



Quality of Life in Hawai'i

2005 Report

Aloha,

All of us who live in Hawai'i are concerned with preserving and improving the quality of life we enjoy. Aloha United Way is pleased to introduce our first "Quality of Life in Hawai'i" report on the well-being of our state as reflected by key social, health, safety, educational, economic, and environmental measures. Together, these carefully selected community indicators give us a way to monitor trends over time, both statewide and at a county level.

The purpose of this report is to inform discussion and inspire action. We hope that our citizens, business owners, government leaders, and private and faith-based organizations will join in collaborative efforts to address community conditions that impact us all.

Aloha United Way and the Center on the Family at the University of Hawai'i are committed to biennial updates of this report. We hope it will serve as a favored resource as we work together to improve the quality of life for all of Hawai'i's people.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert P. Hiam".



Robert P. Hiam
Chair, Aloha United Way
Board of Directors

Poverty dramatically affects an individual's or family's ability to meet basic needs, such as access to food, shelter, health care, and quality early childhood care and education.

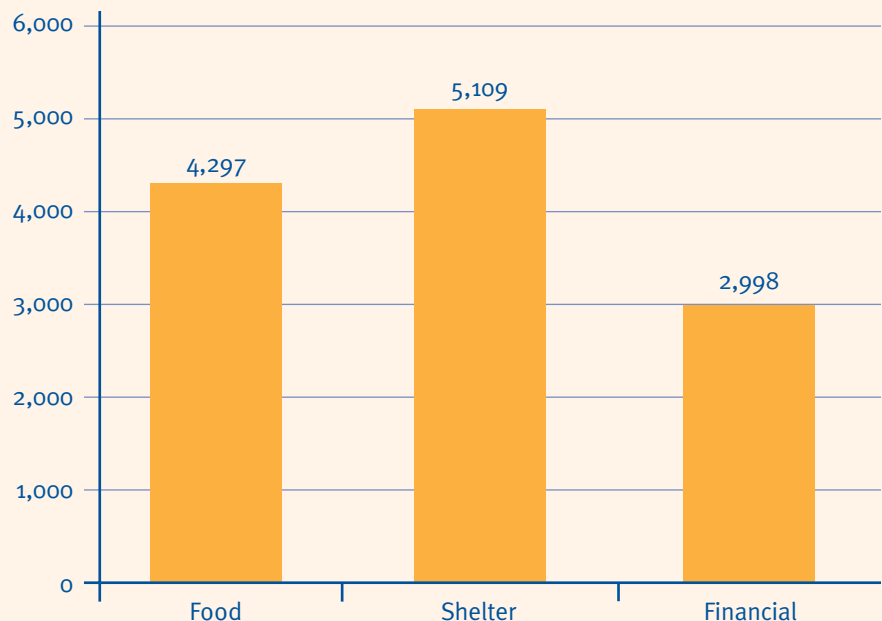
ECONOMIC Well-Being



	COUNTY				STATE
	Hawai'i	Honolulu	Kaua'i	Maui	
Unemployment rate	6.3%	3.9%	5.0%	4.4%	4.3%
Percentage of students receiving free or reduced-cost lunch	54%	43%	40%	37%	44%
Income share of individual taxpayers in the top 20% income group	52%	62%	52%	53%	60%
Number of homeless people per 100,000 population	1,042	880	955	1,412	961
Percentage of medically uninsured:					
Children	5%	2%	4%	4%	3%
Adults	12%	7%	15%	12%	8%
Percentage of individuals living at or below 200% of federal poverty level	44%	30%	37%	34%	32%

Generally, the City and County of Honolulu, hereafter Honolulu, fares better on most economic indicators than the other counties, where opportunities are more limited. Overall, the economy in the State of Hawai'i has been improving since 1997. Hawai'i's personal income growth continues at a pace that is among the highest in the nation, and the unemployment rate through most of 2004 was among the lowest. However, rising prices for fuel, medical care, and housing are eroding our personal income gains. In the late 1990s, the average income of the poorest fifth of Hawai'i's families was only \$16,500, while the average income of the richest fifth of families was 9.6 times greater at \$159,400. The gap between the rich and the poor has been increasing over time and has profound implications for all aspects of our society.

