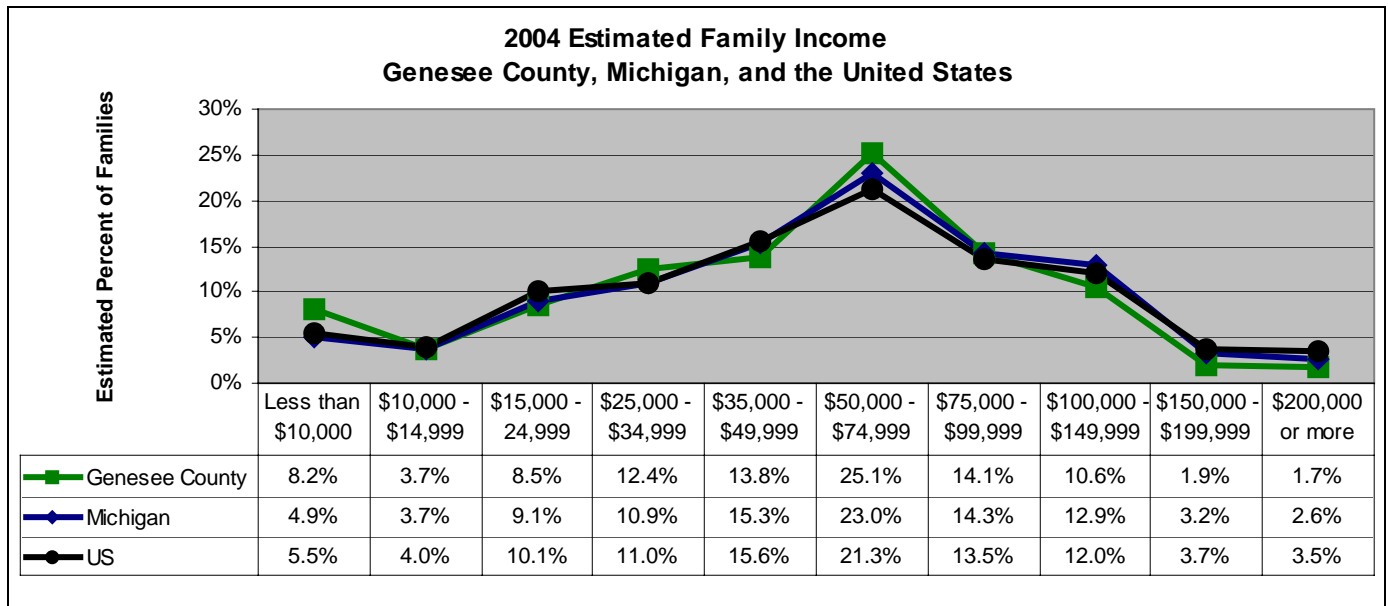




Mission: Improve the quality of life for children and families in Genesee County through assessment, public awareness and advocacy.

