

Introduction

The United Way of Mid & South Jefferson County, the United Way of Orange County and the United Way of Beaumont & North Jefferson County, Texas, wanted to conduct a needs assessment study that would cover Hardin, Jefferson and Orange counties. These three Southeast Texas United Way agencies provided \$1,575 to fund a study to survey citizens of the tri-county region (Hardin, Jefferson and Orange counties, Texas), interview leaders of their partner agencies and conduct research into the services provided by these agencies. James Vanderleeuw, director of the Lamar University Center for Public Policy Studies, coordinated the study. He was assisted by students in a class on *Community Research*. The students worked in teams, with each team responsible for a specific component of the study (i.e., analyzing survey results, interviewing agency leaders, researching agency activities).

The remainder of this section discusses the purpose of the study, the methodology employed in gathering data, and the organization of this report.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to provide information that would allow the leadership of the above-referenced Southeast Texas United Way agencies to assess the extent to which their funding of nonprofit partners agencies might most effectively address community needs. This entailed identifying specific community needs, identifying the various service activities of partner agencies, and employing this information to identify the extent to which community needs and agency activities align. When not aligned, certain types of agency services may be overfunded relative to community needs, while others may be underfunded relative to

community needs. Findings will provide information to help guide the decision making of the Southeast Texas United Way leadership when making funding decisions. The United Way leadership can adjust its funding allocation across partner agencies in a manner that most effectively considers the match between the needs of citizens and communities on one hand, and the activities of partner agencies on the other.

Methodology

Identification of Community Needs

To identify community needs, a survey was mailed to 1,500 households in the tri-county region (Hardin, Jefferson and Orange counties, Texas). Households were randomly selected from the *Golden Triangle Telephone Directory*. This mail-out effort was augmented through surveys that were distributed to clients of several United Way partner agencies. In all, 343 surveys were returned. The mail-out was in two “waves.” The first was mailed in late February, 2011; the second, in mid-March, 2011. The distribution of surveys to partner agency clients took place during late March, 2011.

The community survey addressed three broad issue areas – Youth and Education, Financial Stability, and Health (a copy of the survey instrument is displayed in Appendix A). Survey questions were reviewed and approved by each of the three Southeast Texas United Way agency leaders (during summer 2010). Within each of the three broad issue areas there were a series of specific issue items. Respondents were asked to assign each item a score on a scale of 4 to 1, with 4 being a very critical community issue and 1 being not at all a critical community issue. When the results across all returned surveys are aggregated, this provides information on

the priority citizens accord the various issue items, from what is deemed most critical to what is deemed least critical to the community.

Further, within each of the three broad issue areas (Youth and Education, Financial Stability, Health), respondents were asked to identify the single most critical issue item. From this we are able to garner information about intensity of concern on an issue. This is important information in that within a broad issue area, item 1 not only may be ranked one place higher than issue item 2 and two place higher than issue 3, but in fact may be seen by citizens as overwhelmingly more critical to the community compared to items 2 or 3 (if for example, 70% of respondents pick item 1 as the singly most critical issue).

Respondents were also asked an open-ended question that asked about the biggest problem facing their community. This question provided the opportunity to “capture” significant community concerns not identified in the three broad issue areas.

Our survey cohort (i.e., those who responded to the survey) is generally representative of the tri-county region as a whole. Appendix B reports a comparison between the tri-county area population (Hardin, Jefferson and Orange counties) and our survey cohort on several key population characteristics.

Identification of Agency Services

Information on agency services was obtained through a search of agency web sites. Each of the three Southeast Texas United Way agencies provided a list of partner nonprofits. Accounting for some overlap in partner agencies, we identified 38 separate nonprofits that receive funding from the three Southeast Texas United Way agencies. To identify the services provided by these partner organizations, the web sites of each were reviewed. In five cases a local web site could not be identified; in these cases the agency’s affiliated national web site was

used. In three cases neither a local nor national web site was identified. A list of these partner agencies is provided in Appendix C.

Agency mission statements were initially reviewed. These, though, were deemed insufficiently detailed for our purposes. For any given agency, we reviewed what the web site provided regarding agency programs, activities and services for those they served (heretofore, referred to as services). Numerous United Way partner agencies listed more than one service on their web site. In all, we identified 56 service activities engaged in by United Way partners. The web searches were conducted during March, 2011.

Interviews with United Way Partner Agency Leaders

Interviews with United Way partner agency leaders provided additional information on community needs and agency services. The interviews also provided information on the resources needed by these agencies to continue to perform their community functions. During February, 2011, a request to interview was sent to all agency partner leaders. We received an affirmative response and were able to establish an interview date and time with 13 agency leaders. Eleven of these were interviewed in person at their agency; two were interviewed by phone (a list of the agency leaders interviewed is provided in Appendix D). As far as possible two students conducted each interview – one to ask questions and the other to take notes (though in several cases this could not be arranged and one student conducted the interview).

All interviewed agency leaders were asked an identical set of questions that dealt with their agency's most important activity, the particular needs of those their agency served, and the resources required by their agency to improve the provision of services (a copy of the interview instrument is provided in Appendix E). The interviews began in late February and ended in early April, with the majority conducted during March, 2011.

Organization of the Report

The following report is divided into two sections – Findings and Assessment. Regarding the section on Findings, viewing community needs as the foundation for an investigation into the match between community needs and agency activities, we first report results of the tri-county community survey. Here we discuss citizen attitudes on various items related to youth and educational services, individual and family financial stability, and health. This is followed by a presentation of the service activities of United Way partner agencies. Here we clearly delineate the most frequently provided activities from activities that are less often offered to the community by partner agencies. A discussion of the interviews with partner agency leaders will then follow. Here we discuss what agency leaders say about what is most important to those they serve and the resources their agencies require most to continue to provide these services.

After the presentation of findings, the report proceeds to the Assessment section. In this section of the report, we provide a context for the interpretation of the findings. Because much of our study draws from public opinion, we discuss how best to understand what a study based on opinion has to offer. Further, we discuss the influence that the economic environment as well as political culture can have on public opinion. Finally (and noting, of course, that decisions regarding the allocation of funding rest with the leadership of the three Southeast Texas United Way agencies) we employ our findings to consider the extent to which the most critical community needs across the tri-county area align with the services offered by United Way partner agencies.

Findings

This section presents findings regarding the survey of tri-county residents, the review of agency partner web-sites, and the interviews with agency partner leaders.

Community Survey Results

Education and Youth Issues

Table 1 reports the mean score for each of the 10 Education and Youth issue items, ranked in descending order. The scores tend to be close, particularly among the top four items -- increasing high school graduation rate, character building for youth, bullying in school, and increasing elementary student education skills. Overall, though, these several items are considered more critical to the community relative to after-school programs, juvenile incarceration, or childhood obesity.

Table 1
Education and Youth Issues in Order of Critical Need

<i>Issue Item</i>	<i>Mean Score</i>
Increasing High School Graduation Rate	3.48
Character Building for Youth	3.47
Bullying in School	3.42
Increasing Elementary Student Education Skills	3.41
Teen Parenting	3.35
Affordable Child Care	3.34
Training for Youth Job Placement	3.29
Quality After-School Programs	3.24
Juvenile Incarceration Rates	3.23
Childhood Obesity	3.22

Note: Respondents scored each issue item on a scale from 4 (very critical to their community) to 1 (not at all critical to their community)

As reported in Table 2, when asked to identify the single most critical Education and Youth issue, a clearer priority emerges. Over one-in-five respondents identified character building for youth as the most critical education/youth issue confronting their community. Most other items are viewed as less critical and each was chosen by about 10% of respondents. Juvenile incarceration and after-school programs are not seen as critical community concerns.