Statewide 211 Calls to Aloha United Way for Information and Referral, 2004



Caring COMMUNITIES



	COUNTY				STATE
	Hawai'i	Honolulu	Kaua'i	Maui	
Percentage of families eating together regularly	77%	69%	71%	70%	71%
Percentage of adults who feel they can rely on others in their community	92%	82%	86%	87%	84%
Percentage of adults who volunteer	69%	56%	62%	62%	59%
Percentage of new families at risk: first births to unmarried mother under age 20 who lacks high-school diploma	11%	5%	9%	8%	6%
Percentage of registered voters voting	66%	67%	69%	62%	67%
Percentage of inter-ethnic marriages	67%	57%	64%	54%	58%
Percentage of students (grades 6–12) reporting access to positive community activities	54%	45%	59%	60%	49%
Percentage of taxable income donated to charity	3%	3%	4%	4%	3%

Our Aloha spirit is reflected in the ways we care for each other within our ‘ohana and throughout the greater community, as well as our willingness to be active and responsible citizens.

Here in Hawai'i, we pride ourselves on our Aloha spirit, a spirit of caring. Living over 2,000 miles from any other land mass, we know well the importance of helping one another. Extended family living is more common here than anywhere else in the United States and our ‘ohana typically includes both biological, and “calabash” cousins, aunties, and uncles. As a state known for its ethnic diversity, we show our mutual acceptance and ethnic integration through our high rate of inter-ethnic marriages. Our inclusiveness is also demonstrated in the blending of cultural and food-centered activities that celebrate every facet of our lives. Hawai'i's people establish caring communities through participation in the democratic process, volunteerism, and charitable giving and by ensuring that our children are engaged in character-building activities.

A lifestyle that promotes good physical and mental health improves quality of life,

increases longevity, and models positive behaviors for younger generations to follow.

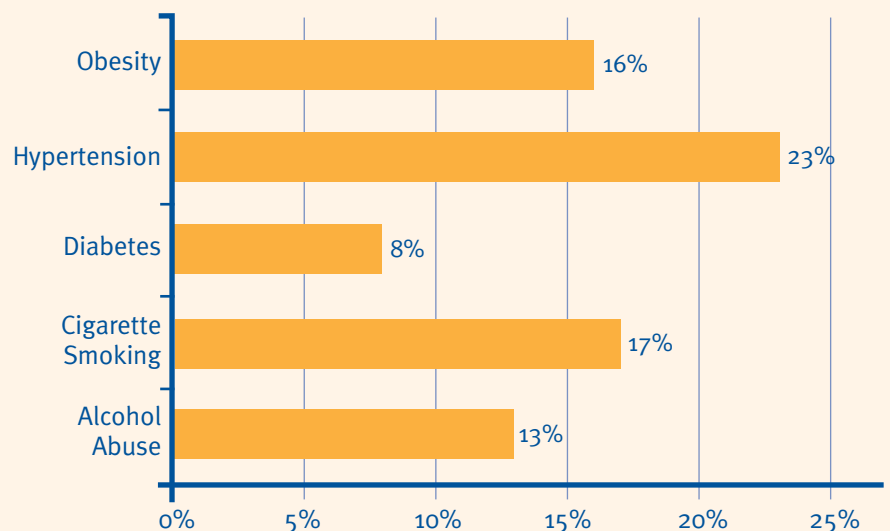
HEALTHY Citizens



	COUNTY				STATE
	Hawai'i	Honolulu	Kaua'i	Maui	
Percentage of live births in which mother received prenatal care during the first trimester	71%	84%	73%	73%	80%
Percentage of teens who report using the following substances within the last 30 days:					
Alcohol	40%	26%	24%	33%	29%
Drugs	24%	14%	17%	22%	17%
Cigarettes	19%	12%	12%	12%	13%
Percentage of adults reporting:					
Binge drinking	15%	13%	12%	12%	13%
Cigarette smoking	17%	17%	19%	18%	17%
Percentage of adults reporting:					
Diabetes	7%	8%	6%	6%	8%
Hypertension	23%	23%	23%	23%	23%
Percentage of adults who are obese	19%	16%	15%	16%	16%
Percentage of adults who engage in regular physical activity	52%	50%	46%	50%	50%

