

COMMUNITY CONCEPTS, INC.



HEAD START PROGRAM

Community Assessment
FRANKLIN & OXFORD COUNTIES, MAINE

MARCH 2011

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Since 1965, Community Concepts, Inc. has offered a variety of social services that promote self-sufficiency within the people of the communities of Androscoggin, Franklin, and Oxford counties of Maine. Our focus is to...“Provide programs and collaborate with others to help individuals and families meet basic needs and become and remain healthy.” Our non-profit organization, piloted by an all-volunteer Board of Directors, has become a leader in providing a number of social service programs for Maine residents.

A. Demographic make-up of Head Start eligible children and families, including their estimated number, geographic location, and racial and ethnic composition:

Community Concepts Head Start program is situated in a large, 3,776 square mile region in rural western Maine. Oxford County encompasses 2,078 square miles, an area more than twice the size of the state of Rhode Island, and Franklin County encompasses 1,698 square miles. Oxford & Franklin Counties form most of Maine's western boundary with New Hampshire, while touching Quebec, Canada to the north, Cumberland and York Counties to the south, Somerset County to the northwest, and Androscoggin & Kennebec Counties to the east.

Maine is the fifth most rural of the fifty states with only 36% of its population defined as urban (the U.S. average is 80%). With approximately 90% of land forested, Oxford & Franklin Counties are very rural non-metropolitan counties. There are no major highways in the region; U.S. Route 2 is the major arterial and is a two-lane road, running east to west from New Hampshire through Rumford to Farmington in Franklin County. State Route 26 in Oxford and State Route 4 in Franklin are the major north/south roads: Rt. 26 is a two lane road that travels from Oxford northward to Bethel and New Hampshire. Rt. 4 connects Lewiston/Auburn in Androscoggin County to Jay, Farmington and points north in Franklin County. There is no public transportation, commercial buses or passenger train services in the area. There are a few very small, private or county-operated airports with no commercial flights. Two non-profit transportation companies provide limited bus service to elderly and low-income persons requiring medical services.

Franklin County is full of beautiful landscapes, of mountains, rivers, valleys and forest. The 2nd largest ski area in New England is located in Franklin County - Sugarloaf USA. Another large ski area is located a few mountains over in Rangeley. Franklin County is a rural New England region with 18 incorporated towns - no cities - and the population density is 17 people per square mile. The largest town is Farmington, followed by Jay, then Wilton. Franklin County is one of the most beautiful, wild and least populated counties in Maine. Since the White people arrived in the 1600 and 1700's, the economy was built upon natural resources (wood) and subsistence farming; the 19th and early to mid 20th centuries brought shoe and other manufacturing. The 1970's and later brought a significant decline in manufacturing and the region continues to exist on a smaller but primary woods, service and tourist economy.

Oxford County, a land of hills, mountains and lakes, has 35 incorporated towns, and also has no cities. Oxford County is home to Sunday River Ski Resort, the largest ski area in Maine. Oxford's population density is 27 people per square mile. The three largest towns are Rumford, Paris, and Norway. Population growth has grown close to the statewide rate for several years. The Bethel region in central Oxford County (home to about 3,000 people) and Fryeburg (population also approximately 3,000), it's western most town, are the county's tourist Meccas, with Sunday River in the Bethel Region and the Oxford County fair (Maine's largest) putting Fryeburg on the tourist map. Oxford County's economic past, after subsistence farming in the 1700's, was manufacturing and woods products. Since the 1970's, Oxford County shifted to

service and tourist economies, still with the rumble of many logging trucks and a smaller woods-based industry.

Population/Racial and Ethnic Composition

Maine has a small population, 1,328,361 according to the 2010 U.S. Census. Maine is the 39th least populated state in our Nation. Franklin County saw an increase in population of 0-5% since the 2000 census and Oxford County’s population rose between 5-15%.

State Population by Race:

Population	Percent of population	Change 2000-2010
White	95.2	+ 2.3%
Black	1.2	+132.4%
American Indian	0.8	+20.7%
Asian	1.0	+49.0%
Other	0.3	+46.4%
Two or more races	1.8	+65.6%
Population by Hispanic or Latino origin	Percent of population	Change 2000-2010
Hispanic or Latino	1.3	+80.9%
Not Hispanic or Latino	98.7	+3.6%

According to the U.S. Census, 5.1% of Oxford County’s population and 4.7% of Franklin County’s population are under age 5. The 2011 Kids Count reported a discouraging 22% of Oxford/Franklin county children under age 18 living in poverty, slightly higher than Maine’s current rate of 17.5%. Statistics have consistently shown the poverty rate for children under age 5 to be significantly higher than the age 0-18 average, and based on this historical fact, we estimate the current poverty rate for Head Start age children to be at least 25% in the two counties.

Within the White population are 2nd and 3rd generation Finnish, Swedish and French-Canadian populations. Virtually everyone in Oxford & Franklin County speaks the English language as his or her first language. In Franklin County, for example, 95.1% of the population speaks only English. Of the 4.9% who speak a language other than English, 21% state they speak English less than “very well.” The Head Start staff members in each county are representative of the population.



Head Start Enrollment

For the '10-'11 program year, Community Concepts Head Start Program receives state and federal funds for a total enrollment of 511 children and families, of which 62% (319) are in Oxford County, and 38% (192) are in Franklin County. There are 322 children and families (63% of total) enrolled in preschool Head Start and 189 children and families enrolled in Early Head Start. This program year, 15 of our Early Head Start families were pregnant women. We have a current waitlist of 324 individuals waiting for services.

Head Start Potential Population

According to the 2011 Maine Kids Count, there are 4,452 children aged 5 and under and we estimate there were 709 pregnant women. Up to 10% of the children may be over income. Up to 35% of the remaining children may come from families up to the 130% of the poverty guidelines. All TANF families are eligible regardless of their income level. Factoring in this eligibility criteria: In 2009 approximately 21% of Oxford/Franklin children under age 18 live in families with income under the poverty level, and based on historical data we estimate that a minimum of 25% of Oxford/Franklin children under age 5 live in families with income under 100% of poverty.