Table 2
Most Critical Education and Youth Issue

<i>Issue Item</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Character Building for Youth	22
Increasing HS Graduation Rate	13
Bullying in School	12
Training for Youth Job Placement	10
Increasing Elementary Student Education Skills	10
Affordable Child Care	9
Childhood Obesity	8
Teen Parenting	8
Juvenile Incarceration Rates	4
Quality After-School Programs	3

N = 296 responses

Percentage may not add to 100 due to rounding

Note: Respondents were asked to identify the single most critical issue

Financial Stability Issues

Table 3 reports the mean score for each of the 12 Financial Stability issue items, ranked in descending order. The mean score across items exhibits greater variation, relative to the scores on the Education and Youth items. This indicates a clearer set of priorities regarding Financial Stability issues. Food for the needy, money management training, and home repairs

for the needy are considered greater community concerns relative to the need to provide free income tax preparation or assistance to undocumented immigrants.

The mean score across these Financial Stability issue items also tends to be lower than the mean score on the Education and Youth issue items, as well as by comparison to the Health issue items (see table 5). On neither of these other two broad issue areas does the mean score on a given item fall below 3.22. By contrast, the mean score on nine of the 12 Financial Stability issue items fall below this threshold. This suggests, with a few exceptions, that Financial Stability issues are not viewed as being as critical to the community as are Education and Youth, and Health issues.

Table 3
Financial Stability Issues in Order of Critical Need

<i>Issue Item</i>	<i>Mean Score</i>
Food for the Needy	3.32
Money Management & Budget Training	3.29
Home Repairs for the Needy	3.24
Shelter/Housing for Homeless	3.18
Long-Term Affordable Housing	3.15
Assistance for Fires/Disasters	3.05
Funds for Emergency Rent/ Mortgage/Utility Assistance	3.03
Need for Public Transportation	2.85
Predatory Lending Practices	2.81
Low Cost or Free Legal Assistance	2.69
Free Income Tax Preparation	2.42
Assistance for Undocumented Immigrants	2.04

Note: Respondents scored each issue item on a scale from 4 (very critical to their community) to 1 (not at all critical to their community)

As reported in Table 4, when asked to identify the single most critical Financial Stability issue, two-out-of-five respondents identified either money management training or food for the

needy. Around 10% of respondents chose home repairs, affordable housing, shelter for the homeless, or funds for emergency assistance. Disaster and legal assistance, assistance for undocumented immigrants, and free tax preparation are not viewed as critical community concerns.

Table 4
Most Critical Financial Stability Issue

<i>Issue Item</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Money Management Training	22
Food for the Needy	18
Home Repairs for the Needy	12
Long-Term Affordable Housing	12
Shelter/Housing for Homeless	9
Funds for Emergency Rent/ Mortgage/Utility Assistance	8
Predatory Lending Practices	7
Need for Public Transportation	6
Assistance for Fires/Disasters	4
Low Cost or Free Legal Assistance	3
Assistance for Undocumented Immigrants	2
Free Income Tax Preparation	0

N = 278 responses

Percentage may not add to 100 due to rounding

Note: Respondents were asked to identify the single most critical issue

Health Issues

Table 5 reports the mean score for each of the six Health issue items, ranked in descending order. Among these items, assistance to child abuse victims is seen as the most critical community need. This is followed by assistance to victims of domestic abuse and care for people with disabilities. There is relatively little separation between the remaining issue items.

Table 5
Health Issues in Order of Critical Need

<i>Issue Item</i>	<i>Mean Score</i>
Child Abuse Victim Assistance	3.59
Domestic Abuse Victim Assistance	3.38
Care/Rehabilitation for People with Disabilities	3.33
Affordable Care for Mental Health Issues	3.27
Assistance with Prescription Medication	3.25
Assistance for Substance Abuse Problems	3.22

Note: Respondents scored each issue item on a scale from 4 (very critical to their community) to 1 (not at all critical to their community)

As reported in Table 6, when asked to identify the single most critical Health issue, over one-in-three chose assistance to victims of child abuse. Overwhelmingly, child abuse is considered the critical community Health concern. Nearly one-in-five identified assistance with prescription medication as a critical community need. The remaining issue items were chosen by slightly over, to slightly under 10% of respondents.

Table 6
Most Critical Health Issue

<i>Issue Item</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Child Abuse Victim Assistance	37
Assistance with Prescription Medication	18
Assistance for Substance Abuse Problems	14
Affordable Care for Mental Health Issues	13
Care/Rehabilitation for People with Disabilities	10
Domestic Abuse Victim Assistance	9

N = 284 responses

Percentage may not add to 100 due to rounding

Note: Respondents were asked to identify the single most critical issue

Education & Youth, Financial Stability, and Health Issues: Summation

To sum up, in terms of broad issue areas Youth/Education and Health issues are generally considered more critical to a community than are Financial Stability issues. Character building for youth is viewed as the most critical Education and Youth issue. Money management training is seen as the most critical Financial Stability issue; providing food for the needy is also viewed as a critical Financial Stability community concern. Assistance to victims of child abuse is by far considered the most critical Health issue facing the community.

Biggest Problem Facing the Community

As a way to garner additional information about what citizens in the tri-county area consider to be important to their community (i.e., to “capture” citizen concerns not addressed by the series of issue items), we asked the following open-ended question: “What would you say is the biggest problem facing your community?” Respondents answered as they saw fit. The placement of this question, toward the end of the survey, meant that responses might be influenced by the prior survey questions (see Appendix A). However, we believed that people would not respond to the survey if it began with an open-ended question (i.e., the way to entice someone to fill out a survey is not to start off by asking them to write). While there is overlap, the responses to this question do not simply replicate the issue items in the prior questions. This indicates that the influence of prior questions on the survey was minimal.

As reported in Table 7, by-far-and-away the biggest problem facing peoples’ communities are Economic Conditions. This category is made up of three types of responses. Almost half of the comments in this category related to unemployment, and noted lack of jobs, lack of new jobs, lack of stable jobs, and general references to high unemployment. Another set of responses concerned the economy and included general references to a bad economy as well

as high prices, high fuel costs, homeless people and hunger. The third type of response concerned the need for assistance, with references to the need for affordable housing and groceries for needy families.

Table 7
Biggest Problem Facing the Community

<i>Problem</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Economic Conditions	41
Unemployment	20
Economy	11
Need for Assistance	11
Crime & Violence	23
Drugs	10
Crime	8
Abuse	4
Education & Youth	16
Education	13
Youth	3
Community Issues	14
City Conditions	6
Citizenry	5
Public Officials	2
Taxes	1
Welfare	3
Public Assistance (too much)	2
Need for Family Financial Management	1
Health	2
Immigration	1
Disasters	1

N = 249 responses

Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding; subcategory percentages may not add to category percentage due to rounding

Comments regarding Crime and Violence account for nearly one-quarter of all responses to the question. Again, there were three types of responses in this category. Almost half of the comments concerned drugs, substance abuse and prescription drug abuse. There were also

responses about crime, break-ins, robbery and lack of street safety at night. Finally, there were comments about abuse that included child abuse, and lack of assistance for abused women and children.

A sizable percentage of responses involved Education and Youth problems. Most of the comments in this category were about education. These included lack of qualified teachers, the high drop-out rate, the poor quality of education, uneducated youth, lack of parental emphasis on education, lack of sufficient school resources, as well as general comments about the public school system and public education. The comments on youth involved young people with no goals or work ethic, childhood obesity and teenage pregnancy.