Establishing and maintaining good health begins with early pre-natal care and continues through life with appropriate immunizations, good nutrition, and a physically active lifestyle. Most chronic health conditions are controllable, if not preventable. For example, cigarettes and drugs can be avoided, alcohol consumption can be moderated, fruits and vegetables can be chosen in place of fatty or junk foods, and exercise can be made a part of everyday life. Although a high percentage of pregnant women in Hawai'i receive early prenatal care, there are ethnic disparities. About 82% of our children are fully immunized by age three. Cigarette use has declined among Hawai'i's teens, but too many of our high school students drink alcohol regularly, risking damage to their minds and bodies. Two areas of current health concern are substance abuse and obesity, which lead to other health problems including diabetes and hypertension.

Adults with Health Risks



Safe NEIGHBORHOODS



	COUNTY				STATE
	Hawai'i	Honolulu	Kaua'i	Maui	
Rate of confirmed child abuse and neglect cases per 1,000 children	22.2	10.9	9.1	9.2	12.2
Rate of domestic abuse protective orders filed per 100,000 population	766	299	329	514	383
Rate of reported crimes per 100,000 population:					
Property crime	4,316	5,351	4,700	5,797	5,237
Violent crime	186	289	309	229	270
Rate of drug-related arrests per 100,000 population	432	180	387	549	261
Rate of deaths by accident, homicide, and suicide per 100,000 population	71	42	35	24	45
Percentage of students (grades 6–12) who report living in disorderly communities	50%	51%	52%	46%	50%
Percentage of adults reporting safe neighborhoods	64%	72%	82%	69%	71%

Safe neighborhoods allow children and adults to move about freely and participate fully in opportunities for education, socialization, recreation, and community engagement.

The majority of Hawai'i's citizens live in safe communities where the value of 'ohana is central to the way we interact with our neighbors. In recent years, however, increases in violent and property crime have been eroding our sense of safety and well-being. It is widely assumed that drugs—in particular crystal methamphetamine or “ice”—are responsible for much of the crime reported, but there are other factors as well. When people are transient or apathetic about the conditions in their neighborhoods, the lack of community cohesiveness and failure to care contribute to unsafe conditions. Community-based interventions help to improve disorderly communities where fighting, graffiti, drugs, and crime, as well as empty and abandoned buildings, are commonplace. Communities are vibrant when neighbors know each other well, monitor the safety of each others' children, elders, and homes, and report unusual or dangerous activity as it occurs.

An educated citizenry is better prepared to solve new and unexpected problems in a changing world.

Quality education imparted to children and adults of all ages

enriches our lives and ensures a better Hawai'i for the future.

