Savannah :: Chatham
COMMUNITY INDICATORS DATABASE

August 2013
3rd Edition
produced by the
Armstrong Public Service Center

photo: GA Dept. of Economic Development
## Education and youth development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Ed.3 Data</th>
<th>2010 vs.GA</th>
<th>2011 vs.GA</th>
<th>2012 vs.GA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First grade readiness (proficient English and math skills)</td>
<td>83.4%</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth grade reading proficiency</td>
<td>86.7%</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-time high school graduation rate</td>
<td>63.3%</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disengaged young adults (age 18-24)</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of school suspensions (percent of 12th graders)</td>
<td>18.7%</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teenage birth rate (per 1,000 female 15-19 year-olds)</td>
<td>40.3%</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Health and Wellness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Ed.3 Data</th>
<th>2010 vs.GA</th>
<th>2011 vs.GA</th>
<th>2012 vs.GA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health insurance coverage rate (for those under 65)</td>
<td>76.7%</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-emergency use of hospital ER (per 1,000 persons)</td>
<td>83.6%</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school students with unhealthy weight</td>
<td>34.6%</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthy birthweight babies</td>
<td>89.8%</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Economic Independence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>2010 vs.GA</th>
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<th>2012 vs.GA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working households that are low income</td>
<td>32.7%</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank account ownership in low income households</td>
<td>72.7%</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeownerships rate in low income households</td>
<td>26.6%</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing costs in low income households (% spending more than 30% of household income)</td>
<td>75.6%</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Regionalism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Ed.3 Data</th>
<th>2010 vs.GA</th>
<th>2011 vs.GA</th>
<th>2012 vs.GA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coastal Empire Coincident Economic Index</td>
<td>158.0</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solid waste recycling (lbs. per person)</td>
<td>99.4%</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good air quality days (Percent)</td>
<td>62.3%</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of alternative transportation (percent of total trans.)</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public transportation ridership (per capita)</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average commute time (minutes)</td>
<td>22.1%</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### Trend Indicators

- **NO Trend**: No comparable past data
- **favorable trend**: Out-performing Georgia
- **relative stability**: Similar to Georgia
- **unfavorable trend**: Under-performing Georgia

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www.savannah-chatham-indicators.org

2010-2012 Summary of Change
Savannah::Chatham Community Indicators
Executive Summary

The Savannah::Chatham Community Indicators report provides data about twenty key indicators describing the well-being of the community that encompass education and youth development, health and wellness, economic independence and regionalism. The indicators are meant to provide information that is meaningful, valid, understandable and applicable. The purpose of reporting the information is three-fold: describe emerging trends, opportunities and challenges; serve as a catalyst for conversation among members of the community leading to action; and inform the citizenry of Chatham County on important issues.

The education and youth development indicators reveal mixed results. Indicators that moved in a favorable direction as compared to data from the previous period were on-time graduation rate, disengaged youth, and teenage birthrate. Fourth grade reading proficiency, on-time graduation rate, and out-of-school suspension data were less favorable than comparable state-level data. First grade readiness declined, but remained above state averages. Data for disengaged 16- to 19-year olds and teenage birthrate improved to be more favorable than Georgia data.

The health and wellness indicators reveal issues which present continuing challenges to the community. Deteriorating conditions were recorded for the health insurance coverage rate for those under 65, percentage of babies born with a healthy birth rate, and the percent of high school students who are overweight and obese. For these three indicators, the Chatham County data reveal underperformance as compared to Georgia as a whole. A significant worsening in conditions is noted for non-emergency use of the hospital ER services.

The economic independence indicators were mixed and continue to identify challenges for the community. Improvement was noted for homeownership rate in low income households and housing costs in low income households. Low income households in Chatham County remain under more financial stress than their state-wide counterparts, but the homeownership rate improved to equal the Georgia rate. Bank account ownership in low income working households declined along with the percentage of those households that were able to continuously maintain a combined balance of $300 in checking and saving accounts.

