

**CENTRAL DISTRICT  
UW-EXTENSION**

**Survey Report**

**December, 2007**

Prepared by:

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**UW-Extension**  
**Central District County Surveys**  
**December, 2007**

***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY***

**METHODOLOGY**

The University of Wisconsin - Extension Central District contracted with the Community Research Center (CRC) at the University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point to conduct community surveys in each of the fourteen counties where the Central District operates. The surveys are a part of an overall Program Planning/Strategic Planning Process undertaken by the Central District.

A survey instrument was developed after consultations with the Central District Resource Management Team. Technical assistance in survey design was provided to the District Resource Management Team by the Community Research Center.

The survey was conducted at the Telephone Survey Center at University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point from September through November, 2007. 3,535 households in the fourteen county area were randomly contacted for the survey. District-wide responses have a + or - error rate of 1.67% at the 95% confidence level (the 95% confidence level means the same results would occur 95 out of 100 times). Responses in each county (except for one exclusion listed below) have a + or – error rate of 5% at the 92% confidence level. Cross-tabulations and queries conducted for data analysis for small sub-groups have slightly larger error rates.

Demographic information was collected by age, income, geographic location and gender. A reasonable distribution and excellent total numbers in each demographic was achieved. As is typical in telephone surveys, the sample became over weighted for those respondents who are older, and female. The income distribution was appropriate in all income categories. Finally, over half the respondents lived in “rural” areas. Complete demographic charts, including individual county responses are included in the appendix.

Menominee county population numbers were considerably smaller than the rest of the counties surveyed. In addition, the county had a much higher refusal rate and higher rate of disconnected phones than other counties. As a result, responses for Menominee County have a + or - error rate of 6% at the 92% confidence level.

The survey instrument asked respondents to rate the importance of community issues in two ways. First, how important the issue is to the person responding or to a member of their family, and second, how important the respondent perceived the issue to be for others in the community. This type of survey design allows for a “gap analysis” measuring the gap between what respondents report is happening within their families and what they believe is happening in the community as a whole.

Most questions asked respondents to rate their response along a scale from one to seven, with one being the lowest and seven being the highest.

The CRC created a database, entered the data from the surveys, and completed a data analysis.

## **GENERAL FINDINGS:**

### **Use of UW-Extension information and services:**

1. 54% of respondents report they have used information and services from a UW-Extension office.
  - Those counties where respondents indicate they use UW-Extension information and services at least 5% **above** the average of all responses include:
    - Taylor
  - Those counties where respondents indicate they use UW-Extension information and services at least 5% **below** the average of all responses include:
    - Wood
    - Marathon
    - Waushara
2. Of those who have used information and services from UW-Extension, **97%** report the information and services were valuable.
  - Those counties where respondents indicate they value UW-Extension information and services at least 5% **above** the average of all responses include:
    - Shawano
    - Juneau
  - There were **NO** counties where respondents indicate they value UW-Extension information and services at least 5% **below** the average of all responses.

County by county responses for use of UW-Extension information and services is included in the appendix on pages 1 & 2.

## Awareness of 4-H Clubs

- 82% of respondents are aware that 4-H Clubs are open to all youth, both urban and rural. There was no significant difference in awareness when compared by county.

County by county responses are included in the appendix on page 3.

## Miles Willing to Travel for Education or Training

1. In general, respondents are not willing to travel long distances for education and training programs.

- A majority of respondents (54%) are willing only to travel 30 miles or less to attend an educational or training program.
- The highest rated response was between 0-15 miles (29%).
- A considerable percentage of respondents are willing to travel over 60 miles for an education or training program (20%).
- Those counties where respondents desire to travel **fewer** miles include:
  - Waushara
  - Portage
- Those counties where respondents are willing to travel **more** miles include:
  - Langlade
  - Menominee

County by county responses are included in the appendix on page 4.

## Community Issues

The following charts show the District-wide responses to all community issues. The responses are ranked in “importance” from highest (7) to lowest (1) responses.

**1.** There is general agreement throughout the District on the issues that are of the highest importance.

- The most important community issue was “adequate health care.” This issue rated the highest responses in both the “you and your family” and the “others in the community” categories.
- “Environmental quality,” “Enough Food,” and “Safe Food Supply” also were in the top five most important issues in both the “you and your family” and “others in the community” categories.
- Only one issue was different in the two categories among those rated in the top five.
  - “Healthy lifestyle” was a top five issue for “you and your family” responses, but somewhat lower in importance for “others in the community.”
  - “Affordable housing” was a top five issue for “others in the community,” but of somewhat lower importance for “you and your family.”

**2.** There is significant movement for the five issues rated as the least important community issue.

- “Learn to start a business” and “Information on lawns and gardens” were the two lowest rated issues of importance in both the “you and your family” and “others in the community” categories.
- While the issue of “Developing community leadership” was rated third lowest in importance for the “others in the community” category, it was just able to escape the lowest five issues in for the “you and your family” category (6<sup>th</sup> lowest).