A sizable percentage of responses also concerned Community Issues. Comments in this category are spread across criticisms of city conditions (such as the need for downtown restoration, bad roads and the need for property repair), the citizenry (such as lack of civility, lack of work ethic, lack of appropriate behavior, and general comments about fellow citizens), and taxes (i.e., too much taxes).

There were also a smaller number of responses related to Welfare (too much dependency on public assistance and the need for more family financial management), Health (obesity and general comments on the need for health care), Immigration (too many unemployed immigrants and general comments on illegal aliens), and Disasters (references to living in a flood zone and Hurricane Ike).

Biggest Problem Facing the Community: Discussion

More than anything else, citizens see adverse economic conditions (and the ramifications of these conditions) as the biggest problem facing their community. In particular, people point to unemployment. Citizens also see crime and violence as a big community problem. In particular,

people point to drugs and lack of safety. To a lesser though still notable extent, citizens see problems with education and the public school system, with our youth, and with various aspects of community life that include fellow citizens and public officials, infrastructure and physical community conditions. Relatively few citizens offered welfare, health, immigration or disasters as the biggest problem facing their community.

It is curious that while respondents tended to report Economic Conditions as the biggest problem facing their community, they tended to score Financial Stability issues items (see Table 3) relatively low by comparison to the items in the other broad issue areas. This apparent discrepancy might be explained by our political culture in Texas -- a way of viewing the proper role of government (or more broadly, collective efforts) and individual responsibility -- that emphasizes individual self-reliance. This will be discussed more fully in the section on Assessment.

Services of United Way Partner Agencies

Table 8 displays the various services provided by the United Way partner agencies as identified via our web site search. Services are aggregated into 11 service categories and, where appropriate, into subcategories and ranked in order based on the percentage, or frequency, in which they are provided. A list of service categories with associated United Way partner agencies is provided in Appendix F.

Most Frequently Provided Services

As displayed in Table 8, the most frequently provided services by United Way partner agencies are related to the three categories of Health/Mental/Special Needs, Educational Services, and Assistance to the Needy/Poor. Together, these three service categories account for

the majority of all services identified through our web site search.

Within the category of Health/Mental/Special Needs, activities dealing with speech and communication, physical and occupational therapy, substance abuse and mental health services are equally provided. Of the agencies that provide these services, Capland Center for Communication Disorders, Shorkey Education and Rehabilitation Center, and Huguen Center, offer speech and communication services. Shorkey Education and Rehabilitation Center and Huguen Center also provide physical and occupational therapy services. Substance abuse programs are offered at Right Choice of Orange County, Southeast Texas Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse (SETCADA), and Spindletop MHMR. Other agencies that provide general health, mental, and special needs programs are Southeast Texas Hospice, Orange County Association for Retarded Children, Spindletop MHMR, and Samaritan Counseling Center for mental illnesses.

Educational Services provided by United Way partner agencies are available in the form of preparatory services for higher education, general community education, health education, adult education, and tutoring. Within the category of Educational Services, activities centered on health are most frequent. The American Red Cross, Rape and Suicide Crisis of Southeast Texas, Southeast Texas Food Bank, Right Choice of Orange County, and SETCADA all provide health education services to the community -- from how to care for the elderly to educational efforts to increase awareness about substance abuse. Preparatory services to obtain a GED are provided by Community Care Prayer Outreach as well as Greater Orange Area Literacy Service (GOALS). GOALS also provides services in adult education that aid in improving basic math and reading skills. Health education is frequently offered. General community education aids citizens on disaster preparedness from the American Red Cross as well as education on violence from

Family Services of Southeast Texas. Communities in Schools Southeast Texas and Camp Fire USA offer children and teenagers tutoring in any subject as well as education in the pitfalls of peer pressure and the benefits of self-reliance.

Table 8
Services of United Way Partner Agencies

<i>Services</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Health/Mental/Special Needs	18
Speech/Communication	6
Physical and Occupational-Therapy	6
Substance Abuse & Mental Health	6
Educational Services	18
Health	8
Adult	3
Community	3
Tutoring	3
Assistance for the Needy/Poor	16
Food	4
Utilities	3
Clothing	3
Financial	1
Health/Medication	2
Housing/Shelter	3
Youth (Non-Health Related)	11
Personal Crisis	11
Counseling	6
Health Related	6
Disaster Assistance	7
Job Training/Employment	7
Assistance for the Elderly	7
Immigration Services	2
Community Enrichment	2
Legal Assistance	2

N = 56 (the total number of times that an activity or program was listed across all reviewed web-sites; of the 38 United Way partner agencies, we found no web-site for three; in five cases we used a local agency's national web-site; numerous United Way partners listed more than one activity)

Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding; subcategory percentages may not add to category percentage due to rounding

Within the category of Assistance to the Needy/Poor, services vary and include the

provision of food, help with paying utilities, and shelter and clothing – each of which is provided with about equal frequency. Agencies that provide assistance for those in need of food are Community Care Prayer Outreach, United Board of Missions and Southeast Texas Food Bank. Community Care Prayer Outreach and United Board of Missions also provide assistance with clothing, as well as does Friends Helping Friends. The American Red Cross, Community Care Prayer Outreach and United Board of Missions have programs to help those community members in need of assistance with utility payments. Vidor Children’s Fund and Community Care Prayer Outreach assist with the payments of health related costs and medication related costs. Boys Haven and Salvation Army have programs that provide housing or temporary shelter to those who do not have a place to live. Habitat for Humanity helps those community members in the rebuilding or repair work on their homes.

Services Provided at a Moderate Frequency

Services aimed at Youth (non-health related services) and persons experiencing Personal Crisis are provided somewhat less frequently than are Health/Mental/Special needs, Educational Services, and Assistance for the Poor/Needy.

Youth services help young children and teens to build leadership skills, increase confidence, and develop good character traits. These activities range from recreational programs to arts and crafts. Those agencies that provide these services are Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council, Boy Scouts of America-Three Rivers Council, Boys Haven, Boys and Girls Club, Camp Fire USA, and Communities in Schools-Southeast Texas. For those community members in need of Personal Crisis counseling, Catholic Charities, Family Services of Southeast Texas, and Samaritan Counseling Center provide programs to meet these needs. Health related Personal Crisis assistance such as pregnancy programs and victims of sexual assault can be found at Rape

and Suicide Crisis of Southeast Texas, Community Care Prayer Outreach and Anayat House.

Least Frequently Provided Services

Services in the categories of Disaster Assistance, Job Training/Employment, Assistance to the Elderly, as well as Immigration Services, Community Enrichment, and Legal Assistance are the least frequently provided activities and programs by United Way partner agencies. The agencies that offer Disaster Assistance programs are Catholic Charities, Port Cities Rescue Mission, American Red Cross, and Salvation Army. The programs help those in financial need, in need of clothing and food in times of a disaster. Job Training/Employment programs are offered by Friends Helping Friends, Family Services of Southeast Texas, Camp Fire USA, and Communities in Schools Southeast Texas. These services include resume writing, technical training, and job placement.

Assistance for the Elderly includes the provision of transportation, meals, fun activities, and financial assistance. Friends Helping Friends, Nutrition and Services for Seniors, American Red Cross, and Port Neches Senior Citizens Center provide these programs and activities for the elderly. Immigration Services, Community Enrichment, and Legal Assistance are offered by Catholic Charities (immigration services), YMCA (community enrichment), and Rape and Suicide Crisis of Southeast Texas (legal assistance for victims of sexual assault). (The services provided by the following partner agencies were not included in this portion of the report because web site information for these agencies was not available: Groves Senior Citizens, Mid County Senior Citizens Center, and Orange Community Action Association.)