The regionalism indicators describing economic, environmental and transportation conditions were mixed. The general economy improved and is expected to strengthen through 2013. Recycling per person increased along with the use of public transportation. However, commute time lengthened, air quality diminished, and overall use of alternative transportation declined. Although air quality deteriorated, it remained better than for the state. Further, commuters in Chatham County spend less time in traffic than their state-wide counterparts and are more likely to use alternative transportation than others in Georgia.
## Indicator Summary

### Education and youth development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Data</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Trend</th>
<th>vs.GA</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First grade readiness (proficient English and math skills)</td>
<td>83.4%</td>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>🟠</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth grade reading proficiency</td>
<td>86.7%</td>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>🟠</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-time high school graduation rate</td>
<td>63.3%</td>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>🟠</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disengaged young adults (age 18-24)</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>2005-07</td>
<td>🟠</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of school suspensions (percent of 12th graders)</td>
<td>18.7%</td>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>🟠</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teenage birth rate (per 1,000 female 15-19 year-olds)</td>
<td>40.3%</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>🟠</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>14</td>
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### Health and Wellness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>76.7%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-emergency use of hospital ER (per 1,000 persons)</td>
<td>83.6</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school students with unhealthy weight</td>
<td>34.6%</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>🟠</td>
<td>✧</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthy birth weight babies</td>
<td>89.8%</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td></td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### Economic Independence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working househoulds that are low income</td>
<td>32.7%</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td></td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank account ownership in low income households</td>
<td>72.7%</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td></td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeownership rate in low income households</td>
<td>26.6%</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>=</td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing costs in low income households (% spending more than 30% of household income)</td>
<td>75.6%</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td></td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### Regionalism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
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<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coastal Empire Coincident Economic Index</td>
<td>158.0</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td></td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solid waste recycling (pounds per person)</td>
<td>99.4</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td></td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good air quality days (Percent)</td>
<td>62.3%</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td></td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of alternative transportation (percent of total trans.)</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td></td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public transportation ridership (per capita)</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td></td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average commute time (minutes)</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td></td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key:
- **No comparable past data**
- **Favorable trend**
- **Relative stability**
- **Unfavorable trend**
- **No comparable Georgia data**
- **Out-performing Georgia**
- **Similar to Georgia**
- **Under-performing Georgia**
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Introduction

The Savannah::Chatham Community Indicators project provides data about 20 key indicators of well-being describing four major areas: education and youth development, health and wellness, economic independence and regionalism. These indicators may be used to establish a baseline for identifying priorities, developing solutions and monitoring progress toward an improved quality of life in our community.

Many community stakeholders were involved in a strategic planning process that identified priority areas of interest covered by the indicators. This process included surveys of community and business leaders, a survey of the population, and focus group sessions with community and business leaders. The process was completed between late 2007 and 2009. The Savannah::Chatham Community Indicators database and this report emerged from that process.

The primary purposes of developing and updating the database are:

- **Describe emerging trends, opportunities and challenges** that can be prioritized and addressed by the people, governments and institutions of the region.

- **Serve as a catalyst for conversation** among people and policy-makers to monitor the effectiveness of strategies and to assess the deployment of public and private resources in addressing matters of community interest.

- **Inform the citizenry** of Chatham County and the region in providing information about the community on matters that are important to them.

In each category, the selection criteria for the indicators included the following:

- **Meaningful.** The indicator measures a specific condition of interest to the public, government or agencies. It characterizes a matter that spans community-wide interests.

- **Valid.** The indicator is obtained from a consistently reliable source. It is timely, readily available, accurate and measurable.

- **Understandable.** The indicator is easy to interpret and communicate to various constituencies.

- **Applicable.** The indicator facilitates the establishment of priorities, development of policy and evaluation of outcomes.

Although great care was exercised in compiling the indicators, an occasional practical problem such as initial collection or recent availability of new and relevant data resulted in minor variances in applying the selection criteria to the indicators. The project is a living work-in-progress capable of adjusting to the changing needs and preferences of the community. It is anticipated that the list of indicators will change through time.
Health

Health care has been an issue dominating the political landscape since 2010. According to the American Community Survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau, 15.5% of Americans did not have health insurance in 2010. In Georgia, the figure was 19.7%, more than four percentage points higher than the national level. The uninsured rate for children under 18 in the U.S. was 8.0%, while it was 9.8% for Georgia. The national health care reform legislation aspires to make health insurance more affordable and aims to increase the access to health care in the nation. High quality health care for all in our community is essential to a high quality of life.