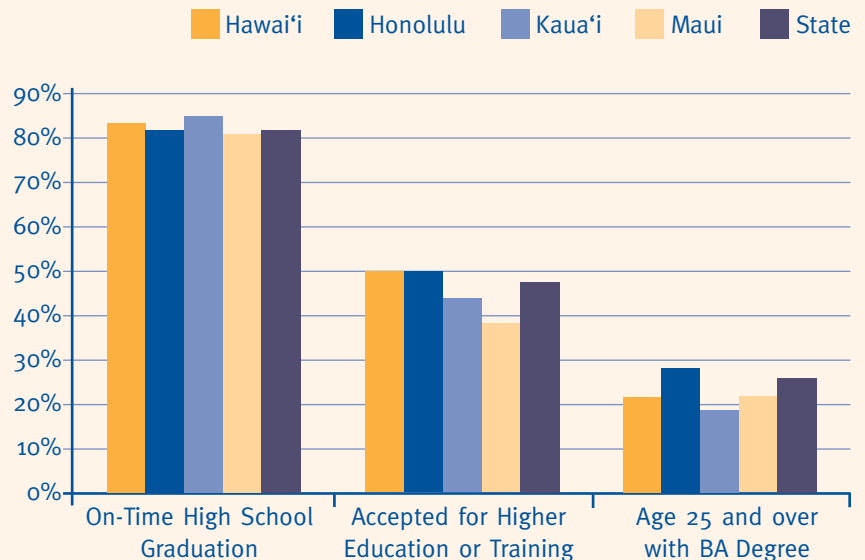
EDUCATED Citizens



	COUNTY				STATE
	Hawai'i	Honolulu	Kaua'i	Maui	
Percentage of kindergarten classes in which at least three-fourths of all entering students are ready to learn	2%	5%	3%	14%	6%
Percentage of public school students meeting Department of Education standards in:					
Math	15%	18%	17%	14%	18%
Reading	37%	39%	37%	35%	38%
Percentage of students (grades 6–12) who feel attached and committed to their schools	44%	44%	42%	42%	44%
Percentage of ninth graders who graduate on time from the school they enrolled in as freshmen	84%	82%	85%	81%	82%
Percentage of public-school seniors accepted into higher education or training as of May	50%	50%	44%	39%	48%
Percentage of students enrolled in Department of Education adult education classes who are age 45 and over	14%	28%	21%	16%	26%
Percentage of population 25 years and over with a bachelor's degree or more	22%	28%	19%	22%	26%

Under the federal *No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act*, the percentage of students achieving reading and math proficiency under the revised Hawai'i Content and Performance Standards II (HCPS-II) must increase each year until 100% of all students are proficient in 2014. For 2003, Hawai'i public school students exceeded federal goals, but there needs to be substantial improvement at all grade levels for the state to keep up with the rising NCLB expectations over the next nine years. Currently only about 80% of ninth graders graduate within four years. One of the strategies for meeting education goals is to put more emphasis on the early childhood years so that children enter kindergarten ready to learn. Higher levels of success in the elementary years should lead to greater school commitment, more on-time graduations, and a higher percentage continuing their education beyond high school.

Educational Pursuits and Attainments



Healthy ENVIRONMENT



	COUNTY				STATE
	Hawai'i	Honolulu	Kaua'i	Maui	
Acres of parks and historic sites per 1,000 acres of total area	128	47	36	57	98
Percentage of land classified as:					
Urban	2%	26%	4%	4%	5%
Conservation	51%	40%	50%	41%	48%
Agricultural/Rural	47%	33%	47%	55%	47%
Number of beach-days with posted warnings for sewage	3	52	6	0	61
Percentage of total streams on the impaired streams monitoring list	11%	60%	25%	9%	19%
Percentage of energy used by source:					
Petrol	86%	91%	85%	81%	89%
Coal	4%	6%	0%	3%	6%
Alternative energy sources	10%	3%	15%	16%	5%
Number of motor vehicles registered per licensed driver	1.3	1.2	1.4	1.5	1.2

By preserving Hawai'i's natural resources and protecting the 'āina, we enhance the quality of life for all our citizens and provide a sense of continuity into the future.

As our islands become more densely populated and development expands into areas that were once open and green, our parks, historic sites, and conservation lands become even more valuable for sustaining our lifestyle. Since the year 2000, the acreage designated as parks or historic sites in Hawai'i has increased. We enjoy some of the cleanest air and water in the nation, but water quality at some of our beaches has been compromised by frequent sewage spills, and many streams are polluted as well. Our dependence on fossil fuels puts us at risk, both environmentally and economically. Approximately 95% of the energy we use comes from non-renewable sources. Traffic congestion is an environmental issue that has gained much attention of late due to the daily frustrations of commuters.

2005 FOCUS AREA: Homelessness in Hawai'i

Homeless families are one of the fastest growing segments of the homeless population nationwide.

In the years ahead, the Aloha United Way will focus public attention on five areas that deserve special consideration: homelessness, family self-sufficiency, crime and drugs, school readiness, and volunteerism. This inaugural issue of the A UW Quality of Life Report provides data on the children and adults who are homeless and the negative consequences they face. These data come from self-reports of homeless individuals who accessed government-funded homeless shelters or received homeless outreach services from January 2004 to December 2004. The data presented in this report likely reflect an undercount of the actual homeless population; however they are the best data currently available.

Although homelessness is not a new problem, the rising number of homeless people—estimated to have increased approximately 39% in Hawai'i from 1999 to 2003—warrants immediate attention. Of the 13,000 people who were homeless in Hawai'i in 2004, approximately 57% were males and 43% were females. The majority

resided on Oahu (65%), followed by Hawai'i (16%), Maui (15%), and Kaua'i (5%). More than one-third were Hawaiian/Part Hawaiian (35%), 29% were Caucasian, 11% were other Pacific Islanders, and 26% were of other or unknown ethnicities.

