



Poverty Initiative

Poverty is the "extent to which an individual does without resources."

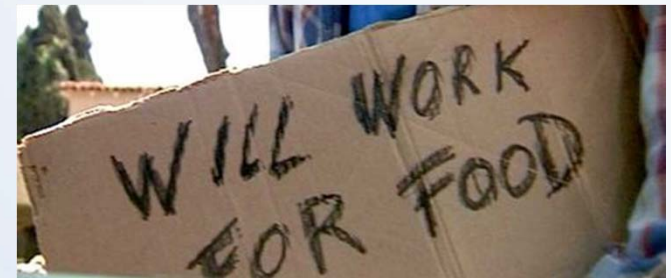
SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

November 15, 2011



Status of Poverty

- In 2010, almost 75,000 people (18% of residents) were living below the federal poverty level (FPL), a 52% increase since 2007 (Source: 2010 American Community Survey).
 - 21,000 (or 21.7 %) of the 96,000 County children are living below the FPL, a 63% increase since 2007.
 - Of the 46,283 families with related children, 16.1% or 7,452 are living below the FPL, a 35% increase since 2007.
- The cities of Lompoc, Guadalupe and Santa Maria have been hit hard by the economic recession with unemployment rates of 15%, 14.5% and 13.3%.
 - Forty-seven percent of the unemployed in the County live in these three cities.



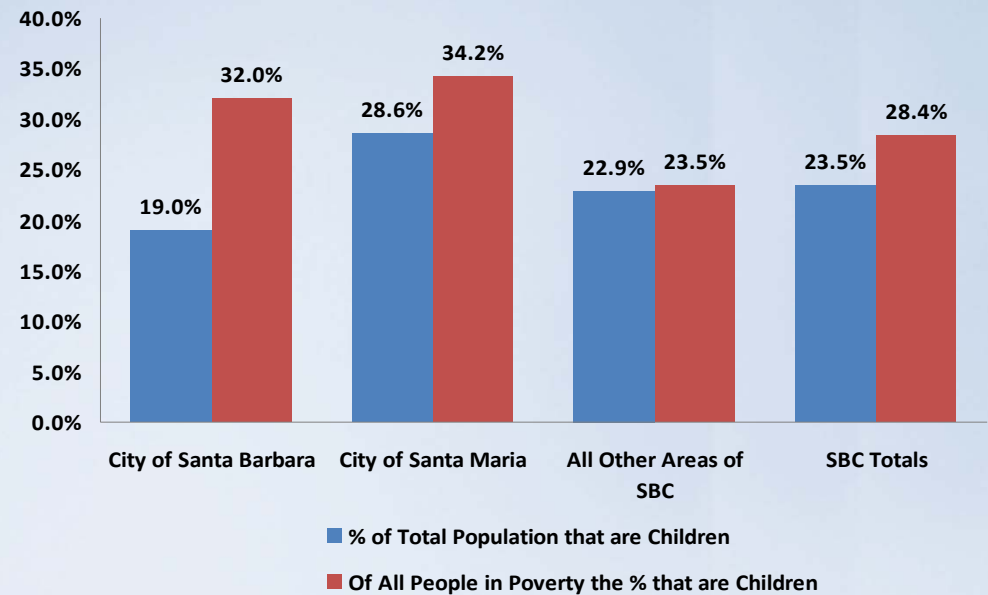


Children in Poverty

Number of Santa Barbara County Children Living in Poverty (20,963 Total Children in Poverty)

- City of Santa Maria, 7,342, 35%
- City of Santa Barbara, 5,061, 24%
- All Other Areas of Santa Barbara County, 8,560, 41%

Children Represent a Disproportionate Share of SBC Residents Living in Poverty



	Total People	Total Children	% of Total Population that are Children	Total People in Poverty	Total Children in Poverty	Of all People in Poverty % that are Children
City of Santa Barbara	87,461	16,622	19.0%	15,796	5,061	32.0%
City of Santa Maria	98,746	28,271	28.6%	21,455	7,342	34.2%
All Other Areas of SBC	223,290	51,177	22.9%	36,490	8,560	23.5%
SBC Totals	409,497	96,070	23.5%	73,741	20,963	28.4%