Services of United Way Partner Agencies: Summation

To sum up, Health/Mental/Special Needs, Educational Services, along with Assistance for the Needy/Poor are the services most frequently provided by United Way partner agencies,

and account for over half of all partner agency activities. Services related to Youth, Personal Crisis, Disaster Assistance, Job Training/Employment, and Assistance to the Elderly are offered at modest levels. Immigration Services, Community Enrichment, and Legal Assistance are the least provided services by United Way partner agencies.

Interviews with United Way Partner Agency Leaders

Programs and Successful Activities

Thirteen nonprofit leaders were interviewed, 11 in person and two by phone. Each leader was asked a set of six questions. The first two were designed to give information on the activities of each agency: “Can you tell me a little about your agency - What kind of activities and program does your agency engage in?” and “What do you consider to be your agency’s most successful program or programs?” Because of the variation in service-provision across these 13 nonprofits (except for the two Red Cross agencies), we received a varied set of responses to these first questions. Quite distinct from one another, the responses were descriptive of agency activities and informative, and are provided in Appendix G.

The Needs of Agency Clients

Following these were two questions designed to provide information on the needs of agency service recipients from the perspective the service provider. These questions were “What are the particular needs of those you serve?” and “Among these needs, which are the most critical?” Responses to these two questions are aggregated into categories and displayed in tables 9 and 10.

Table 9
“What are the particular needs of those you serve?”

<i>Item</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Agency</i>
Food	22	Rape and Suicide Crisis of SETX; Southeast Texas Food Bank; Nutrition and Services for Seniors; Red Cross Beaumont; Catholic Charities of SETX
Money	17	Red Cross Orange; Catholic Charities of SETX; United Board of Missions; Southeast Texas Food Bank
Facilities/Supplies (housing, shelter, clothing)	17	Anayat House; Red Cross Beaumont; Catholic Charities of SETX; Rape and Suicide Crisis of SETX
Fellowship (e.g., prevent individuals from feeling alone)	9	Red Cross Beaumont; Port Neches Senior Center
Holistic Education (physical, medical, emotional, nutritional, educational, leadership, and social needs)	9	Boys Haven; Girl Scouts-San Jacinto Council
Volunteerism	9	Southeast Texas Food Bank; Red Cross Orange
Emotional and Family Support	9	Nutrition and Services for Seniors; BSA-Three Rivers
Referral Service	4	Rape and Suicide Crisis of SETX
Addiction Abstention	4	Right Choice of Orange

N=23 responses

Percentage may not add to 100 due to rounding

As shown in the Table 9 (above), Food is considered a particularly important client need. Money, along with Facilities/Supplies (such as housing and clothing), are also considered important client needs. These three categories account for the majority of responses to this question. Fellowship, Holistic Education (efforts to provide information to improve physical or

emotional well-being for example), Volunteerism (that people should join more), and Emotional and Family Support are also considered needs of agency clients. Finally, the need for Referral Services and Addiction Abstention services each garnered a response.

As shown in Table 10, agency leaders clearly consider Money to be the most critical client need (most of the needs listed in Table 9 cannot be accomplished without money). The need for Emotional Support is also considered to be critical. Considered less critical to those served by these agencies, though still receiving mention, are Disaster Education/Preparedness and Holistic Education services, along with Fellowship/Exercise programs and programs designed to help people get their life straightened out.

Table 10
“Among these needs, which are the most critical?”

<i>Item</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Agency</i>
Money	36	Anayat House; Catholic Charities of SETX; BSA—Three Rivers; United Board of Missions; Southeast Texas Food Bank
Emotional Support	21	Anayat House; Rape and Suicide Crisis of SETX; Nutrition and Services for Seniors
Disaster Education/Preparedness	14	Red Cross Orange; Red Cross Beaumont
Holistic Education	14	Girl Scouts-San Jacinto Council; Boys Haven
Fellowship/Exercise Programs	7	Port Neches Senior Center
Get Back to Normal Life	7	Right Choice of Orange

N=14 responses

Percentage may not add to 100 due to rounding

The Resource Needs of Agencies

The final two questions asked of agency leaders were designed to obtain information on the resources United Way partners required to continue to provide services. These questions were “How might your agency even better serve people in your community— are there still

things that can be done?” and “If your agency could have all the resources it needs, what additional resources would be on your “wish list?” Responses to these two questions are aggregated into categories and displayed in tables 11 and 12.

Regarding how their agency might even better serve the community, interviewees stated that there is always more to be done and additional needs to be met. Leaders of agencies that provide more than one type of service said they anticipate expanding their agency’s range of services to more people in need; leaders of agencies that focus on a single target audience anticipate the need for additional resources to increase provision of their single service.

Table 11
“How might your agency even better serve people in your community— are there still things that can be done?”

<i>Item</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Agency</i>
Budget	28	Boys Haven; Nutrition and Services for Seniors; Red Cross Beaumont; Right Choice of Orange
Volunteers	21	BSA—Three Rivers; Red Cross Orange; United Board of Missions
Educational Efforts (educate the public on budgeting and sexual abuse)	14	Rape and Suicide Crisis of SETX; Southeast Texas Food Bank
Communication with the Public (let the public know about available services)	7	Port Neches Senior Center
Technology Systems (to communicate with volunteers during disasters)	7	Girl Scouts-San Jacinto Council
Referral Service	7	Southeast Texas Food Bank
Facilities (a new building)	7	Anayat House
Identify Community Needs	7	Catholic Charities of SETX

N=14 responses

Percentage may not add to 100 due to rounding

As reported in Table 11 (above), more than half of agency leaders interviewed said that to better serve their community their organization needed more Money (i.e., they expressed concerns about their budget) and Volunteers. The need to increase Educational Efforts also received more than one response. Education here refers to educating the public on particular issues. One of the nonprofit leaders, for instance, mentioned that their organization anticipates increased emphasis on helping people reduce dependency on government services by providing relevant education (this particular agency offers an “Asset Building” program designed to encourage welfare recipients to save money and use it wisely). The final set of responses split equally, with one response each for the final four categories.

As the follow-up to “what remains to be done,” we asked agency leaders about the resources on their “wish list.” As reported in Table 12, greater Financial Resources (budget) top the resource “wish list,” followed by additional Volunteers. Generally, agency leaders believe that their agency could serve more of the community and improve current services with more funding and volunteer hands. These two “wish list” resources account for over half of all responses to this question. The need for Equipment, such as a fork lift and power-point projector, also garnered several responses.

Table 12

“If your agency could have all the resources it needs, what additional resources would be on your “wish list?”

<i>Item</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Agency</i>
Financial Resources	36	Catholic Charities; United Board of Missions; Anayat House; Southeast Texas Food Bank; Boy Scouts; Boy's Haven, Red Cross-Beaumont; Nutrition and Services for Seniors; Red Cross-Orange; and Right Choice
Volunteers	25	Catholic Charities; United Board of Missions; Anayat House; Southeast Texas Food Bank; Boy Scouts; Girl Scouts; Red Cross-Beaumont
Equipment (bedding items, household items, forklift, projector for PowerPoint, hoveround chairs)	15	Anayat House; Red Cross-Orange; Port Neches Senior Center
Partnership (partnership for shelters, meals, or medical supplies; partnerships with Red Cross and local churches)	7	United Board of Missions; Red Cross-Beaumont
Facilities (a new building)	7	Boy Scouts; Boys Haven
Staff	7	Boy Scouts; Rape and Suicide Crisis Center of SETX
Support group	4	Port Neches Senior Center

N=28 responses

Percentage may not add to 100 due to rounding

Interviews with United Way Partner Agency Leaders: Discussion

Uniformly, the agency leaders that we interviewed were deeply committed to the mission of their organization and to serving the community. According to these agency leaders, lack of financial resources (i.e., money) emerges as the most important need of those they serve. Lack of individual and family financial resources were undoubtedly heightened in the context in which this survey was administered – that of economic recession. Specific material needs that are

required by those whom these agencies serve are considered to include basics such as food, shelter and clothing. Again, we see the likely influence of economic recession.