4,452 children x 25 % =	1,113
709 pregnant women x 25 % =	177
10% of enrollment may be over income=	51
35% of remaining children may be 130% of poverty =	<u>160</u>
Total potential universe in Oxford and Franklin	1,501

PERCENT OF ELIGIBLE CHILDREN RECEIVING CCI HEAD START SERVICES		
NUMBER OF INCOME ELIGIBLE CHILDREN	NUMBER OF HEAD START SLOTS	PERCENT IN HEAD START
1,501	511	34%

The State average in 2009 for eligible children receiving Head Start services is 30%. As evidenced by the variety of options we provide, we have historically made tremendous efforts to locate Head Start-eligible children and tailor programs to meet those families' needs.



The following chart indicates the Head Start and Early Head Start enrollment in Maine for 2010-2011:
 (Numbers in parentheses are the difference from last year's totals)

Grantee	Federal HS	State HS	Federal EHS	State EHS	ARRA HS	ARRA EHS	Totals
Androscoggin Head Start & Child Care	236	6	40	18	0	0	300 (-30)
Aroostock County Community Action	256	0	0	14	0	58	328
Child & Family Opportunities	184	40	24	0	0	0	248
Community Concepts	304	18	189	0	0	0	511 (-15)
Kennebec Valley Community Action	213	26	64	13	44	0	360 (+17)
Midcoast Maine Community Action	191	32	0	0	0	60	283
Penquis Community Action	439	27	36	6	0	0	508 (-12)
PROP Community Action	266	18	48	30	0	0	362
Southern Kennebec Child Development	224	8	70	10	20	0	332
Waldo County Community Action	136	15	0	0	0	50	201 (-31)
York County Community Action	252	17	32	10	0	0	311 (-17)
TOTALS	2701 (-74)	207 (-46)	503 (+16)	101 (-5)	64 (+17)	168	3744 (-92)

The following chart represents the distribution of slots and program options we are providing for the '10-'11 program year.

OXFORD COUNTY								
CENTER	Head Start					Early Head Start		Child Care
	Center-based	Combo 1	Combo 2	Combo 3	Home-based	Center-based	Home-based	
Oxford Pre-K				18				
Norway	18							X
Riley (S. Paris)						8	61	X
Paris Pre-K			11	18				
W. Bethel	18						16	
Fryeburg	18						13	
Chisholm (Rumford)	54	10					27	X
Rowe Pre-K		10		19				
TOTAL OXFORD	108	20	11	55	0	8	117	
	TOTAL HS= 194					TOTAL EHS= 125		
	GRAND TOTAL OXFORD COUNTY= 319							
FRANKLIN COUNTY								
CENTER	Head Start					Early Head Start		Child Care
	Center-based	Combo 1	Combo 2	Combo 3	Home-based	Center-based	Home-based	
Wilton	19					8		X
Farmington	19			12			23	X
Jay	18						11	
Jay Pre-K	19							
Mt. Abram			12				10	
New Sharon Pre-K				12				
HomeStart	12					12		X
Center Partnerships	5							X
TOTAL FRANKLIN	92		12	24	0	20	44	
	TOTAL HS= 128					TOTAL EHS= 64		
	GRAND TOTAL FRANKLIN COUNTY= 192							
PROGRAM TOTAL 511 = 322 HS + 189 EHS								

B. Other child development and childcare programs in Oxford & Franklin Counties that are serving Head Start eligible children, including publicly funded State and local preschool programs, and the approximate number served by each.

There are very few resources for low-income children in Oxford and Franklin Counties other than the Head Start program. The Head Start program is the only comprehensive child development program for low income children in Oxford and Franklin Counties.

Community Concepts operates 4 child care centers that provide Head Start and child care services to low income children by offering subsidized rates - our Norway Children's Center, Riley Children's Center, Farmington Child Care Center and Wilton Child Care Center. The centers utilize the Head Start model and provide "wrap-around" services for full day, full year child care. Our nonprofit childcare centers provide subsidized childcare for approximately 60 children. The Rumford Center offers a full day/full year Head Start classroom for working parents, supported by state Special Revenue (Tobacco) funding. Eighteen children receive this Head Start option. Community Concepts also provides HomeStart services, combining full time/full year Head Start and family-based child care for 24 children. 5 Head Start children have the option of full day/full year care through three center based Head Start/child care partnerships.

As more and more public schools around the state are implementing Pre-K programs for four year olds, Community Concepts Head Start program is forging new partnerships. In South Paris, 18 Head Start children are part of a Pre-K partnership with two classrooms in the elementary school building close to the Riley Center. We also collaborate with the Jay School Department to offer two Pre-K classrooms at the elementary school serving 18 Head Start children and 18 community slots. This year we expanded our Pre-K options to include Oxford, Guy Rowe (Norway) and Cape Cod Hill (New Sharon) Elementary Schools.

The non-profit Child Health Center of Norway, which recently came under the umbrella of Community Concepts, operates a low-cost preschool program for children with developmental challenges in Norway. In Franklin County, a developmental preschool program operates at the CDS site. Here are the data on the number of child care facilities and total licensed capacity in Franklin & Oxford County in February 2011:

Type	Facilities	Licensed Capacity	County
Child Care Center	12	305	Franklin
Family Child Care	44	405	Franklin
Child Care Center	21	778	Oxford
Family Child Care	38	409	Oxford
Total	115	1,897	

Community Concepts' Western Maine Child Care Resource Center estimates that only 13% of the total child care slots have subsidy, so that a family can pay child care costs according to its income. Without that subsidy a family with an infant can pay on average \$9,057 for full-time center care. That's more than a semester of college at UMF which costs on average \$8,032 for a Maine resident!

