

In 2013, Couleecap Inc. conducted a needs assessment to gather information regarding the needs of low-income individuals and families in a four-county service area (Crawford, La Crosse, Monroe, and Vernon counties). Information was gathered via surveys designed for low-income households. Surveys were distributed to a total of 1,350 households with 1,185 responses in the Couleecap Service area (response rate = 88%).

The responses reported here are from 46 low-income households that reported their race as American Indian. The data represents at least 144 people (adults and children) that live in the Coulee Region. Demographic information about the low-income households includes:

- 80% had annual incomes less than \$20,000; an additional 9% had incomes between \$20,000 and \$29,999.
- 24% had income from wages; 13% had income from self-employment.
- 11% received income from unemployment.
- Other sources of cash income:
  - 24% received income from Social Security Disability
  - 22% received income from Social Security
  - 11% received income from SSI
- Other sources of support:
  - 48% received support from Food Share / Food Stamps
  - 37% received support from Food Pantry
  - 28% received support from Medicaid / Medicare
- 50% were renters; 26% owned their own home.
- 22% could be considered homeless.
- 33% had children.
  - 13% with children were single-parent households
  - 20% with children were married-parent households
- 67% had at least one person limited by a physical, mental or emotional problem.
- 50% have had at least one adult have difficulty finding employment because of physical, mental, or emotional problems.

Information from the 2013 Couleecap Needs Assessment along with information from other recent, local assessments will be used to help plan for and implement services to address the needs of low-income households across the Couleecap, Inc. service area.

**Outcomes**

*Low-Income Households.* Households that responded to the needs assessment were asked to rate issues that were a need for their household. The table below reports the eight areas of need (rank ordered from most to least important) and the top two concerns within each area:

| <b>Areas of Need</b>                             | <b>Significant Concerns</b>   |
|--|---|
| <b>Housing</b>                                   | Finding safe, affordable housing<br>Paying for rent / security deposit and utility bills, and buying a home |
| <b>Transportation</b>                            | Paying for car expenses – gas, insurance, repairs<br>Getting a reliable car                                 |
| <b>Employment</b>                                | Finding a job (full-time, permanent, with benefits)<br>Getting training for a better job                    |
| <b>Emergency Assistance</b>                      | Getting help with utility bills, rent, and transportation<br>Need for food, clothing, shelter               |
| <b>Education</b>                                 | Transportation to get to school<br>Getting training for a better job, and learning money management skills  |
| <b>Health</b>                                    | Getting and paying for dental care<br>Paying for prescription drugs   |
| <b>Business Development</b>                      | Getting business start-up loans<br>Getting business start-up help and developing a business plan            |
| <b>Child and Family Development (parenting)</b>  | Dealing with increased levels of stress<br>Dealing with teenager(s)   |
| <b>Child and Family Development (child care)</b> | Finding child care on nights and weekends<br>Finding child care when child is sick                          |