However, according to these agency leaders, the needs of those they serve are not solely material. According to these leaders, a key nonmaterial consideration is the need for emotional support. Although there are always those in need of material and emotional assistance, in the context of economic recession, likely both types of needs are heightened.

When asked about agency needs, agency leaders refer to money and volunteers as the primary resources needed to continue their efforts. While there are numerous other agency needs, the need for both increased financial resources and more volunteers tends to dwarf other considerations. To some extent, though likely not in full, an increase in volunteers might compensate for a decline in financial resources. This, though, depends on a given agency's ability to management larger number of volunteers which may be a limiting factor to any trade-off between these two resources.

In an economic and social context of diminished financial resources (diminished individual contributions and reduced, when not eliminated, government grants) combined with the need for increased agency services, the organizational need for money and volunteers in particular are also likely heightened.

Assessment

This section provides a discussion of public opinion, a cautionary note about findings that rank-order issues and services, economic context and political culture as influences on public opinion, and the relationship between the most critical community needs and the present level of services provided by United Way partner agencies.

Interpretation of Findings

Public Opinion

Much of this study draws upon public opinion (among community members and agency leadership). Public opinion refers to the collected attitude of citizens on a given issue or topic. Accordingly, we have to be careful not to infer from the aggregate to the individual. Even when a majority of people share the same opinion on an issue, unless opinion is universal there will be those who hold alternate opinions.

When we ask people questions, we tap into their knowledge, understanding, opinions and attitudes on an issue. We do not directly tap into “objective” conditions. Perceptions may not always line up with objective conditions. For example, people may say that high school graduation rates are a bigger problem than obesity among children even though there might be many more obese children than high school drop outs. This train of thought might lead some to construct a dichotomy where there exists “subjective” attitudes on one side and “objective” reality on the other. This, though, is a false dichotomy. Our attitudes and opinions on issues are derived (if not in full, then in part) from our interaction with “objective” reality. Although

perhaps imperfectly, the collected opinion of people on a given issue reflects the conditions, the environment, within which people live their lives. The opinion of citizens will reflect the state of their community.

The alignment between opinions and objective conditions should be particularly strong when people are asked about their workplace situation. As professionals who have worked for years in their field, agency heads are reasonably expected to hold opinions regarding client and organizational needs that are compatible with objective conditions. The comments from agency leaders come from those who are immersed on a daily basis in the objective conditions of their workplace.

Rank-Ordering of Issues and Services

Any rank-order of issues in terms of what is viewed as important to a public via survey results is in no way to be construed as suggesting that issues ranked lower or at the bottom are unimportant. Certainly, issues such as childhood obesity and assistance for undocumented immigrants have significant implications for society even though they rank toward the bottom of their respective lists; there are significant implications for the individuals involved as well.

The information provided as the result of the review of United Way partner agency web sites is a frequency-count of agency activities. As is the case with a rank-order of public opinion on issues, in no way should it be construed that a less frequently provided service is therefore necessarily less important than a more frequently provided service. That disaster preparedness as an agency service is offered less frequently than some other services does not discount its importance to a region impacted by three hurricanes in less than a decade. We must be cautious in inferring normative implications from the findings presented in this study.

Public Opinion and the Economic Context

Whenever we employ public opinion in understanding our world (whether the mass public or that of a specific cohort) we must keep in mind that opinion can be influenced by social and economic conditions. Economic recession, for instance, is a context that will influence not only the mass public's attitudes on issues, but also influence the operation of nonprofit organizations that provide social services (and government and private-sector organizations as well). Undoubtedly, this study "picked up" influences of the current economic recession, according to some observers the steepest in our country since the Great Depression. Rising unemployment means that more people are in need of assistance. At the same time, some people are less able than otherwise to donate to charitable causes. Add to this, government budget cutbacks that result in fewer available grants (and government services). In a nutshell, there is rising public demand for nonprofit services and declining resources to provide these services.

In this sense, the present study, or any study that relies on survey data, is really a "snapshot" of opinion at a given point in time. Opinion on some issues may change over time as social or economic conditions change. By contrast, in other cases opinion may be relatively permanent. We need to be sensitive to where public opinion may be more fluid and where it may be comparatively more fixed (economic conditions change over time; our region's political culture, discussed below, is more enduring).

Public Opinion and Political Culture

In addition to social and economic context, opinion on issues can be influenced by the values and beliefs that people hold about the proper role of government and individual responsibility – i.e., political culture. Derived from the work of scholar Daniel Elazar, the

United States can be viewed as exhibiting three political cultures – Traditionalistic (where an emphasis is placed on societal hierarchy, and governance is the domain of economic and social elites), Moralistic (where an emphasis is placed on government providing for the well-being of society, and where public service is seen as a noble calling), and Individualistic (where an emphasis is placed on individual self-reliance and responsibility, and government is to be kept to a minimum). The prevalence of a given political culture is associated with region with, for instance, the Moralistic political culture historically reflected in the New England region and along the northern tier of the United States. Important for present purposes, political culture can be understood as a filter through which information is interpreted, and can therefore influence peoples’ attitudes on issues.

Citizens in Texas have been classified as reflecting the Individualistic political culture: People succeed or fail on their own merits and “government that governs best, governs least.” Strictly speaking, our survey asked citizens about services provided by nonprofits (United Way agency partners – see Appendix A). The term government, however, does not need to be understood in a limited or restrictive sense, but can be understood more broadly as institutionally organized collective action. As such, Individualistic political culture refers to a set of values and beliefs whereby citizens emphasize individual self-reliance, initiative and responsibility, and deemphasize institutionally organized collective action in solving problems.

The influence of our Individualistic political culture shows in the ranking of Financial Stability issue items (see Table 3). From the perspective of the Individualistic political culture, several of the lowest ranked items – predatory lending practices, low cost legal assistance, free tax preparation – can readily be viewed as items over which the individual should take responsibility (e.g., if one wants to borrow money at a high rate of interest, that is one’s business;

if one wants to hire a lawyer, that is one's choice). By contrast, and continuing to employ the framework of Individualistic political culture, we speculate that there is some support for assistance to those who, for reasons beyond their control, are in extreme need (i.e., in the context of economic recession, those who need the most basic requirements of life, such as food).

From the perspective of our Individualistic political culture, the second ranked Financial Stability item – money management and budget training – is perhaps the most telling. With the exception of food, there is more support for efforts to train people for financial self-responsibility than there is for any type of assistance. In fact, money management training was chosen by community survey respondents as the single more critical Financial Stability Issue (see Table 4).