Source: 2010 American Community Survey



Measuring Poverty

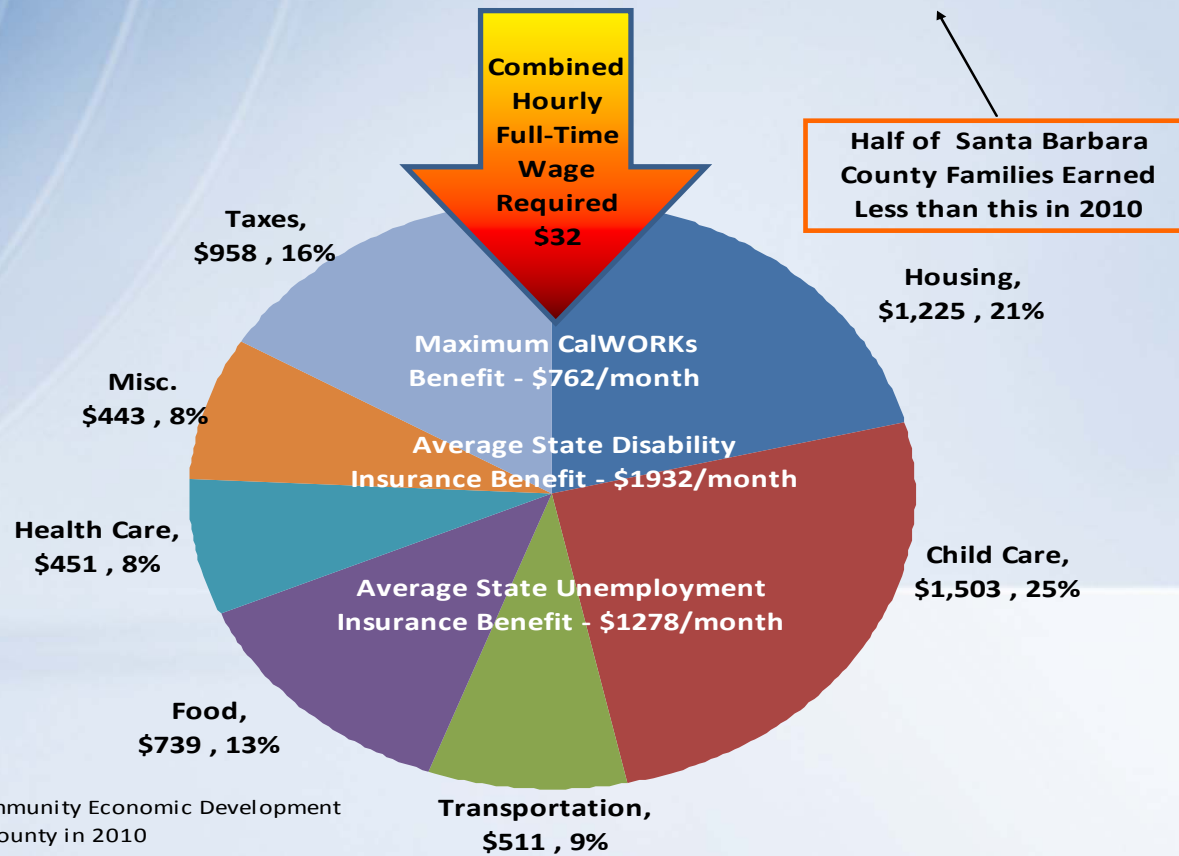
- The Federal Poverty Level (FPL) for a family of four is 22,050.
- Santa Barbara families are in crisis and more are struggling to make ends meet than the poverty rates alone suggest.
- The FPL is a national measure that does not adjust for families living in high cost counties.
- The median 2010 family income in SBC was \$66,848.
- The 2010 Self-Sufficiency Standard for Santa Barbara County for a family of four to meet “basic” needs was \$66,779 (Source: Insight Center for Community Economic Development)