The Parent Partners program operated by Community Concepts provides home visits with child development and parenting education to 99 first time parents. There are no income eligibility guidelines, yet lower income families would have a preference. This program has helped to provide services to families on the Early Head Start waiting list. The Franklin County Children's Task Force offers the Healthy Families home visitor program to families in Franklin County. As state-funded programs, both Parent Partners and Healthy Families are in jeopardy of being cut this year.



C. The estimated number of children with disabilities five years old and younger in Oxford & Franklin County, including types of disabilities and relevant services and resources provided to these children, and the approximate number served by each.

Community Concepts works with two Child Development Services entities – one based in Oxford County and the second based in Franklin County. 32% of the parents of Maine children age 0-5 have at least one concern about their child’s development, learning, or behavior. Furthermore, 7.1 % of Maine children ages 0-17 have an emotional, developmental, or behavior problem for which they receive treatment or counseling.

Of the 205 children who are currently with CDS in Oxford County, 78 children are under age 3 and 127 children are 3 – 5 year olds. As of January 2011, Oxford County Head Start has 32 PHS and 10 EHS children diagnosed with a disability.

CDS-Oxford County:

Categories	Birth – 2 years	3 - 5 years
Autism	1	10
Emotional/Behavioral Disorder		
Health Impairment		3
Hearing Impairment including deafness		1
Learning Disability		
Mental Retardation		
Multiple Disabilities		2
Developmental Delay	72	23
Orthopedic Impairment		
Speech and Language Delay	5	88
Traumatic Brain Injury		
Visual Impairment including Blindness		1
TOTALS	78	127

To date there are 79 children age 0-5 identified with disabilities by the Franklin County Child Development Services. Of these children, 22 are under the age of 3 and 57 children are 3-5 year olds. As of February 2011 Franklin County Head Start has 17 PHS and 5 EHS children diagnosed with a disability.

CDS-Franklin County:

Categories	Birth-2 years	3-5 years
Autism		5
Behavioral Impairment		
Deaf/Blind		
Deafness		
Developmental Delay	22	1
Emotional Disturbance		
Hearing Impairment		1
Mental Retardation		
Multiple Disabilities		4
Orthopedic Impairment		
Other Health Impairments		1
Speech/Language Impairment		45
Specific Learning Disability		
Traumatic Brain Injury		
Visual Impairment/Blindness		
TOTAL	22	57

Community Concepts Head Start Children with Disabilities, 2010

0 - 3 POPULATION:
31 children with an IFSP

All children under the age of 3 with an IFSP are listed as being developmentally delayed, regardless of the actual treatment/therapy the child may be receiving.

3 - 5 POPULATION:
**62 children with IFSP/
 IEP; some with multiple
 diagnosis**

40 Speech/language impaired	7 Developmental delays
0 Learning Disabilities	13 Multiple delays
1 Autism	1 Health Impairment

Typically there are approximately 100 children with diagnosed disabilities; this year at mid-term there are 63 or 12% of our total enrollment of 511. Franklin County ranked fourth and Oxford County ranked ninth in the state as having the lowest number of students with disabilities enrolled in public schools.

Profile of Head Start Families 2010-2011 Program Year

This program year, 516 families have participated in Head Start. Household composition is as follows:

- 53.5% two parent family
- 37.4% single parent family; mom head of household
- 3.8% single parent family, mom, living with other partner
- 2.9% single parent family, dad head of household
- 1.0% single parent family, dad, living with partner
- 1.1% foster family
- .3% other relatives

This year, 95.8% of our Head Start children are White, .3% Asian, 3.7% Bi-Racial, 0.1% African American, and 1% American Indian. This mirrors the race demographic in the two counties. The majority of our enrolled children speak English; however, we have 2 EHS children and 1 PHS child whose native language is Spanish, 1 PHS who speak Chinese, 1 PHS child who speaks Indian, and 1 PHS child who uses sign language as their primary language. This year, 51% of the children are male and 49% are female. 87.4% of the children have MaineCare health insurance and 10.3% have private insurance. This year 2.3% of the children entered the program with no health insurance.

Head Start and Early Head Start Head of Household Education Level:

	Head Start	Early Head Start
Less than high school graduate	8%	10%
High School Diploma	41.9%	46.6%
Attended some college or Associates Degree	42.8%	35.4%
Bachelor's Degree or higher	7.3%	8%

Head Start staff connected families with many different community services. This year Early Head Start and Preschool Head Start had the same top five requests for service education information as evidenced in the following chart:

Top 5 services received as a result of Head Start/ Early Head Start –

- 100% received parenting education
- 100% received health education, including prenatal
- 41% received housing assistance
- 26% received mental health services
- 23% received adult education assistance



Poverty plays a key role in children’s well-being. According to the 2011 Kids Count, children who live in poverty, especially those who live in poverty for long periods of time are at an increased risk for poor health, cognitive, social and educational outcomes. They are more likely to have physical, behavioral and emotional healthy problems; to have difficulty in school; to become teen parents; and, as adults, to earn less. This year 36% of our enrolled families receive TANF benefits.

2009 Children, ages 0-17, living in poverty:

County	Poverty Rate
Androscoggin	22.7%
Aroostook	23.4%
Cumberland	11.9%
Franklin	21.5%
Hancock	18.3%
Kennebec	16.6%
Knox	19.9%
Lincoln	19.2%
Oxford	21.2%
Penobscot	19.5%
Piscataquis	24.8%
Sagadahoc	14.8%
Somerset	27.1%
Waldo	20.9%
Washington	29.0%
York	12.3%
<i>Data Source: 2011 Kids Count</i>	



Franklin

KEY:

- * Rate per 1,000
- ** Rate per 10,000
- *** Rate per 100,000
- † Data has been suppressed to preserve confidentiality
- n/a Not available or not applicable