As noted in the section on Findings, it is curious that though respondents reported Economic Conditions as the biggest problem facing their community (see Table 7), they scored most Financial Stability issues items (see Table 3) lower than they scored items in the other broad issue areas. Our Individualistic political culture may help explain some of this discrepancy. The objective conditions of economic recession cannot be ignored – people are out of work, people are unable to pay bills and unable to afford food and housing, etc. A bad economy can readily be considered the biggest problem facing us today. However, our political culture emphasizes individual initiative and self-reliance, and deemphasizes collective action. Accordingly, what is recognized as a problem impacting large numbers of people (recession) can also be viewed as solvable via individual action. Only under the most extreme conditions does significant support for institutionally-driven collective action emerge (when people cannot afford a basic prerequisite of life such as food, for instance),

This political culture framework can also be applied to help explain findings regarding the other two broad issue areas. Juvenile incarceration and childhood obesity may be viewed as

less critical community Youth and Education issues (see Table 1) because a proper upbringing and diet are considered family, not collective, responsibilities. Similarly, assistance for substance abuse problems may be ranked as a less critical community Health issue (see Table 5) because the decision to use illegal or harmful substances may be widely perceived as an individual responsibility, and the effort to end addiction viewed as better addressed through individual rather than collective efforts.

While not an explanation for all findings, our Individualistic political culture provides a helpful framework to understand some of what is going on. This said, it is potentially important to consider that an understanding of our political culture may provide a useful guide to predict those nonprofit programs that will have the best chance to garner public support. Programs designed to get people to assume self-responsibility and programs designed to help those who are in extreme need through no fault of their own may receive wider support compared to programs perceived as designed to spend money on people who should otherwise help themselves.

The Most Critical Community Needs in the Tri-County Area and Agency Services

As noted in the introduction to this report, it will be up to United Way leaders to determine how best to allocate resources to their partner agencies. Needless to say, the resources that the tri-county United Ways distribute to partner nonprofits is important, if not vital to these agencies. Agency leaders themselves tended to identify financial resources as their most required organizational resource (see tables 11 and 12). The findings in this report will hopefully provide decision makers useful information to make these decisions. The findings can help determine where community needs and agency services are aligned and where they are misaligned – where agency services are under or over provided-for, relative to community needs.

At this juncture, however, we can offer suggestions about the types of services that might be increased based on the most critical community needs in the tri-county area. We also, in the following discussion, offer suggestions about how to synthesize the information presented in this report.

The Most Critical Community Needs

To start, we believe it is beneficial to establish a relatively “manageable” set of community needs. Of course, the set can be expanded. However, an initial simplification of findings is often a worthwhile technique when dealing with a large volume of information. Therefore, to compare community needs with agency services we employ a decision-rule that reduces the number of community needs. We label the resulting reduced number of community needs as those that are “most critical.” We note in advance that other decision-rules can be applied and that what we employ here is one among potentially numerous ways to proceed.

To determine a set community needs that are most critical, we utilize results of the community survey that address the three broad issue areas – Youth and Education, Financial Stability, and Health. To be considered among the most critical community needs, any given issue item has to meet two criteria. An item has to rank in the top one-third of items within its category (the top three Education and Youth issue items listed in Table 1; the top 4 Financial Stability items listed in Table 3; the top 2 Health items listed in Table 5) AND the item has to be identified as the single most critical community issue by a larger percentage of respondents than would have been the case by random (exceed 10% of responses from among the 10 Education and Youth issue items, see Table 2; exceed 8% of responses from among the 12 Financial Stability issue items, see Table 4; exceed 17% of responses from among the six Health issue items, see Table 6).

These criteria yield the following set of *most critical issues facing communities in the tri-county area*:

Education & Youth Issues --

Character building

Increasing high school graduation

Bullying in school

Financial Stability Issues --

Money management training

Food, home repairs and shelter for the needy and homeless

Health Issues --

Assistance to victims of child abuse

Services that Might be Increased

We can now compare this list of the most critical community needs in the tri-county area to the frequency of services provided by United Way partner agencies (see Table 8). This comparison can be augmented by the information obtained via interviews with agency leaders as well as by responses to the open-ended community survey question about the biggest problem facing the community.

Generally, the services being provided by United Way partner agencies align fairly well with the community needs that we have identified. Services in several areas, though, could be increased to better align with what we have defined as the most critical needs.

At present, Educational Services are provided at a relatively high level (as shown in Table 8, nearly one-in-five services are categorized as Educational Services). Given that the majority of the most critical community needs in the tri-county area may be amenable to public

education efforts, the provision of these particular types of services might be increased. Agency leaders, in fact, frequently identified increased educational efforts regarding how the community might be better served in the future (see Table 11). A specific focus might be on programs that pertain to the education of individuals and families to become financially self-reliant, on programs that increase awareness of child abuse and provide services to counsel those who most likely might abuse a child, and educational efforts aimed at the prevention of bullying in school.

At present, numerous partner agencies provide services that assist individuals and families in need (as shown in Table 8, about one-in-seven services are categorized as Assistance to the Needy/Poor). These services are varied and include the provision of physical items such as food, clothing and shelter. This study's findings provide clear support for the presence of a compelling community need for essentials such as food and shelter. The need for shelter and particularly food rank among the most critical community needs in the tri-county area, as shown above. Further, citizens across the tri-county area frequently noted bad economic conditions as the biggest problem facing their community, with particular reference to the need for food and housing (see Table 7). Agency leaders also frequently identified food, as well as money, as a particular need of those they serve (see Table 9). The views of agency leaders here validate the idea that among the most critical needs across the tri-county area is the provision of physical items that are fundamental for individual and family well-being, such as food. These particular types of services might be increased.

At present, agency programs aimed at developing character among youth and providing youthful citizens with guidance and a moral compass are offered at a modest frequency (as shown in Table 8, about one-out-of-ten services are categorized as providing services for Youth). Given that character building among youth and bullying in school are two of the most critical

community needs in the tri-county area, as shown above, character-building programs aimed at youth might be given heightened attention.

The Most Critical Community Needs and Agency Services: Summation

As noted above, different criteria may be employed to identify the most critical community needs. The criteria used here seem logical and justifiable. For citizens in the tri-county area (Hardin, Jefferson and Orange counties), the most critical Education and Youth issues are character building, increasing high school graduation, and bullying in school. The most critical Financial Stability issues are money management training and providing shelter and food. The most critical Health issue is assistance to child abuse victims.

At present, United Way partner agencies provide services to address these needs, though these services may be increased. These services include specific types of educational services, material assistance to the poor, and programs that provide guidance to youth.

Appendix A

Community Survey Instrument

*The following is a list of ten **Education and Youth** issues.*

For each issue, please circle whether you think it is a Very Critical issue in your community (4), is a Somewhat Critical issue (3), is a Not So Critical issue (2), or is Not At All a Critical issue in your community (1).

	Very Critical	Somewhat Critical	Not So Critical	Not At All Critical
Affordable child care	4	3	2	1
Character building/mentoring for youth	4	3	2	1
Quality after school programs	4	3	2	1
Bullying in school	4	3	2	1
Teen parenting	4	3	2	1
Juvenile incarceration rates	4	3	2	1
Childhood obesity	4	3	2	1
Training to improve job placement opportunities for youth	4	3	2	1
Increasing the rate of high school graduation	4	3	2	1
Increasing educational skills of elementary school students	4	3	2	1

Of the 10 education and youth issues listed above, which would you rate as the most critical?

The following is a list of twelve issues related to the **Financial Stability** of families and individuals.

For each issue, please circle whether you think it is a Very Critical issue in your community (4), is a Somewhat Critical issue (3), a Not So Critical issue (2), or is Not at all a Critical issue in your community (1).