Self-Sufficiency Standard “Basic” Family Budget in Santa Barbara County

**Two Parent Family With Children
(Preschooler + School Age) Requires a Monthly Income of \$5,565/month**

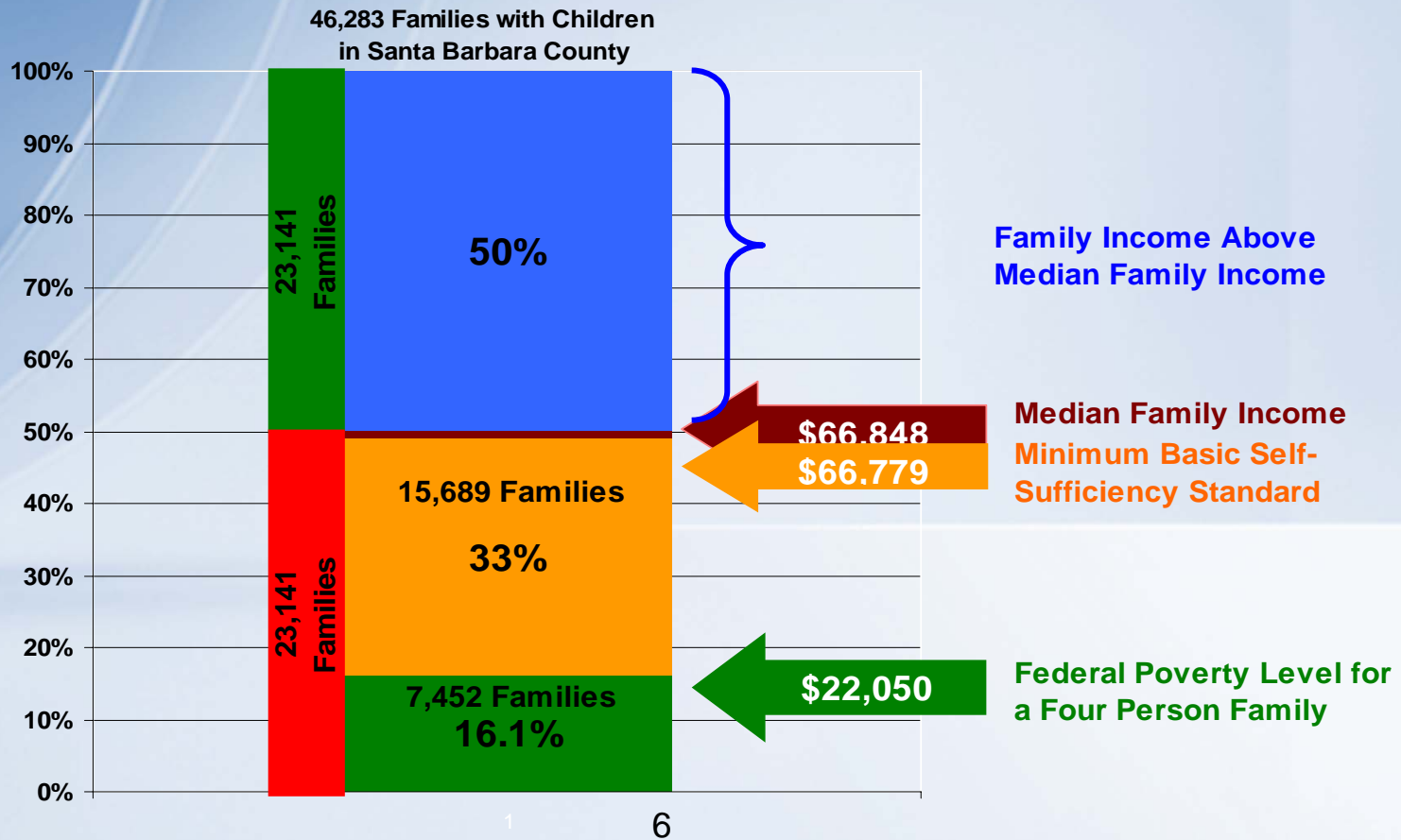


Source: Insight Center for Community Economic Development
Self-Sufficiency Standard by County in 2010



Half of the Counties' Families With Children are Struggling

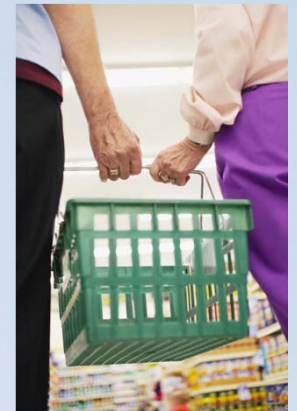
(Annual Income)