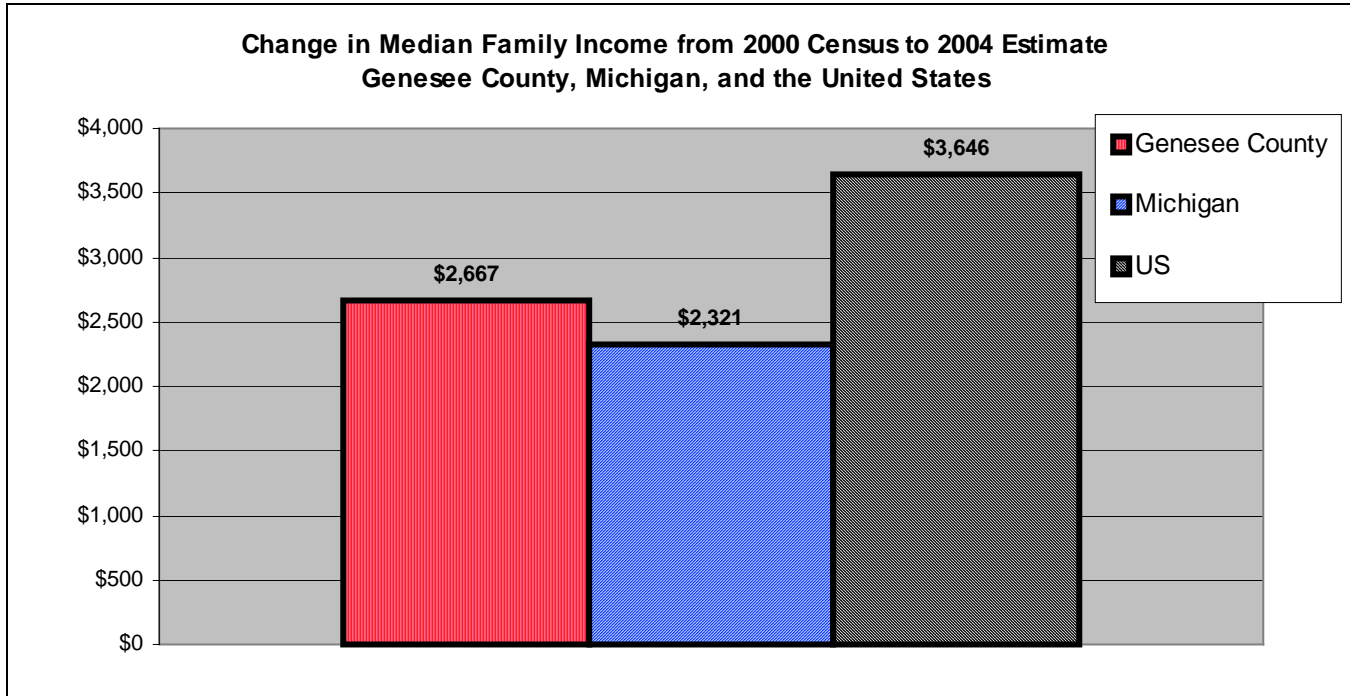
Fact Sheet 4.4 Family Income

Family income is important because it is one of the central factors (along with family size) that are directly related to poverty or affluence. Changes in family income within the population of a given area, therefore, suggest parallel changes in their relative economic well-being. Since social risk is related in some respects to income level, sustained or dramatic decreases in family income suggest similar increases in social risk.



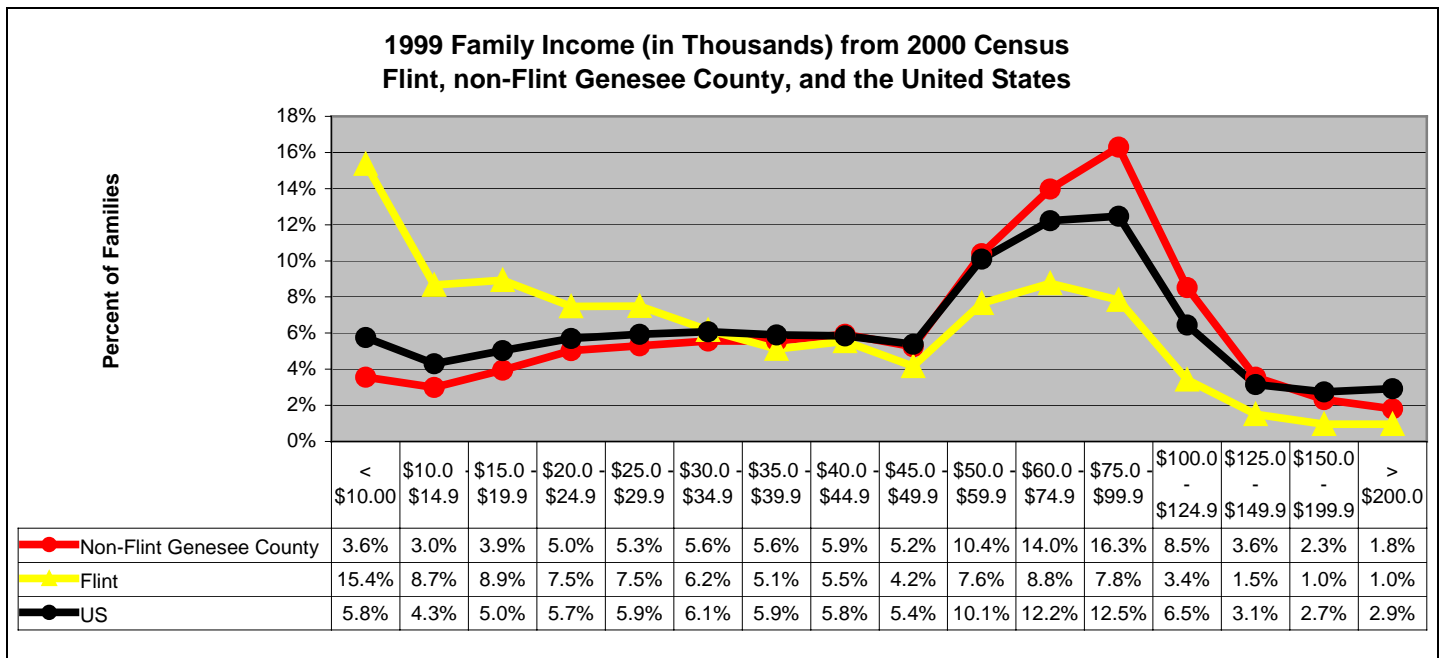
- By 2004, compared to the US as a whole, the census bureau estimated that Genesee County had 149% of the proportion of families with very little income and less than half the proportion of people with very high incomes.