	Very Critical	Somewhat Critical	Not so Critical	Not at all Critical
Predatory lending practices (payday lending/title loans)	4	3	2	1
Funds for emergency rent/mortgage/ utility assistance	4	3	2	1
Money management and budget training to promote financial stability	4	3	2	1
Long-term affordable housing	4	3	2	1
Shelters/housing for homeless families or individuals	4	3	2	1
Food/groceries for needy families or individuals	4	3	2	1
Free income tax preparation	4	3	2	1
Home repairs for low-income, the elderly or the disabled	4	3	2	1
Assistance for fires and other disasters	4	3	2	1
Need for more public transportation	4	3	2	1
Assistance/increased assistance to undocumented immigrants	4	3	2	1
Low-cost/free legal assistance	4	3	2	1

Of the 12 financial stability issues listed above, which would you rate as the most critical?

*The following is a list of six **Health** issues.*

For each issue, please circle whether you think it is a Very Critical issue in your community (4), is a Somewhat Critical issue (3), a Not So Critical issue (2), or is Not at all a Critical issue in your community (1).

	Very Critical	Somewhat Critical	Not so Critical	Not at all Critical
Assistance to victims of domestic abuse	4	3	2	1
Assistance to victims of child abuse	4	3	2	1
Assistance for substance abuse problems	4	3	2	1
Affordable care for mental health issues	4	3	2	1
Assistance with prescription medication	4	3	2	1
Care and rehabilitation for people with disabilities	4	3	2	1

Of the 6 health issues listed above, which would you rate as the most critical?

What would you say is the biggest problem facing your community?

Finally, can you please tell a bit about yourself?

What is your age? _____

Are you:

1. Female 2. Male

Do you consider yourself:

1. White 2. Black 3. Asian 4. Hispanic 5. Other _____

Are you currently employed?

1. Yes 2. No

If you are unemployed, are you?

1. Retired 2. Student 3. Disabled 4. Homemaker 5. Other _____

In what county do you currently reside?

1. Hardin 2. Jefferson 3. Orange 4. Other _____

How many years have you lived in this county? _____

What is your level of education?

1. 8th grade or less 2. High school/GED 3. Some college/Associates degree
4. Bachelors degree 5. Masters or Ph.D.

Appendix B

Demographic Characteristics of Tri-County Population and Survey Cohort

In addition to questions on issues, the community survey asked respondents questions on county of residence, ethnicity, gender and education. Comparing the demographic characteristics of our survey cohort with compatible census information on the tri-county population allows us to assess the representativeness of our survey sample.

Our survey cohort reflects the population distribution across the tri-county area. Expressed as a percentage of the total population across Hardin, Jefferson and Orange counties, Jefferson County is clearly the largest, accounting for 64% of the tri-county population (according to the 2005-2009 American Community Survey estimates). Orange County accounts for 22% and Hardin County for 14% of the tri-county population. Among our survey cohort, 59% reported residing in Jefferson County, with 17% and 9% residing in Orange and Hardin counties respectively (14% of the survey cohort reported that they reside in some other county).

Our survey cohort generally reflects the ethnic composition of the tri-county area, though it under-represents Hispanics. Ethnically, the tri-county population is 25% Black, 2% Asian American, 66% White and 11% Hispanic (according to 2005-2009 ACS estimates). Our survey cohort is 20% Black, 2% Asian American, 66% White and 2% Hispanic. (All except Hispanic are “one-race” estimates. Hispanic is “two or more races.” Therefore percent Hispanic in the population may be somewhat inflated. While the American Community Survey does not provide Hispanic for “one race only,” it does provide an Other Race category for “one race only,” which is 5% across the three counties.)

Our survey cohort generally reflects the educational level of the tri-county area. According to 2005-2009 ACS estimates, 83% of the tri-county population age 25 and above have graduated high school; 92% of our survey cohort report completing at least high school.

Our survey cohort over-represents woman. Females make up 50% of the tri-county population v. 62% for the survey cohort.

Appendix C

United Way Partner Agencies

American Red Cross Beaumont Chapter
American Red Cross Orange County
Anayat House
Boy Scouts of American Three Rivers Council
Boys' Haven
Camp Fire USA*
Capland Center for Communication Disorders
Catholic Charities
Communities in Schools Southeast Texas, Inc.
Community Care Prayer Outreach*
Family Services of Southeast Texas
Friends Helping Friends*
Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council (Beaumont)
Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council (Houston)
Greater Orange Area Literacy Service (GOALS)*
Groves Senior Citizens**
Habitat for Humanity
Hughen Center
Mid County Senior Citizens Center**
Nutrition and Services for Seniors
Orange Community Action Association (OCAA)**
Orange County Association for Retarded Citizens, Inc. (OCARC)
Port Cities Rescue Mission
Port Neches Senior Citizens Center
Rape and suicide Crisis of Southeast Texas, Inc.
Right Choice of Orange County
Salvation Army (Port Arthur)
Salvation Army/Boys and Girls Club (Beaumont)
Salvation Army/Boys and Girls Club (Orange)
Samaritan Counseling Center
Shorkey Education and Rehabilitation Center
Southeast Texas Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse (SETCADA)
Southeast Texas Food Bank
Southeast Texas Hospice, Inc.
Spindletop MHMR
United Board of Missions
Vidor Children's Fund*
Y.M.C.A

Total agencies = 38

* Non-local website information used; ** Not reported in this research

Appendix D

United Way Partner Agency Interviewees

<i>Organization</i>	<i>Interviewee</i>	<i>Position</i>
Anayat House	Pat Coldewey	Director
Boy's Haven	Ira Wilsker	Board President
Boy Scouts of America, Three Rivers Council	Leslie Bentley	CEO
Catholic Charities of SETX	Carol Fernandez	President/CEO
Girl Scouts, San Jancinto Council	Mary Vitek	CEO
Nutrition & Services for Seniors	Elaine Shellenberger	Executive Director
Port Neches Senior Center	Sharon Lemoine	Center Coordinator
Rape & Suicide Crisis	Sarah Jones	Survivor Specialist
Red Cross, Beaumont	Jo Ann Block	Executive Director
Red Cross, Orange County	Janie Johnson	Executive Director
Right Choice, Orange County	John Neely	Director
Southeast Texas Food Bank	Carol Inzer	Agency Relations
United Board of Missions	Jack Leggett	Executive Director

Appendix E

Interview Instrument

Agency: _____
Interviewee: _____
Date: _____
Interviewer(s): _____

Thank you for agreeing to interview. We are students at Lamar University working on a class project. The project is funded by the United Ways of Beaumont, Mid & South Jefferson County, and Orange County. The United Way wants to understand the community needs and the needs of its partner agencies. Basically, the United Way wants to understand the needs of our local communities and whether these needs are being met.

I have several questions – with your permission, I'll begin.

First, can you tell me a little about your agency -- What kind of activities and program does your agency engage in?

What do you consider to be your agency's most successful program or programs?

What are the particular needs of those you serve?

Among these needs, which are the most critical? Why?

How might your agency even better serve people in your community – are there still things that can be done?

If your agency could have all the resources it needs, what additional resources would be on your "wish list?"

