



2008 Community Needs Assessment

We have had some concerns raised regarding our presentation of the Race/Ethnicity data in the 2008 Community Needs Assessment. In conducting the Community Needs Assessment we depend on the data categories that other sources use. We use secondary data that is commonly used by the government and other public entities. Though not everyone agrees upon this data collection method, this is a commonly accepted approach. In fact, more than 50 knowledgeable volunteer experts from city and county governments; United Way Partner Agencies; school districts; universities; health and social service agencies; and corporations met to create this report by reviewing the methodology, reviewing the indicators and assisting with technical issues related to data collection.

Unfortunately, the Hispanic demographic is a difficult demographic to capture completely and accurately without some overlap and misrepresentation. In the American Community Survey the “White Alone” number includes people of Hispanic origin because there is no option on the “Race” question to identify oneself as Hispanic. Hispanics are addressed in a completely separate question: ethnicity. Below is the definition of Ethnic Groups and Hispanic Origin from the US Census Bureau.

Ethnic groups: There are two minimum categories for ethnicity: Hispanic or Latino and Not Hispanic or Latino. The federal government considers race and Hispanic origin to be two separate and distinct concepts. Hispanics and Latinos may be of any race.

The categories are designed for collecting data on the race and ethnicity of broad population groups in this country. They are based on social and political considerations -- not anthropological or scientific ones. Furthermore, the race categories include both racial and national-origin groups.

Hispanic or Latino Origin: The terms “Spanish,” “Hispanic origin,” and “Latino” are used interchangeably. Some respondents identify with all three terms, while others may identify with only one of these three specific terms. Origin can be viewed as the heritage, nationality group, lineage, or country of birth of the person or the person’s parents or ancestors before their arrival in the United States. People who identify their origin as Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino may be of any race.

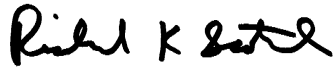
In an attempt to present data succinctly, the United Way Community Needs Assessment presents racial and ethnic estimates on one graph. This leads you to believe that Whites and Hispanics are separate racial categories when in actuality the Whites category can include Hispanics (other racial categories, such as Blacks, can also include a number of Hispanics). This is why the percentages in some graphs add up to over 100%.

The community at large and other data collection agencies also struggle with the accuracy of the different data reporting methods. There is no perfect method to use as there are positive and negative points in all methods. Though we use this reporting method now, it is possible in the

future that we would change our reporting methods if a better and more accurate method was determined and approved by our volunteer community experts.

We believe the 2008 United Way Community Needs Assessment is as accurate as possible using second-hand data, and provides a great look into our service area in North Texas.

Best regards,

Handwritten signature of Richard K. Scotch in black ink.Handwritten signature of Michelle S. Patrick in blue ink.

Richard K. Scotch
2008 Community Needs Assessment Chair

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