	COUNTY			STATE		
	Number	Current Rate	Previous Rate	Number	Current Rate	Previous Rate
DEMOGRAPHICS						
Total Population - 2007 estimate	29,927	100%	100%	1,317,207	100%	100%
Under 5 years old	1,392	4.7%	4.7%	70,744	5.4%	5.4%
5-17 years old	4,554	15.2%	15.7%	208,723	15.8%	16.2%
18-64 years old	19,688	65.8%	65.6%	842,754	64.0%	63.8%
65 years and over	4,293	14.3%	14.0%	194,986	14.8%	14.6%
PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH						
Children participating in MaineCare, SFY 2010	3,533	54.9%	52.5%	137,998	46.5%	44.6%
Children ages 0-5 in MaineCare	1,198	70.6%	69.6%	47,204	55.5%	53.5%
Children ages 6-18 in MaineCare	2,335	49.3%	46.3%	90,794	42.9%	41.1%
Live births for which prenatal care began in the first trimester, 2008	256	89.8%	88.7%	11,813	86.8%	87.1%
Low birth-weight infants, 2008	17	6.0%	8.7%	910	6.7%	6.3%
Pre-term births, 2008	25	8.8%	9.0%	1,179	8.7%	9.2%
Infant mortality, 2004-2008 annual avg.*	2	5.6	5.7	86	6.1	6.0
Child deaths (ages 1-14), 2003-2007 annual avg.**	†	†	†	39	1.9	1.9
Teen deaths (ages 15-19), 2003-2007 annual avg.**	†	†	†	55	6.0	6.0
Children in Department of Health and Human Services care or custody, Dec. 2010*	10	1.7	8.0	1,467	5.2	5.8
SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STATUS						
Children under 18 in poverty, 2009	1,207	21.5%	22.5%	46,350	17.5%	16.5%
Children receiving TANF, December 2010	663	11.2%	10.6%	24,916	8.9%	8.5%
Children receiving SNAP benefits, December 2010	1,948	32.8%	31.4%	74,618	26.7%	25.1%
School children receiving subsidized school lunch, 2010-11	2,299	55.6%	53.1%	83,676	44.2%	43.1%
Estimated livable wage for a single-parent family of 3, 2008	n/a	\$14.81	\$15.28	n/a	\$20.00	\$19.35
Median household income, 2009	n/a	\$39,827	\$36,405	n/a	\$45,708	\$46,419
Unemployment, 2010	1,383	9.7%	10.7%	55,025	7.9%	8.2%
Domestic assaults reported to police, 2009***	116	387.6	469.0	5,287	401.4	403.9
Arrests of children, 2009*	138	45.7	47.0	6,788	50.1	49.3
Arrests of children for crimes against persons, 2009**	1	0.3	1.0	103	0.8	0.9
Teen pregnancies (ages 10-17), 2007*	16	10.7	6.5	445	6.7	6.8
EDUCATION AND LEARNING						
Students in public Pre-K, 2009-10	68	25.3%	10.3%	3,661	25.3%	19.6%
Students with disabilities, 2009-10	610	14.5%	15.1%	32,811	17.1%	17.1%
Public high school dropouts, 2008-09	46	3.1%	3.0%	2,162	3.4%	4.3%
Public high school graduates, Class of 2009	307	84.3%	83.0%	12,419	79.8%	82.9%



Oxford

KEY:

- * Rate per 1,000
- ** Rate per 10,000
- *** Rate per 100,000
- † Data has been suppressed to preserve confidentiality
- n/a Not available or not applicable

	COUNTY			STATE		
	Number	Current Rate	Previous Rate	Number	Current Rate	Previous Rate
DEMOGRAPHICS						
Total Population - 2007 estimate	56,734	100%	100%	1,317,207	100%	100%
Under 5 years old	2,904	5.1%	5.1%	70,744	5.4%	5.4%
5-17 years old	8,867	15.6%	16.1%	208,723	15.8%	16.2%
18-64 years old	35,958	63.4%	63.1%	842,754	64.0%	63.8%
65 years and over	9,005	15.9%	15.7%	194,986	14.8%	14.6%
PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH						
Children participating in MaineCare, SFY 2010	7,528	60.9%	58.6%	137,998	46.5%	44.6%
Children ages 0-5 in MaineCare	2,426	69.3%	68.3%	47,204	55.5%	53.5%
Children ages 6-18 in MaineCare	5,102	57.6%	54.8%	90,794	42.9%	41.1%
Live births for which prenatal care began in the first trimester, 2008	453	83.7%	86.1%	11,813	86.8%	87.1%
Low birth-weight infants, 2008	46	8.5%	5.6%	910	6.7%	6.3%
Pre-term births, 2008	40	7.4%	9.3%	1,179	8.7%	9.2%
Infant mortality, 2004-2008 annual avg.*	4	7.0	7.3	86	6.1	6.0
Child deaths (ages 1-14), 2003-2007 annual avg.**	2	2.4	2.9	39	1.9	1.9
Teen deaths (ages 15-19), 2003-2007 annual avg.**	3	9.0	8.3	55	6.0	6.0
Children in Department of Health and Human Services care or custody, Dec. 2010*	8	0.7	3.9	1,467	5.2	5.8
SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STATUS						
Children under 18 in poverty, 2009	2,446	21.2%	20.8%	46,350	17.5%	16.5%
Children receiving TANF, December 2010	1,429	12.1%	12.1%	24,916	8.9%	8.5%
Children receiving SNAP benefits, December 2010	4,341	36.9%	36.8%	74,618	26.7%	25.1%
School children receiving subsidized school lunch, 2010-11	5,770	58.6%	56.9%	83,676	44.2%	43.1%
Estimated livable wage for a single-parent family of 3, 2008	n/a	\$15.35	\$18.29	n/a	\$20.00	\$19.35
Median household income, 2009	n/a	\$39,437	\$41,526	n/a	\$45,708	\$46,419
Unemployment, 2010	2,862	10.2%	11.1%	55,025	7.9%	8.2%
Domestic assaults reported to police, 2009***	239	421.3	451.6	5,287	401.4	403.9
Arrests of children, 2009*	164	28.0	26.8	6,788	50.1	49.3
Arrests of children for crimes against persons, 2009*	1	0.2	0.5	103	0.8	0.9
Teen pregnancies (ages 10-17), 2007*	16	5.5	6.6	445	6.7	6.8
EDUCATION AND LEARNING						
Students in public Pre-K, 2009-10	139	23.5%	15.3%	3,661	25.3%	19.6%
Students with disabilities, 2009-10	1,593	18.5%	10.1%	32,811	17.1%	17.1%
Public high school dropouts, 2008-09	97	2.9%	5.3%	2,162	3.4%	4.3%
Public high school graduates, Class of 2009	615	74.9%	82.6%	12,419	79.8%	82.9%