Research highlights

The health and wellness indicators reveal issues which present continuing challenges to the community.

The health and wellness indicators are health insurance coverage rate, non-emergency use of hospital emergency departments by self-paying or indigent patients, percentage of high school students with an unhealthy weight, and percentage of babies born with a healthy weight. Good health outcomes improve the quality of life, enhance productivity, and contribute to the well-being of a community as a whole.

Chatham County's health insurance coverage rate is two percentage points less than the state average for those ages 18 to 64. The non-emergency use of hospital emergency departments increased substantially from 2011 to 2012 and broke out a four-year period of relative stability. In 2012, the percentage of high school students in Chatham County who have unhealthy weight is approximately equal to the state (2011 YRBS data). In Chatham County, the prevalence of overweight adolescents was higher among females and African Americans. A lower proportion of babies were born with a healthy weight in Chatham County as compared to Georgia. The incidence of healthy birth weight babies favorably reversed a downward trend for the state, while the county rate fell for the second consecutive year.

- The health insurance coverage rate for those ages 18 to 64 in Chatham County was 71.2% in 2011, a decrease from 2010. The state rate was 73.2%.

- In 2011, 92% of Chatham County residents under 18 had health coverage, which is higher than the state rate of 90.5%.

- In 2012, the non-emergency use of emergency rooms by self-pay or indigent patients was 83.6 visits per 1,000 population, a substantial jump from 63 in 2011.

- The percentage of Chatham County high school students of unhealthy weight was 34.6% in 2012, as compared to 34.8% for the state (in 2011).

- In 2011, healthy birth weight incidence in Chatham County was 89.8%, while in Georgia it was 90.6%.
Family health and well-being

Good health is the most basic desire of a human being. Without it an individual is unable to perform everyday tasks and adverse health outcomes often jeopardize the economic well-being of the family unit. Presented below are several indicators reflecting family health and well-being across the age spectrum from birth to old age. The indicators characterize access to health care, healthy lifestyle outcomes among youth, and maternal and infant well-being.

INDICATOR 1: Health insurance coverage rate

What does it measure?
This indicator provides a broad measure of access to health care services. The variable measured is the health care insurance coverage rate among those under age 65 in Chatham County. The American Community Survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau began to collect health insurance coverage data in 2008. Prior to that, health insurance data was available only at the state level through the Community Population Survey.

Why is it important?
The indicator characterizes medical care access through health insurance coverage programs. People without health care insurance generally have reduced access to health care and tend to receive less preventive care. Their children are more likely to be uninsured as well which puts them at greater risk of having undetected health problems. In addition, low coverage rates among children can lead to adverse outcomes in other matters such as school attendance and learning outcomes.

How are we doing?
In 2011, 76.7% of Chatham County residents under the age of 65 had health care insurance. Compared to 2010, this is a 0.9 percentage point decrease in coverage for those residents. The state rate increased slightly to 78.2% from 78.1% in 2010.

Among those 18 and under, the proportion of Chatham County residents with health coverage increased to 92% from 89.6% in 2010. For Georgia, the coverage rate for those under 18 increased 0.3% from 2010 to 2011.

Among adults 18 to 64 years, 71.2% of Chatham County residents were insured, a decline of approximately two percentage points from 2010. This coverage rate is approximately two percentage points below Georgia’s coverage rate for the adult, non-retirement age population.
HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE RATE, 2008-2011
UNDER AGE 65
Source: U. S. Census Bureau (American Community Survey, Table B27001)

HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE RATE, 2008-2011
BY AGE GROUP
Source: U. S. Census Bureau (American Community Survey, Table B27001)
INDICATOR 2: Non-emergency use of hospital ER (emergency departments)

What does it measure?
This indicator is the number of emergency department visits that are not for medical emergencies per 1,000 persons at the two major health care systems (three hospitals) in Chatham County: St. Joseph's/Candler and Memorial University Medical Center. The data were provided by the hospitals and the measure is defined as emergency department patients classified as self-payers and indigent/charity visits with non-emergency (level 1 and level 2 acuity) cases. The data are standardized across the years by dividing by the U.S. Census Bureau population estimate for Chatham County.

