

Data Sources for the Demographics of your County(s)

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One of the best sources of information is the US Census. Not every county is the same, so some of the data sources listed below will be more useful than others in compiling your own needs assessment. These files give you data about demographics, social characteristics, economic characteristics, and housing. You can also obtain files for smaller geographic areas, such as cities and towns. The downside is that you will not be able to tell how your county (or smaller geographies) rank in comparison to others. Some data of particular interest are listed here. Use only the data that makes sense for describing your county(s):

- a. Visit: www.census.gov
- b. Click on “American FactFinder”, under the left hand menu column
- c. Under “Fast Access to Information,” get a fact sheet of information by entering your county, city or town name, or zip code, and Wisconsin, clicking “GO”
- d. You’ll see a list of data available (even more is available if you click on “show more”). Some data of particular interest are:
 - Under “GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS”
 - Population
 - Household size
 - Race
 - Under “SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS”
 - Disability status
 - Marital status
 - Under “ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS”
 - In labor force
 - Median household income
 - Individuals below poverty level
 - Under “HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS” (you’ll have to select “show more” to get the following)
 - Vehicles available
 - Selected monthly owner costs as a percentage of household income in 1999
 - Gross rent as a percentage of household income in 1999