- Two issues showed a significant difference in rating. “Planning use of land” received a middle rating for the “you and your family” category, but was rated the fourth lowest issue in the “others in the community” category. “Use local food” was rated in the top half of issues in the “you and your family” category, but fifth lowest in importance for the “others in the community” category.

### Community Issues - District-wide Responses

<b>Question</b>	<b>CATEGORY You &amp; Family</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>CATEGORY Others in Community</b>
Adequate Health Care	6.2	Adequate Health Care	6.3
Environmental Quality	6.2	Enough Food	6.2
Healthy Lifestyle	6.1	Safe Food Supply	6.0
Safe Food Supply	6.1	Affordable Housing	5.9
Enough Food	5.9	Environmental Quality	5.8
Manage Finances	5.8	Learning Parenting Skills	5.8
Use Alternative Energy	5.8	Healthy Lifestyle	5.7
Affordable Housing	5.6	Manage Finances	5.7
Use Local Food	5.5	Build Career Skills	5.6
Profitable Ag. Communities	5.2	Use Alternative Energy	5.5
Planning use of land	5.2	Youth Leadership	5.5
Youth Leadership	5.2	Out-of-School Programs	5.5
Build Career Skills	5.1	Drug & Alcohol issues	5.4
Out-of-School Programs	4.9	Profitable Ag. Communities	5.4
Develop Comm. Leadership	4.9	Active 4-H Clubs	5.3
Learning Parenting Skills	4.8	Use Local Food	5.2
Drug & Alcohol issues	4.7	Planning use of land.	5.1
Active 4-H Clubs	4.7	Develop Comm. Leadership	5.0
Info on Lawns & Gardens	4.3	Learn to Start a Business	4.4
Learn to Start a Business	3.7	Info on Lawns & Gardens	4.4

County by county responses for community issues are included in the appendix on pages 5 – 14.

## Method of Receiving Information:

1. While a variety of methods for receiving information received reasonably high ratings, there does seem to be a fairly clear distinction between “traditional” methods of information sharing, and those that use newer technologies. Newer technologies are rated lower than the traditional methods.

## Method of Receiving Information - District-wide Responses

	Rating
<b>Written Materials</b>	5.3
<b>Study on Own</b>	5.2
<b>Newspaper</b>	5.0
<b>One-on-one</b>	4.7
<b>TV</b>	4.7
<b>Newsletter</b>	4.7
<b>Radio</b>	4.3
<b>Workshops</b>	4.2
<b>Internet</b>	4.1
<b>Email</b>	3.5
<b>Teleconference</b>	2.8

- Among all counties surveyed, only Menominee County had responses for methods of receiving information that differed from the average by at least .5. Menominee responses were **higher** than the District-wide responses for receiving information through the internet, through workshops, by study on your own, and by email.

County by county responses are included in the appendix on page 15.

## Gap Analysis:

District-Wide responses for some issues had a significant gap between the categories of “you and your family” and “others in the community.”

1. Significant gaps exist in the issues of “Building Career Skills,” “Out-of-School Programs,” “Learning Parenting Skills,” “Drug & Alcohol Issues,” “Active 4-H Clubs,” and “Learning How to Start a Business.” All had a significant gap between the importance the issue was to “you and your family” the perception of how important the issue is to “others in the community.” In each of the following cases, the issue was perceived as **more** important to others in the community rather than an issue for anyone in the respondent’s family.

### Gap Analysis

<b>Question</b>	<b>You &amp; Family</b>	<b>Others in Community</b>	<b>Gap Difference</b>
<b>Drug &amp; Alcohol issues</b>	4.7	5.8	+1.1
<b>Learning Parenting Skills</b>	4.8	5.8	+1.0
<b>Learn to Start a Business</b>	3.7	4.4	+.7
<b>Out-of-School Programs</b>	4.9	5.5	+.6
<b>Active 4-H Clubs</b>	4.7	5.3	+.6
<b>Build Career Skills</b>	5.1	5.6	+.5

2. Of the twenty community issue questions only seven rated responses for “you and your family” **higher** than responses for “others in the community.” In general, the gap between the categories was relatively small. The seven issues are listed below.

### Gap Analysis

<b>Question</b>	<b>You &amp; Family</b>	<b>Others in Community</b>	<b>Gap Difference</b>
<b>Healthy Lifestyle</b>	6.1	5.7	-.4
<b>Environmental Quality</b>	6.2	5.8	-.4
<b>Use Alternate Energy</b>	5.8	5.5	-.3
<b>Use Local Food</b>	5.5	5.2	-.3
<b>Managing Finances</b>	5.8	5.7	-.1
<b>Safe Food Supply</b>	6.1	6.0	-.1
<b>Land Use Planning</b>	5.2	5.1	-.1

## Analysis by County:

Overall, there was more agreement than disagreement in responses among the fourteen counties. However, some distinctions did emerge.