Why is it important?
This indicator is an indirect measure of the lack of access to primary care physicians and/or the lack of a primary care “medical home” among the population. Reliance on emergency room care for non-emergencies that could be treated through primary care is cost inefficient and diverts resources from patients who require immediate care. Persons without health insurance tend to use hospital-based emergency department treatment because the emergency room provides immediate treatment without immediate payment. Increasing use of emergency rooms for non-emergency cases provides information about the degree to which hospital emergency departments are being substituted for primary health care.

How are we doing?
The number of county residents using hospital emergency rooms for non-emergency visits increased to 83.6 visits per 1,000 county residents in 2012 from 62.7 in 2011. The record-high level of use ends a four-year period of relative stability.

NON-EMERGENCY USE OF EMERGENCY ROOMS PER 1,000 PERSONS
Source: Memorial University Medical Center and St. Joseph's/Candler Hospital
INDICATOR 3: High school students with unhealthy weight vs. GA

What does it measure?
Percentage of high school students in Chatham County who are not of healthy weight, based on their Body Mass Index (BMI) for the appropriate age and gender percentiles in 2010 and 2012. Persons are characterized as being of unhealthy weight if their BMI is equal or greater than the 85th percentile of BMI’s for high school students based on the Center for Diseases Control growth charts for school age males and females in the U.S. Individuals whose BMI is at or above the 95th percentile range are considered to be obese. The data were collected by means of a county-wide survey conducted by the Armstrong Atlantic State University Public Service Center.

Why is it important?
This measure provides data about healthy lifestyle outcomes among high school aged children. Weight outcomes depend primarily on choices made about activity lifestyle and food intake. Childhood obesity has been linked to serious medical conditions both during childhood and later in life and has negative effects on the social and psychological development of children. The Body Mass Index is a measurement of body fatness based on weight, height, age and gender. The measure accounts for size and growth patterns among children of high school age.

How are we doing?
The percentage of high school aged children in Chatham County who are unhealthy overweight was 24.9% in 2010 and increased to 34.6% in 2012. In Georgia in 2011, the rate was 34.8%. In Chatham County, the rate was higher among females compared to males (37.5% vs. 23.5%) and among African Americans compared to whites (37.5% vs. 16%). The data indicates an increasing incidence of unhealthy weight among high school students in Chatham County from 2010 to 2012.

PERCENTAGE OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH UNHEALTHY WEIGHT, BY GENDER AND RACE: 2010, 2012
Source: AASU Public Service Center
INDICATOR 4: Healthy birth weight babies

What does it measure?
The percentage of babies born in Chatham County whose birth weight is greater than 2500 grams, or equivalently, 5.5 pounds. The data are provided by the Georgia Department of Community Health.

Why is it important?
Babies born with low birth weight face increased risk for infant mortality. Additionally, low birth weight has been linked to higher frequencies of long-term disabilities and delayed or impaired motor and social development. It is a predictor of future medical needs. Common factors that cause low birth weight are smoking during pregnancy, low maternal weight or low pre-pregnancy weight.

How are we doing?
Chatham County data decreased for two consecutive years after peaking in 2009 at 90.3%, falling to 89.8% in 2011. The Georgia rate increased to 90.6% in 2011, favorably reversing a long-term downward trend.
Links and Resources

Indicator 1: Health insurance coverage rates
Multi-year health insurance coverage rates by state and county in the United States, from the US Census Bureau
http://www.census.gov/did/www/sahie/data/interactive/

“Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2011,” from US Census Bureau

Health Insurance Coverage Statistics, from the CDC
http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/hinsure.htm

Indicator 2: Non-emergency use of hospital ER (emergency department)

Emergency Department Visits for the U.S., from the CDC
http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/ervisits.htm

Press release [5/30/13] from the CDC about the 2012 Health, United States report with a special section on emergency care
http://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2013/p0530-emergency-room.html

Indicator 3: High school students with unhealthy weight

"Childhood Obesity," from The Future of Children

BMI for Children and Teens, from the CDC
http://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/assessing/bmi/childrens_bmi/about_childrens_bmi.html

Obesity Rates by State (2009), from Trust for America’s Health

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