Homeless families are one of the fastest growing segments of the homeless population nationwide. In Hawai'i, slightly more than half of all homeless individuals (52%) are members of a homeless family. Of the 1,893 homeless families, about 83% are families with children. Children account for 27% of the total homeless population in Hawai'i, and 75% of these children are 12 years of age or younger. The majority of homeless adults are under 50 years old (77%), and 24% are under age 30. About 18% of homeless adults are employed either full-time or part-time.

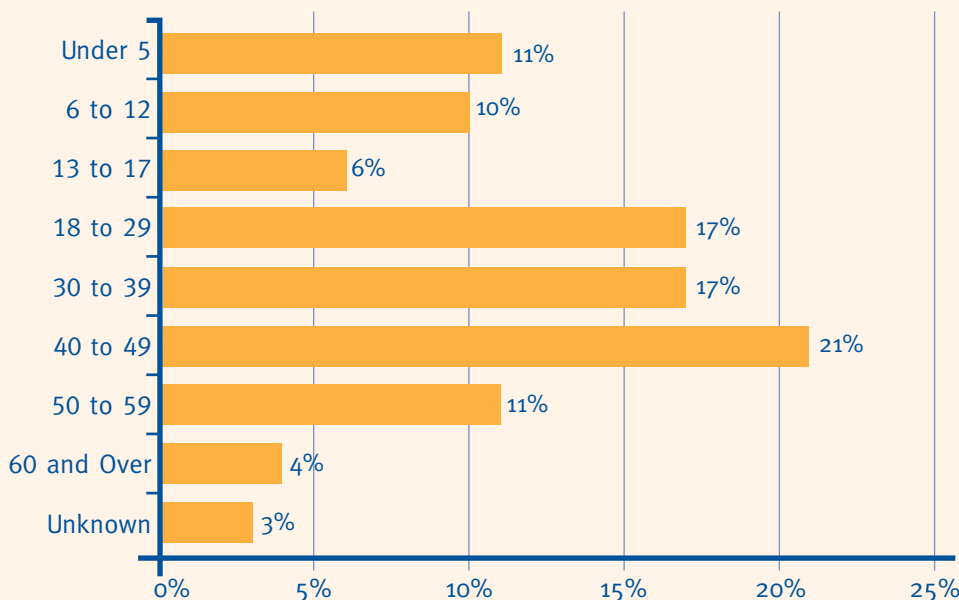
Homelessness severely affects individuals' and families' well-being. Without a permanent address it is difficult for adults to find employment, access medical and dental care, and provide a safe and secure place

to nurture their children. Compared to those who have shelter, homeless people have higher rates of acute hospital-based care, physical and mental illnesses, substance abuse, hospitalization (with longer stays in hospitals), and early death. The negative impact of homelessness on children's health is of grave concern, as research has documented that homeless children tend to suffer from poor nutrition, inadequate health care, health problems and impairments, developmental delays and neurological deficits, and severe emotional stress. These conditions have long-term developmental effects that often follow the children into adulthood.

Poor health, frequent family moves, and the lack of food, clothing, and school supplies make it difficult for homeless children to adjust successfully to schools' social and academic environments. Lack of transportation prevents homeless children from attending school regularly. Even when they are able to attend school, homeless children find it challenging to perform well academically. Nationwide, homeless children are twice as likely to repeat a grade in school.

The reasons for homelessness entail a complex combination of economic, health, and social issues. The key economic factors of homelessness nationwide include low wages/income, unemployment, and the availability and cost of housing. The most frequent reasons for becoming homeless in Hawai'i, as cited by homeless families and individuals, were difficulty securing affordable housing (48%), health problems (24%), family conflict and dissolution (19%), and unemployment (18%).

Homeless Persons by Age



Notes

The indicators in this report were selected from the most reliable sources which could provide county, as well as state, data. The data presented are the most recent available at the time the report was published. For references, data source information, indicator definitions, and technical notes, go to www.uhfamily.hawaii.edu/publications/publications.asp or call the Center on the Family at 956-4132.

