

Basic Economy Security TablesTM (BEST) Report Community Forum Summary June 23 and 27, 2011 Metro United Way

The following summary is feedback captured from two community forums, where attendees were broken into small groups to discuss and answer the questions below. A spokesperson from each group scribed their respective answers on flipcharts and presented them to the entire group of attendees.

Table Discussions:

1. What is important about the KY BEST Report?

- Focus and talking points for W4W
- Concrete description of economic security vs. poverty / "at risk"
- Disturbing reality of the challenges of hardworking families
- Great tool for counseling and budget planning
- The data is in the public eye again
- Shifts language from "anti-poverty" to "financial security"
- Attracting employers that can provide good wages
- Creates awareness
- True "picture" of stakeholder goals
- Workforce development
- Post-secondary education
- Measurable data
- Realistic, interpretable, thorough comparisons
- Covers county by county
- Breaks down into categories (housing, food, etc.)
- Dispels myth that earning above poverty line is adequate
- Wake up call to economic reality
- Talking points for new Women 4 Women Champions 4 Her members
- Highlights need for future investments
- Shift in language

2. What does it mean for you and your family (or a family you serve or program you fund)?

- Family job loss impact need for budgeting
- Parenting and guidance
- Policy challenges are bigger than jobs
- There is a starting point to share with stakeholders
- Emphasis on post-secondary education; includes savings and asset development
- Gives families and college students a goal for career/salary to allow for self-sufficiency
- Gives stakeholders data to help advocate for funding
- Motivational tool for young adults
- Shows clients they are not alone with financial issues
- Better insight to help agencies direct people to resources

- New quantitative standard for everyone's future
- Provides realistic goals regarding career planning
- Childcare cost data
- Encourages people to advocate for broader economic access and support for women
- Enables us to focus on how different sectors affect economic opportunities: education, transportation, housing, etc.

3. Who is the first person you will share this information with and who else should know?

- Single moms
- Low income workers
- Students
- Donors and fundraisers for supplemental programs
- Corporations
- Business owners
- KY Economic Development Council
- State Chamber of Commerce
- Media throughout the state
- Policy makers
- Family
- Advocacy groups
- College counselors
- Kentucky Association of Counties (KACO)
- Greater Louisville, Inc.
- Legislators
- Community
- Family
- Staff
- Board
- Educators
- Those directly impacted; those who work with those who are directly impacted

4. What is your biggest concern about this new information?

- That the data sits on the shelf
- What does "pro- active" look like?
- What it requires for children to have financial security
- The types of jobs being attracted
- Breaking the cycle for the future
- Jobs that we are preparing our kids for
- It will be seen as a "women's issue", and it's a community and family issue
- It is a lot to digest and it's dry
- Jobs don't meet need and people don't match jobs
- Does not include education loans
- People may not believe the numbers
- Pay scales of current jobs
- How to address student loans and their impact
- Promotes marriage as a way to achieve self-sufficiency
- Information overload
- Getting people to find data credible and accurate

- Subject of this data is often marginalized
- How to recover from recession and gain momentum
- "Next Degree" does not always apply
- Continued loss of government support
- Lack of sufficient, economically secure jobs
- Getting the data to the right advocates who will act on it
- The Male/Female age gap
- Lack of resources within KY to move families forward; how to fill need gaps
- The information may not be used or paid attention to in government documents

5. What can you do to spread the word about KY BEST Report information?

- Tell business owners and corporations
- Bring the data to meetings, outings, events
- Put it on websites
- Send it to the cabinet of health and family services
- Write to your Congress person
- Network it
- Use it to inform career development programs