- When compared to all other counties across the forty possible rating scores in both “you and your family” and “others in the community” categories, Marathon County rated the importance of issues lower than or equal to the lowest ratings among all counties twenty-five times. No other county had many ratings below the mean.
- Several questions elicited county responses that were at different from the average score by at least .5. These include:
  - In the category of responses in “you and your family,” those responses different by at least .5 from the mean were:
    - ❖ Marathon County rated the importance of “Learning to Start a Business,” “Using Alternative Energy,” “Youth Leadership,” “Active 4-H Clubs,” and “Out-of-school Programs” **below** the mean.
    - ❖ Menominee County rated the importance of “Profitable Agricultural Communities,” and “Active 4-H Clubs” **below** the mean, but rated “Learning to Start a Business” **above** the mean.
    - ❖ Juneau County rated the importance of “Profitable Agricultural Communities” **above** the mean.
    - ❖ Portage County rated the importance of “4-H Clubs” **below** the mean.
    - ❖ Wood County rated the importance of “4-H Clubs” **below** the mean.

- For the category of “others in the community,” those responses different by at least .5 from the mean were:
  - ❖ Menominee County rated the importance of “Profitable Agricultural Communities” **below** the mean.
  - ❖ Marquette County rated the importance of “Getting Information on Lawns and Gardens” **above** the mean.
- For the category of “preferred method to receive information” the one response different by at least .5 from the mean was
  - ❖ Menominee County rated both “study on your own” and “email” **above** the mean.

County by county responses for all questions are included in the appendix on pages 1-15.

## **CROSSTABULATIONS**

- 1. Large Counties:** When counties with a population of at least 50,000 were queried, no differences were uncovered from the District-wide responses. That is, there were no significant differences in the responses of the larger and smaller counties.
- 2. Geographic location:** When the data was queried to show the difference between responses of those who lived in rural areas and villages, and those who lived in cities, no differences were uncovered in the District-wide responses. That is, where the respondent lives is not a significant indicator for any differences in responses. District-wide responses for community issues queried by geographic location are included in the appendix on page 16.
- 3. Age:** Responses from three different age groups were analyzed: 18-24, 35-54, and over 55. The analysis shows a significant difference in response to community issues by age. Over one half (21) of the 40 possible responses in both the “you and your family” and “others in the community” categories show at least .5 difference from the youngest to oldest group.
  - Nineteen of the 21 responses that differed by more than .5 from the mean, showed that the age group 55 and over rated the importance of the community issue higher than did the 18-24 age group. In most cases, the different responses showed a gradual progression where each older age group perceived community issues as increasingly important.
    - Responses in the category of “you and your family,” where there was at least a .5 difference and where the older group rated the response of **higher** importance than the younger group were:
      - Planning use of land
      - Use local food
      - Information on lawns and gardens
    - In the category of responses in “you and your family,” those responses different by at least .5 where the older group rated the response of **lower** importance than the younger group were:

- Learning parenting skills
  - Learn to start a business
  - Out-of-school programs
  - Build career skills
- In the category of responses in “others in the community,” those responses different by at least .5 and the older group rated the response of **higher** importance than the younger group were:
    - Learning parenting skills
    - Drug & alcohol issues
    - Safe food supply
    - Learn to start a business
    - Develop community leadership
    - Planning use of land
    - Use alternative energy
    - Environmental Quality
    - Use local food
    - Youth leadership
    - Active 4-H Clubs
  - In the category of responses in “others in the community,” those responses different by at least .5 and the older group rated the response of **lower** importance than the younger group were:
    - None

District-wide responses for community issues queried by age groups are included in the appendix on page 17.

**4. Income:** In general, those with more income attach less importance to community issues in both the “you and your family” and “others in the community” categories. While some of the difference in importance of community issues can be explained by virtue of higher income (e.g. having adequate health care or enough food), the perceived lower importance for others in the community is notable.

- For those earning \$76,000 or more, a rating difference of at least .5 **below** the average of all respondents exists in 11 of twenty categories for the category of “you and your family.”

- For those earning \$76,000 or more, a rating difference of at least .5 **below** the average of all respondents exists in 15 of twenty categories for the category of “others in the community.”

District-wide responses for community issues queried by income are included in the appendix on page 18.

**5. Gender:** Although the difference is almost always small, in 39 of the 40 possible responses in both the “you and your family” and “others in the community” categories, women rated the importance of issues higher than men.

- In the “you and your family” category, women rated the importance of issues at least .5 **above** the average of all men for:
  - Use of local food
- In the “others in the community” category, women rated the importance of issues at least .5 **above** the average of all men for:
  - Use of local food
  - Out-of-school programs

District-wide responses for community issues queried by gender are included in the appendix on page 19.

