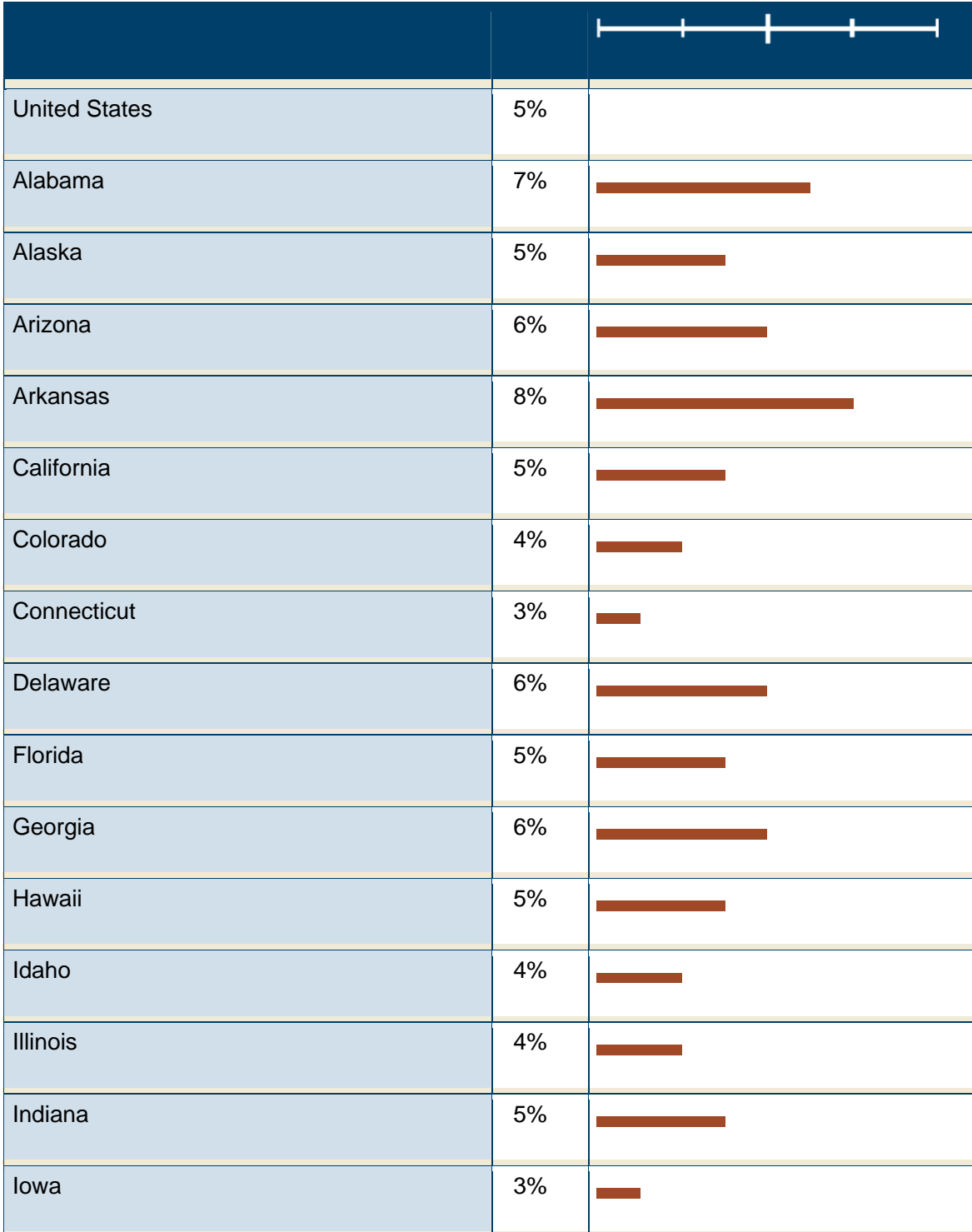
Definitions: Children under age 18 who live with their own single parent either in a family or subfamily. In this definition, single-parent families may include cohabiting couples and do not include children living with married stepparents.





















Grandchildren in the care of grandparents (Percent) – 2008
















Data Provided by: National KIDS COUNT Program

TOOLBOX:

Scale: 2% - 10%



Kansas	4%	
Kentucky	6%	
Louisiana	9%	
Maine	3%	
Maryland	5%	
Massachusetts	3%	
Michigan	4%	
Minnesota	2%	
Mississippi	10%	
Missouri	5%	
Montana	4%	
Nebraska	2%	
Nevada	5%	
New Hampshire	2%	
New Jersey	3%	
New Mexico	8%	
New York	4%	
North Carolina	6%	
North Dakota	3%	
Ohio	5%	

Oklahoma	7%	
Oregon	4%	
Pennsylvania	4%	
Rhode Island	2%	
South Carolina	6%	
South Dakota	5%	
Tennessee	7%	
Texas	6%	
Utah	3%	
Vermont	3%	
Virginia	5%	
Washington	4%	
West Virginia	6%	
Wisconsin	3%	
Wyoming	6%	
Puerto Rico	10%	
Virgin Islands	N.A.	

Definitions: The share of children under age 18 living in households where grandparent(s) provide primary care for one or more grandchildren in the household.

Additional Sources

Accument Global Technology
Cumberland Family Care Clinic
Fall Creek Falls State Resort Park
Generations of Spencer
Southeastern Tennessee Regional Correctional Facility
Taft Youth Development Center
The Tennessean
Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth
Tennessee Department of Children's Services
Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development
Tennessee Department of Human Services
Upper Cumberland Development District
Upper Cumberland Human Resource Agency
UCHRA Van Buren County Head Start Community Survey
U.S. Census Bureau
Van Buren County Board of Education
Van Buren County Circuit Court Clerk
Van Buren County School System
<http://centstats.census.gov>
www.bls.gov/lau/home.htm
www.covertn.gov
www.dekidscount.org
www.health.state.tn.us/statistics/healthdata.htm
www.Kidscount.org
www.ruralstrategies.org
www.Tennessee.gov
www.caneyforkel.com