Economy/Unemployment

Maine's rural employers are comprised of very small businesses and many jobs do not provide medical insurance or other benefits. Maine's MaineCare program has allowed many low income children to receive Medicaid health insurance. Most of our working parents, however, still have no health insurance. Although almost 98% of this year's Oxford & Franklin County Head Start families have medical insurance for their children, the overwhelming type is Mainecare at 87%.

Staff members continue to see an increase in the number of families with multiple stresses. Included among the major problems families face is economic stress. For some families this is exacerbated by transportation problems, nontraditional work hours, domestic violence, substance use, and child abuse and neglect. As family stresses increase, not surprisingly, the children are affected as well as the adults.

The high cost of heating fuel is a significant issue in rural Maine. Homes are not serviced by natural gas, so families typically choose between fuel oil and wood. The price of heating oil was lower than last year, but families continue to struggle with the cost of heating. Households relying on heating oil are expected to spend approximately \$2,000 this winter to heat their homes. Maine's 211 statewide resource telephone warm line identified calls for Franklin and Oxford residents inquiring about fuel as the top call over the past three months. Other top calls were inquiries for mental health and housing/utilities.

Franklin and Oxford County's January 2011 (non-seasonably adjusted) unemployment rates of 9.5% Franklin and 10.3% Oxford was higher than the State average of 8.4%. These rates are actually a little lower than last year at this time.

Oxford & Franklin Counties' economies were historically dominated by traditional manufacturing industries including wood products, paper, shoes, leather, and metal working. Since the 1980's, there has been a dramatic shift from a manufacturing economy to a service economy. Franklin County was one of several Maine counties particularly devastated by the loss of shoe and other manufacturing in the past 20 years. The tourist industry is now prominent in both counties, led by two of Maine's and New England's largest ski areas, Sunday River in Bethel, and Sugarloaf USA in Carrabassett Valley.

Both counties have large concentrations of small businesses. In Maine, nine of out ten businesses employ less than 20 people. Employee benefit packages tend to be minimal, and there are virtually no unionized workers, with the exception of the paper industry. Wages are typically 20% below the state average per capita, which is itself usually 20% below the national per capita wage.

The Rumford area of Oxford County continues to be economically-tied to a large paper mill, the major corporate employer in northern Oxford County. The Jay area in southern Franklin County suffered the closing of one of its paper mills. There exists an almost 2-tier economy in the Rumford & Jay areas, between the paper mill employees and the people without a paper-company job. The paper industry is labor-organized.

In the Bethel area, Sunday River Ski Area is the largest employer as is Sugarloaf USA in the Kingfield/Carrabassett Valley area. These seasonal jobs are almost always part-time and without health insurance. However they do provide work for strong, able-bodied workers who are willing to work many hours during the ski season.

The Oxford Hills regional center is Oxford County's county seat, and also has the largest health care system in the county, Western Maine Health, and is the health care center for much of southern and central Oxford County.

Farmington is the largest town in Franklin County, and plays the role of regional center and county seat, holding also Franklin County's health care system, Franklin Community Health Network. This is the county's main shopping and health care region. Farmington also is the home of the only University system in the two counties, the University of Maine at Farmington. This is a traditional four year college with a historic reputation as the most exclusive University system college, and is the University system's major teaching college. The town of Wilton connects Jay to Farmington and has a farming and manufacturing tradition that has been drastically altered in the past 20 years.

In the Fryeburg areas of Oxford County, jobs are concentrated in neighboring New Hampshire, where North Conway is a shopping and recreation Mecca. The Rangeley region of Franklin, often called "God's Country" because of its unsurpassed beauty, is a traditional woods economy with seasonal recreation catering to hunters, fisherman and other outdoor recreation including a ski industry. Again, seasonal part-time jobs with no health insurance are the rule.

Our economy's dependence is on jobs that are part-time and without health insurance, and heavily impacts Head Start-eligible parents. Businesses like Wal Mart and call centers offer jobs for hard working people; however the jobs are often seasonal, part time, with little or no health insurance. The estimated livable wage for a single-parent family of 3 living in Franklin County is \$14.81. For Oxford County the estimated livable wage for the same family is \$15.35. There are very few jobs paying that scale.

Alcohol and other Substance Abuse

Alcohol is by far the most common abused substance, according to statistics by the Maine Office of Substance Abuse, followed by marijuana and non-prescribed prescription drugs. Both counties are currently in the process of developing strategic plans to prevent further alcohol and drug abuse. Nonprescribed prescription drug abuse is a rapidly growing problem particularly affecting young women under age 30; many women in this age group have very young children. There are only a handful of substance abuse treatment programs in our region. Community Concepts is a member of all Healthy Maine Partnerships in the region, including Healthy Oxford Hills, River Valley Healthy Communities Coalition, and the Franklin County Healthy Community Coalition.

Data obtained from Healthy Oxford Hills shows the percentage of Mainers who smoke is down this year to 17 % (the national average is 18.4 %) however, more than 79,000 of Maine children are exposed to the effects of second hand smoke. Smoking rates for pregnant women is 1 in 3 low income (with Mainecare) and 1 in 20 higher income (without Mainecare). 45% of adults aged 18-64 who receive Mainecare smoke in Maine.