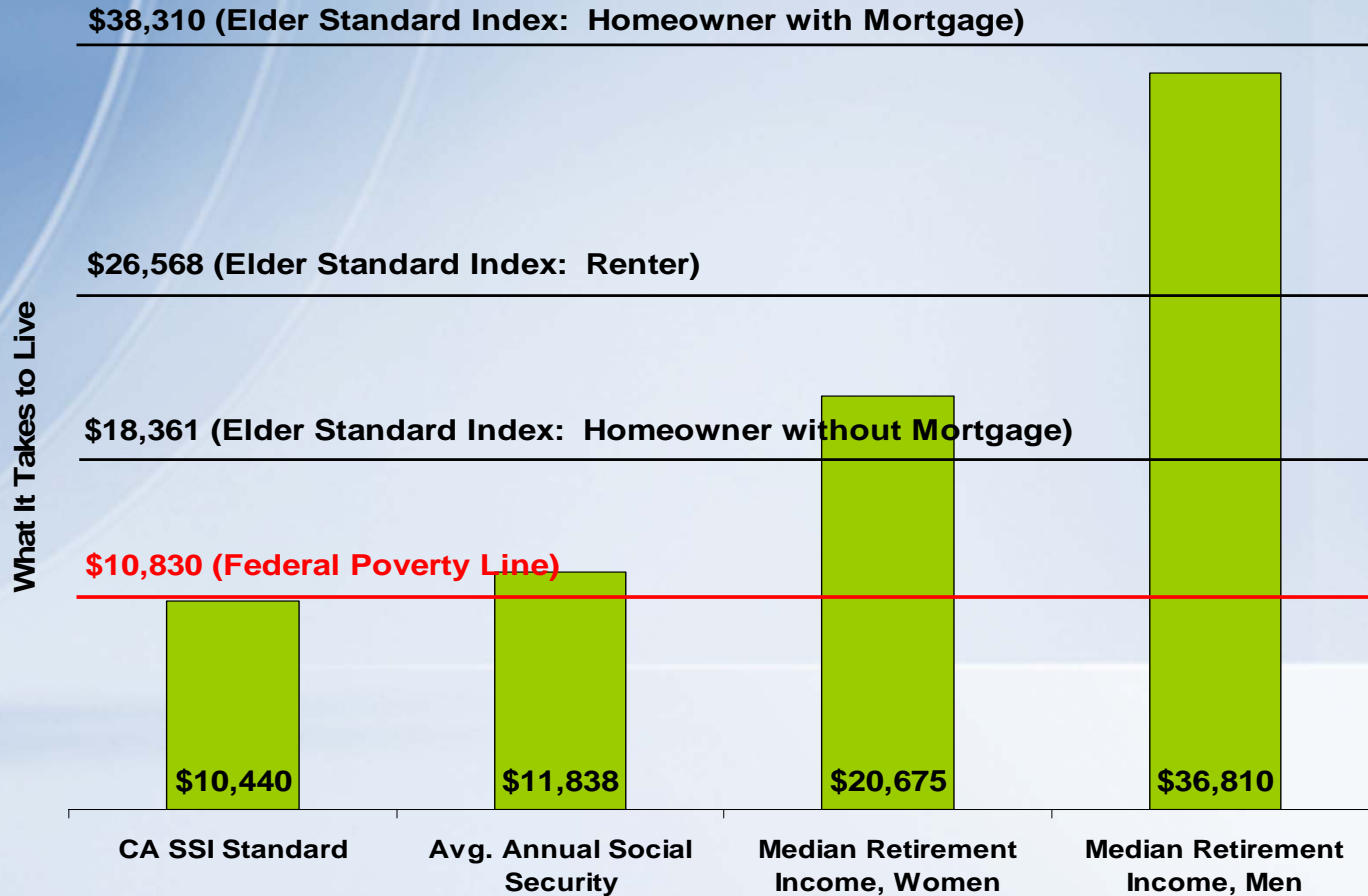
“Basic” Budget for Elderly

- According to the U.S. Census, 7.1% of seniors are living in poverty.
 - FPL for a family size of one - \$10,830
 - FPL for a family size of two – \$14,570
- Most elderly individuals are on fixed budgets and have limited opportunities to supplement their income.
 - 2009 Maximum Social Security Payment:
 - Elder Person - \$10,440
 - Elder Couple - \$18,288
- Many more elderly people are struggling than the poverty rates suggest. Seniors yearly income needed to meet basic needs is \$18,361 to \$48,402 (UCLA, 2009 Elder Index by County).
- The elderly in poverty and with very low incomes cannot augment their income by working and there are no government income assistance programs.





Elder Economic Security Standard for Santa Barbara County Individuals



*Median elder retirement income includes Social Security, pensions, and all other non-earned income for elders 65+. The Elder Standard index assumes that elders are retired.



Consequences of Poverty

- Food and nutrition insecurity
- Housing instability and increased homelessness
- Employment instability due to lack of transportation, training and child care
- Increased crime rates (misdemeanor and felony)
- Health deterioration impacting the Public Health Department and emergency rooms
- Mental health deterioration (depression)
- Family dysfunction (child and elder abuse, domestic violence)
- Decreased educational attainment (increased truancy, high school drop-outs)
- Community impacts (blight, losses in economic vitality)





Poverty Impact Assessment

- Brookings Institute Center on Children and Families projects continued growth in poverty over the next few years.
- The shrinking “safety net” equates to fewer public and non-profit resources when the demand is high and is projected to continue to remain high.
- The Poverty Impact Assessment will identify the high poverty pockets within the County, identify family and neighborhood resource needs and identify gaps based on existing “safety net” capacity.



Recommended Action

- Direct staff to support a coordinated, countywide poverty impact assessment.
- Allocate \$30,000 in County General Funds and authorize the expenditure of \$30,000 in additional Social Services funds to hire a consultant to work with County staff to complete the community assessment.
- Direct staff to return to the Board in six months with a report that assesses community needs and recommends targeted priorities to support Santa Barbara County individuals, children and families in poverty.