Fact Sheet 4.4: Family Income continued...



The median is the midpoint of a ranked distribution. By definition, then, half the family households have incomes above the median, and half have incomes below it.

- Between 1999 and 2004 estimated median family income rose in the United States as a whole by \$3,646 (7.3%), and in Michigan by \$2,321 (4.3%). The census bureau estimates that family income rose in Genesee County by \$2,667 (5.3%). (No estimates of family income were produced for the city of Flint for 2004.)



Fact Sheet 4.4: Family Income continued...

- When 1999 income of Flint families is compared to that in Genesee County outside Flint, far greater proportions had income below \$35,000 and far fewer Flint families had incomes above \$50,000.
- In 1999, the pattern of income distribution in families was about the same in Genesee County as in the rest of the United States, although there tended to be a slightly greater proportion of very poor families and slightly fewer families with very high incomes.
- In 1999, more families in Genesee County outside Flint had incomes between \$60,000 and \$124,999 than in either Michigan or the United States as a whole.

BEYOND THE NUMBERS

The importance of family income levels cannot be overestimated. Income affects health, education, medical care, and social well-being. Family income is affected both directly, when incomes increase, decrease, or end, and indirectly, in the spin-off effects of plant closings, bankruptcies, store closings, loss of population, etc. Rises and declines in family income cannot be neglected by anyone. We all benefit from the positives of a good economic climate, and we suffer from the negatives of an unhealthy economic climate, because it is “contagious” to other areas of well-being.

EXAMPLES OF INTERVENTION EFFORTS

- **National League of Cities** - introduced in 2004 the “Municipal Action to Reduce Poverty” project. The goals are to assist local officials in addressing barriers related to economic needs of the poor, and identify tools, activities, and strategies to alleviate those needs. Components include providing information about how to reduce poverty, developing a strategic approach for meeting needs, and providing conferences, workshops, mentoring, and related meetings.
- **Michigan Works! Systems, Career Alliance, Inc.** - Genesee/Shiawasee County’s central location for both linking with training programs and providing programs, including Flint Family Road.

Source: 2000 US Census, United States Bureau of the Census, and: 2004 American Community Survey, United States Bureau of the Census

Note: The census bureau defines a family as “a householder and one or more other people who is living in the same household who are related to the householder by birth, marriage, or adoption.” Furthermore, “all people in a household who are related to the householder are regarded as members of his or her family. A family household may contain people not related to the householder, but those people are not included as part of the householder’s family in tabulations. Thus the number of family households is equal to the number of families, but family households may include more members than do families. A household can contain only one family for purposes of tabulations. Not all households contain families since a household may be comprised of a group of unrelated people or of one person living alone – these are called nonfamily households.”

Family income, therefore, depends not only on how much income each breadwinner earns, but how many breadwinners there are in the family household. As a result, for example, two parent households in general are likely to have higher family incomes than single parent households in general.

“Total income” is defined as “the sum of the amounts reported separately for wage or salary income, net self-employment income, interest, dividend, or net rental or royalty income or income from estates and trusts, Social Security or railroad retirement, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), public assistance or welfare payments, retirement, survivor, or disability pensions, and all other income.

Despite that, some things are not included as income: capital gains, money received from the sale of property (unless business related), the value of food stamps, public housing subsidies, medical care, employer contributions for individuals, etc., withdrawal of bank deposits, money borrowed, tax refunds, exchange of money between relatives living in the same household, gifts, and lump-sum inheritances, insurance payments, and other types of lump-sum receipts

The 2000 census distribution of family income was based upon the exhaustive census survey, not an estimate. The income year that was reported in the census was, however, 1999.

The 2004 estimates were made using a representative sample of families who were then interviewed to obtain the data that formed the basis for the estimates.

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