Domestic Violence

The regional domestic violence provider, The Abused Women's Advocacy Program, continues to operate 2 offices in Oxford County, one office in Franklin County, and a shelter in neighboring Androscoggin County. A Domestic Violence Task Force has started in Oxford County, of which Community Concepts is a founding member, mirroring its Franklin County counterpart, to better coordinate domestic violence services.

Child Abuse

Child abuse and neglect is a serious concern throughout Maine and more child protective reports are filed for families with limited incomes and other resources. Child Protective Services (CPS) responded to approximately 65% of appropriate reports, and Family Support/Alternative Response Programs (of which Community Concepts operates one in Franklin, Oxford and Androscoggin counties) serviced 35% of appropriate referrals and follow up services after CPS assessment. In fiscal year ending 9/10, 185 child abuse

cases in Oxford County and 91 child abuse cases in Franklin County were assigned to Community Concepts' Family Support Program. That's an increase of 57 cases from the year before. The Family Support program works closely with our Head Start program, offering extensive support to program families and clinical-level technical assistance to Head Start staff in addressing the child abuse and neglect situations of program families. Head Start has agreements with both Child Protective and Family Support in order to collaboratively address the needs of families with child abuse and neglect issues. The top three family stress factors identified during assessment were; parent mental or physical health problems, alcohol/drug misuse by parent or caretaker, and family violence.

Maine's child welfare system has worked hard to reduce the number of children in out-of-home care. Between December 2002 and December 2010, Maine saw a 45.8% decrease in the rate of children in DHHS care or custody, dropping from a rate of 9.6 per 1,000 children ages 0-17 in 2002 to 5.2 in 2010. According to Maine Kids Count 2011, in December of 2010 Oxford and Franklin Counties average 1.2 % of children ages 0-17 in DHHS custody, down from 5.9% the previous year.

Housing

Low-income Oxford & Franklin County citizens have chronically faced the housing affordability problem. Many families struggle with paying the mortgage, maintaining the home, and the challenges of rural isolation. Many Head Start homeowners own mobile homes, and pay lot rents. According to a Maine State Housing Authority report, rents have increased two and half times faster than rental household incomes.

The Maine Housing Authority reports that families receiving LIHEAP benefits (virtually all Head Start families would be eligible for LIHEAP) pay 40 - 50% of their income towards housing. Also, one third of LIHEAP households live in substandard housing, as opposed to only 5% of general Maine households. Community Concepts has received 8,576 applications for fuel assistance as of March 1, 2011. That is actually a 9% decrease from last year's record number of 9,777. However, benefits to families average \$760 per family down from \$862 last year. Heating costs are once again on the rise and many of our families will be feeling the pinch.

According to the Maine Housing Authority, in 2009, Franklin County's median house price was \$109,000; median income was \$39,572; income needed to afford a median price home was \$36,915; meaning 47.0% could not afford a median priced house. (affordability index=1.07) In 2009, Franklin County had 11,279 homeowner households, of which 1,765 (16%) had incomes between 50 and 80% of median, 1,050 households (9%) with incomes between 30 and 50% of the median, and 968 households (9%) with income below 30% of median. Average household size was 2.29 and average age of head of household was 54.4 years.

Oxford County's median house price was \$116,625 in 2009; median income was \$41,570; income needed to afford a median price home was \$38,976; meaning 47.5% could not afford median priced house. (affordability index=1.07) In 2009, Oxford County had 15,937 homeowner households, of which 2,551 (16%) had incomes between 50 and 80% of median, 1,412 households (9%) with incomes between 30 and 50% of the median, and 1,304 households (9%) with income below 30% of median. Average household size was 2.34 and average age of head of household was 53.5 years.

The current housing downturn is expected to affect housing prices, but by a smaller margin than national and Maine averages, mostly due to fact that housing prices did not rise significantly during the past 10 years. The rate of housing foreclosures is at a similar pace to the national average.

In Franklin County by the end of 2009, the average 2 bedroom rent was \$784 with an affordability index of 0.78. Renter household median income was \$24,513, but a household would need \$31,377 to afford the average rent. Thus, 61.0% (2,101 households) were unable to afford an average 2 bedroom rental units. There were 3,443 renter households in Franklin County, of which 721 (21%) had incomes between 50 – 80% of median; 592 (17%) had incomes between 30 – 50% of median, and 803 (23%) had incomes below 30% of median. Average households size was 2.29 and median age of head of household was 37.3 years.

In Oxford County by the end of 2009, average 2 bedroom rent was \$715 with an affordability index of 0.92. Renter household median income was \$26,020 but a household would need \$28,626 to afford the average rent. Thus, 54.2% (2,801 households) were unable to afford an average 2 bedroom rental units. There were 5,164 renter households in Oxford County, of which 1,105 (21%) had incomes between 50 – 80% of median; 859 (16%) had incomes between 30 – 50% of median, and 1,230 (23%) had incomes below 30% of median. Average households size was 2.36 and median age of head of household was 42.2 years.

In Maine, chronic poverty is the marked difference between households at risk of homelessness and other Maine households. The great majority of the families at risk of homelessness have at least one household member employed to some degree. There are three homeless shelters in Oxford County, operated by Community Concepts and Rumford Group Homes. They are increasingly full to capacity; often by families with young children in extreme distress. There are currently no homeless shelters in Franklin County. Housing assistance information was given to 293 families this past year. The National Center on Family Homelessness ranks Maine as 9th overall in providing services for homeless children. There are approximately 2,103 homeless children living in Maine.

Head Start has redefined the term homeless to include persons without a “permanent home”. Staff members receive training on working with families in this situation and in the past year, worked with 62 of families falling into this category. That is an increase from 44 families last program year.

E. The education, health, nutrition, and social service needs of Head Start eligible children and their families as defined by families of Head Start eligible children and by institutions in the community that serve young children.