Appendix F

List of Services Provided by United Way Partner Agencies as Described in Agency Web Sites

Health/Mental/Special Needs: Capland Center for Communication Disorders; Shorkey Education and Rehabilitation Center; Southeast Texas Hospice; Huguen Center; OCARC; Right Choice of Orange Country; SETCADA; Spindletop MHMR; Samaritan Counseling Center

Educational Services: Community Care Prayer Outreach; GOALS; Family Services of Southeast Texas; American Red Cross; Right Choice of Orange Country; SETCADA; Southeast Texas Food Bank; Camp Fire; Communities in Schools; Rape and Suicide Crisis

Assistance for the Needy/Poor: Community Care Prayer Outreach; Friends Helping Friends; Boys Haven; Habitat for Humanity; United Board of Missions; American Red Cross; Salvation Army; Southeast Texas Food Bank; Vidor's Children's Fund

Youth (Non-Health Related): Girl Scouts of San Jacinto; Boy Scouts Three Rivers Council; Boys Haven; Boys and Girls Club; Camp Fire; Communities in Schools

Personal Crisis: Anayat House; Community Care Outreach; Rape and Suicide Crisis; Catholic Charities; Family Services of Southeast Texas; Samaritan Counseling Center

Disaster Assistance: Catholic Charities; Port Cities Rescue Mission; American Red Cross; Salvation Army

Job Training/Employment: Friends helping Friends; Family Services of Southeast Texas; Camp Fire; Communities in Schools

Assistance for the Elderly: Nutrition and Services for Seniors; American Red Cross; Port Neches Senior Center

Immigration Services: Catholic Charities

Community Enrichment: YMCA

Legal Assistance: Rape and Suicide Crisis

Appendix G

Responses of Agency Leaders Regarding their Programs and Successful Activities

Agency

Programs and activities

Anayat House

This program was the idea of a grassroots campaign by a family staying at a Christus Saint Elizabeth hospital. The walking distance is extremely close to Saint Elizabeth hospital. The family wanted other loved ones and friends of people undergoing treatment at the hospital to have a more “home away from home” experience while those individuals underwent treatment. Family rates are also available. However, the house can work out arrangements for those individuals who cannot afford the cost. The house operates very much like a bed and breakfast style lodging with fully furnished bedrooms with cable TV. A kitchen is also provided and three meals prepared by the staff are served every day. The house also boasts two bathrooms, a washer, a dryer, and a cleaning person who works at the house three times a week. Any families with loved ones in the local hospital are welcomed to stay at the house and are usually directed to the house via referral from the hospital staff.

Boys Haven

Boys Haven is a non-profit and non-sectarian institution founded in 1945 that provides a safe, healthy alternative home for boys in need.

Boy Scouts

Boy Scouts teaches values, morals, and leadership to young people in order to change their life. Cub Scouts has provided fun and challenging activities for young boys and their parents for over 100 years. Boy Scouts, also running for 100 years, develops leadership in young men. The Venturing program accommodates both males and females and has run for 20 years.

Catholic Charities

Seven Service Areas:

1. The hospitality center provides free hot meals every day in Port Arthur
2. Counseling services are available for a fee.
3. Immigration services provided involve providing attorneys and legal aid to protect the rights of low- to moderate-income immigrants.
4. Elijah’s place provides grief support for children impacted by the death of a parent or sibling.
5. Disaster assistance is provided such as hardship assistance for hurricanes and homelessness.

6. Asset Building
Case Management
involves financial
education
programs that help
down-payment,
credit cleaning,
budgeting, basic
financial
knowledge, and
IDA accounts.
Generally, each of
these is designed
to help families
become self-
sufficient and not
dependent on
social services. 7.
Parish social
ministries provide
resources for
Catholic and non-
Catholic churches
to help
communities.

Girl Scouts	Girl Scouts is the number one leadership building organization in the country and the world. All councils are separate 501C3 associations. The mission of the Girl Scouts is to build girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place.
Nutrition and Services for Seniors	Our organization provides services to seniors 60 years and older living in Jefferson and Hardin county. We provide meals to those seniors, and also deliver lunch to their houses, whenever the seniors are home bound. We also help those seniors with financial and emotional issues. We furthermore give the seniors transportation to life sustaining appointments, check on them daily and monitor the seniors with emergency response units. To make sure the seniors are well nourished we also provide them with monthly nutrition education. Besides that we have activities in our entity where the seniors come together and enjoy each others' company by playing games and having dinner together.
Port Neches Senior Center	This program provides physical and mental exercise for senior citizens, such as chair exercise, Zumba, line dances, bingo, computer games, and puzzles.
Rape and Suicide Crisis Center	This organization works with abuse survivors, goes to the hospital/trials with clients, features 6 different groups, has a 24 hour support hotline for people who just need to talk, has 3 locations in Beaumont and 1 in Orange, gives referrals to other services and resources, helps clients cope with trauma, provides prevention education on sexual abuse, helps with mental and physical recovery, and provides survivors with support, meals, and rides.
Red Cross Beaumont & Red Cross Orange	Red Cross provides community education for everything that centers on "signal events" such as a house fires or hurricane. It has disaster services in response to catastrophic situations, community hospital programs, power to care programs where by the elderly are able to get affordable power to their home, paid burial services for soldiers killed in action, and volunteer services.
Right Choice of Orange	This organization provides education, intervention, prevention, and treatment of alcohol and drug abuse. We are a residential program for adult men; we have a 40 bed facility, DARRC unity house, and a unity treatment center. There are three out-patient counseling locations. The three out-patient centers service both adult male and female. People have a safe home environment.
Southeast Texas Food Bank	They distribute donation food to partner agencies in eight counties, provide free school supplies for rural school teachers, and picks up food from retail stores.
United Board of Missions	This organization features two resale shops that sell clothes, furniture, and household goods for a small fee. Also, they offer assistance with utilities, rent, food, and clothing. They also have small meals on wheels service twice a week. They serve Groves, Nederland, Port Arthur, Beaux Garden, Port Neches, and Sabine Pass.

Right Choice of Orange

Agency

Most successful program(s)

Anayat House	The most successful aspect of the agency is the ability to provide the feeling of a home-like atmosphere while loved ones are being treated
Boys Haven	There are many success stories including high school graduation, college graduation, trade school, military, etc. There have also been numerous successful placements back in the child's original home. There is also independent living after age 18 where Boys Haven helps with education, housing, and job placement. Boys Haven does not have a set age where their care and concern ends. There is a rewards program based on a point system which add or remove privileges based on behavior, attitude, completion of homework, completion of chores, etc. Boys may get a couple hours to play video games, play sports outside, etc. or may lose privileges if warranted. HavenKeepers is a program designed to enlist periodic donation from the community. Money can be drafted directly out of a donor bank account.
Boy Scouts	Cub scouts and Boy scouts are the most successful, and they celebrated their 100 th anniversary in 2010.
Catholic Charities	Hospitality center
Girl Scouts	They serve kindergarten through twelfth grade girls and deliver all activities in an all-girl environment. All programs are age appropriate and function to build skills in education, leadership, confidence, and character. The most successful programs are those involving education such as math, science, finance, and technology (robotics program).
Nutrition and Services for Seniors	No programs are more or less successful than the others, as each program is connected with every other one, and they are all equally important.
Port Neches Senior Center	Exercise program. For example, line dances taught by volunteer teacher or Zumba taught by DVD.
Rape and Suicide Crisis Center	SART – sexual abuse recovery team. This is a team that includes hospitals, district attorney's offices, police, psychologists, and counselors who meet every 3 months to discuss how they can improve service and collaborate.
Red Cross Beaumont & Red Cross Orange	In Beaumont & Orange, disaster response is very successful. In Beaumont, poverty care supported by Entergy to pay the utility bills for the elderly is successful.

People need continuing care. When people complete the residential center program, they will attend meetings at night. The more you have someone treated, the more successful you are. You cannot have one without the other.

Southeast Texas Food Bank

United Board of Missions

The Backpack program: This Food Bank owned program serves hundreds of children in rural elementary schools with kid-friendly food for the weekend.

The Mobile Pantry program: This is a direct service to reach those who are struggling to access the food they need. Boxes of food, fresh produce, and bread are delivered for low-income family, especially for the elderly.

All programs that help with utilities, food, rent, and clothes are successful.