Typically, many of our Head Start children have siblings. The great majority of Head Start children are up-to-date on their immunizations. This year, 54% of families have 2 parents in the household. The home-based options are successful in rural Maine because the majority of parents interested in the Head Start program arrange life so that one parent can be home during the day to be with their children. This program year, 184 of our families receive TANF. That’s an 8.5% increase over last year. With the cost of high quality childcare, the limited availability of subsidized child care, it often makes economic sense to have one parent home with the children while the other partner is working. Equally attractive to young parents is using the “swing” shift where each parent works different shifts.

Parent Satisfaction Survey

Head Start parents continue to be highly satisfied with our Head Start program.

Community Concepts 2010-2011	
PARENT SATISFACTION SURVEY	
<i>How well is program doing in...</i>	% families answering excellent and good
Providing health and nutritional needs of your child?	95%
Concerned about the meals provided?	5%
Helping your child get along with other children?	93%
How well has the program done in creating an inviting environment?	97%
Helping your child develop language and literacy skills?	92%
Sharing information about your child's progress at home and in HS?	96%
Supporting your child's development through education experiences?	97%
Supported you in getting special services your child needed?	61%
Providing community information and resources to your family?	92%
Supported you in meeting your family goals?	90%
Opportunities to be involved in the program?	94%
Hours, days months in session meet your family's needs?	88%
Would you recommend Head Start to a friend or family member?	95%

Community Concepts received a total of 271 surveys, for a return rate of 52%. We believe our commitment to varied program options to meet a multitude of family needs is the reason that we continue to have a waiting list for Head Start services. Comments from parents were very positive again this year. Many parents took the time to write specific comments in their surveys. Most were very positive, but some had negative comments about a school lunch program that is provided by the public school systems. Parents also mentioned work schedules as barriers to participating in classroom activities. Also, a few parents wanted longer days for childcare. Many praised the staff specifically for their work in the classroom:

- ❖ “This program gives me peace of mind making sure his development is where it should be.”
- ❖ “Each week we learn about resources we didn’t even know existed prior to this program.”
- ❖ “We wouldn’t be where we are without the program.”
- ❖ “My child used to be a bully, now he is a helper and sympathetic to others.”
- ❖ “Such an opportunity for growth and support, not only for the child but for the entire family to gain learning, self-esteem and a sense of belonging which acts as a step, with pride, head held high into the community.”

In March and April of 2010, Community Concepts conducted a customer satisfaction survey. One of the questions asked respondents to identify services they thought of as extremely important. 64% sited affordable childcare and early childhood education. Only fuel assistance ranked higher.

Observed Trends:

Head Start Health Services staff identified several trends during the 2010-2011 program year. Nationwide, 16% of all children are obese and there has been a 6% increase in obesity of adults. Also noted is a 10% increase in poverty levels. Most studies have shown that during hard economic times, obesity rates increase. However, Head Start is pleased to show our numbers declined this year in regards to obesity.

	9/09-3/10	9/10-3/11	9/09-3/10	9/10-3/11
	EHS	EHS	HS	HS
Above 95 th percentile for height/weight	26	22	66	63
Below 10 th percentile for height/weight	33	28	9	12
Elevated lead	3	5	3	0
Low HCT/HGB	2	0	8	3
Severe allergies	3	2	3	5
Asthma	15	12	30	30

While the number of children with elevated lead levels is fairly low the risk to children is high as evidenced by the number of homes with lead paint hazards. Head Start staff continuously provides parents and pediatric offices education regarding the importance of lead testing and lead safety.

Type of Housing Unit	Estimated Homes With Lead Paint Hazards	
	Franklin County	Oxford County
All Units	7,370	10,796
Owned	5,433	7,862
Rented	1,937	2,934

Head Start works closely with the area Healthy Coalitions to provide education to families on tobacco use, nutrition and substance abuse issues. Both counties promote community gardens coupled with cooking ideas and education on healthy food choices. A recent report by the University of Wisconsin’s Population Health Institute ranked Franklin County as one of the healthiest Maine counties in which to live. Unfortunately, Oxford County ranked the lowest.

Unemployment rates have impacted our families and programs this year. 44% of our families are not working and 184 families are receiving TANF benefits. We found filling vacancies in our full day programs difficult. On the other hand, 34% of our staff is current or former Head Start parents.

Increasing numbers of public schools are developing Pre-K programs. In every case the impact on our Head Start Program is palpable. Partnering and redesigning our approach is the best case scenario and we are currently engaged in collaborative programming with four different school districts. The worst case scenario is our inability to partner due to either inflexible Head Start regulations or unwilling collaborators. Ultimately, without willing partners, our waiting list is likely to deplete and sustaining our enrollment may become challenging.

A focus group consisting of Head Start parents and Community Concepts board members identified some of the following as issues families are struggling with currently; transportation, unemployment, and finances.

The loss of Medicaid TCM reimbursement had a significant impact on our budget planning and program design for the '10-'11 program year.

F. Resources in the community that could be used to address the needs of Head Start eligible children and their families, including assessments of their availability and accessibility.

- **Public school systems** around the state are developing Pre-K programs for 4 year olds. We are currently engaged in four collaborations and continue to develop partnerships with various schools.
- Increasingly, public school systems are offering **before and after school programs** for children and their families in public schools K-6. Many elementary schools are now offering full day kindergarten sessions, as well. However, the funding sources (mostly federal 21st Century funds) are nearing its term and it is possible that the programs will be reduced in the coming year.
- Head Start is part of a progressive **collaboration** with several public school departments whereby middle and high school students volunteer in the Head Start classroom to read with the children and participate in other activities. Some students work at our sites as part of their alternative learning placements. Interns from the University of Maine at Farmington also partner with Head Start for student placements.
- **Community Concepts' Parent Partners** – provides monthly home visits to 99 Oxford County first time parents to offer child development, parenting education, and group events. There is no income guideline. This program can provide partial assistance to families on the EHS waiting list.
- **Franklin County Children's Task Force** – offers Healthy Families model home visitation to families with children aged 0 – 5. They also offer other resources to families and community members including parenting classes, bullying prevention, mandated reporter training, and advocacy.
- **Child Development Services**- offers screening, evaluation and therapy for preschool children with special needs. Community Concepts' Head Start programs maintain strong collaborative contacts with CDS in both Franklin and Oxford counties. We have signed written agreements with both CDS agencies and our Child Development Managers serve on their Board of Directors.
- **The Preschool Program of the Child Health Center** is a nonprofit developmental program that offers half-day preschool experiences for disabled children in Norway. Children with developmental delays and handicapping conditions too extreme for Head Start enjoy a group experience with the help of trained physical and occupational therapists. Availability is limited due to class sizes being very small - 8 to 12 child limit. The Preschool Program enrolls approximately 80 children annually.
- **Woman Infants Children (WIC)** -All Oxford and Franklin County Head Start families receive information and referral to the WIC Program. 63% of our Head Start families participate in this program.
- **Public Transportation** - There is no public transportation in Oxford or Franklin County. Two nonprofit agencies provide limited transportation services. The first is primarily a provider for elderly persons; the second, operated by Community Concepts, provides rides to Medicaid eligible people for medical-related appointments. Availability is excellent for Medicaid recipients needing medical related rides, but virtually non-existent for anyone needing general transportation. Transportation is a challenging issue for Head Start families.
- **Substance Abuse Resources/Treatment** -There are a few licensed programs in Oxford County. Common Ground Counseling and Crooked River Counseling, offers outpatient treatment in Norway.

Tri County Mental Health Services, the public mental health agency, offers treatment in the Rumford, Oxford and Farmington areas. Franklin Health Behavioral, formerly known as Evergreen Behavioral Services, offers services in Farmington. As treatment programs that charge fees, many parents without health insurance are unable to access the services.

- **Community Concepts Counseling Program** is a small outpatient mental health treatment program and a strong partner with Head Start this year, including the provision of mental health consultation services. The program has clinicians who specialize in treating children, adolescents, parents, and has provided needed access to many of our Head Start children and families.

G. Goals for the '11 – '12 Program Year:

Goal I: Continue the development of a system that provides comprehensive services to children and families who are dual language learners.

Objectives:

- Create a comprehensive plan that outlines program services, systems and available resources

Outcome: The program will have an effective system for providing services to children and families who are dual language learners.

Goal II: Continue to enhance the quality of health and nutrition services.

Objectives:

- Define a structure for the provision of nutrition services for infants and toddlers
- Develop site-based health resource materials for staff to use with families
- Continue to provide nutrition training along with the support of ongoing monitoring and feedback
- Continue to work with Pre-K partners to influence the quality of food service

Outcome: The program will deliver consistent, high quality health and nutrition services to children and families.

Goal III: Provide quality early childhood services and interventions that prepare children for future school success.

Objectives:

- Revise current school readiness process and procedures
- Develop an implementation plan for utilizing the CLASS tool to enhance professional development
- Research and select an appropriate assessment tool for infants and toddlers

Outcome: All children will show progress towards school readiness goals.

Goal IV: Provide consistent documentation that substantiates the provision of high quality, comprehensive services.

Objectives:

- Review and revise documentation designed to capture information regarding the provision of services to families

Outcome: Documentation will demonstrate the provision of quality services.

Goal V: To maintain quality services in an unpredictable financial environment.

Objectives:

- Management teams will brainstorm ideas based on needs and trends
- Budget committee will explore ways in which to consider community needs while adapting programming due to budgetary constraints
- Policy Council and Board will review and make final recommendations

Outcome: The program will have a strategic plan for program implementation in 2011-2012.

H. THE COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Information for the Community Assessment was collected by the agency planning department during January and February. The annual Head Start self-assessment and parent questionnaire, which involved parents, staff, Board and Policy Council involvement, were completed during the months of January, February and March. The materials were collated by the Family & Community Partnership Manager for an Oxford and Franklin County Community Assessment. The final document will be presented to the Board and Policy Council for review and final approval in April.

I. SOURCES

Statistical information was received from the following sources:

1. Child Development Services-Opportunities (statistics on children with disabilities 0-5, Oxford & Franklin County)
2. Community Concepts' Children's Services Program (statistics on child care subsidies and slots)
3. Community Concepts' Family Services Program (statistics on child welfare and substance use issues and resources)
4. Community Concepts' Finders/Seekers Program (statistics on child care vouchers)
5. Community Concepts, Inc. "Multi Year Plan 2002-2006," (South Paris, 2002) and Multi-Year Plan, 2008 – 2011, in draft
6. Maine Department of Labor (unemployment information, census information, per capita income) via www
7. Maine Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services (Substance Abuse Prevention; Maine's 1997 Data Report) via www
8. "Vision for MSAD #39 for the Year 2011," Mt. Blue School District, 2001
9. "Community Health Visioning 2002," Franklin County Health Network et al, 2002
10. Maine Kids Count: 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 & 2011 Data Books (Maine Children's Alliance, Augusta, Maine)
11. Maine State Housing Authority (housing information) via www
12. Maine State Planning Office (poverty statistics, census information, economic
13. information) via www
14. U.S. Census Bureau, <http://www.maine.gov/labor/lmis/news/manw1206.html>
15. U.S. Census Bureau, http://www.maine.gov/spo/economics/docs/census/prof1_4datame.xls
16. Maine Dept. of Labor <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/23000.html>.
17. 2011 Maine Kids Count for Franklin County <http://www.mekids.org/am/uploads/2011franklin.pdf>
18. 2011 Maine Kids Count for Oxford County <http://www.mekids.org/am/uploads/2011oxford.pdf>
19. Partnership for a Tobacco Free Maine

Community Concepts Children's Services

2010-2011

