

**JOB SKILLS AND NEEDS IN THE
NORTH END OF MIDDLETOWN:
A Survey of Residents' Employment
and Barriers to Employment**

Spring 2003

This report was written by
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cooperation with the North End Action Team (NEAT) and the

Special Thanks...

We would like to thank the north end residents for participating in our survey. We appreciate the help of the community, for inviting us into their homes and lives. We enjoyed working with you.

Many thanks to the North End Action Team (NEAT), Professor Rosenthal, and Sara Norr for guiding us through this extraordinary opportunity.

We would also like to extend a special thanks to north end residents who helped us format and conduct our survey: Cookie Quinones, Nora Manns, Elsie Arnold, Stanley Herring, Luke and Carla Hansen, Yatu Busari, and Peggy Busari.

Last but not least, thanks to the Community Research Seminar for your helpful critiques and support, and Sharon Smith of the Wesleyan University Sociology Department for copying so many of our drafts.

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May 2003

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5-minute summary

We, four Wesleyan students along with several community members, spent the last 4 months gathering information from over 60 North End residents in an attempt to give a picture of the barriers and strengths that influence resident employment. This is a summary of our final report. The whole report is available at both the NEAT (North End Action Team) office, 33 Ferry, and the Russell Library.

During this time we also collected specifics from certain residents who wanted to participate in a Job Database Neat is constructing. This Job Database will try to connect participating residents with job openings and training opportunities. If you would like to learn more about this database, contact the NEAT office at 346-4845.

What we found: (We interviewed 24 males (40%) and 37 females (60%))

- 50% of residents interviewed are currently employed.
 - 8 people have steady skilled jobs.
 - 6 people have steady work in low-skilled jobs.
 - 10 people have skilled steady jobs but are looking for better jobs.
 - 6 people have steady work in low-skilled jobs but are looking for better jobs.
- 38% of residents interviewed are unemployed.
 - 3 people are short-term unemployed and have formal education (a certificate or degree).
 - 9 people are short-term unemployed and have on the job training.
 - 7 people are short-term unemployed and don't have any specific skills.
 - 4 people are long-term unemployed.
- 12% of residents interviewed are not in the work force (disabled or retired).
- 62% of women are currently employed.
- 29% of men are currently employed.

Factors that effect Employment

Education:

- We found that **more education does not guarantee** a job. Those who are unemployed are as likely to have their GED/High School diploma as those who are employed. However, we found a **relationship between having more education or training and having better job opportunities**. Having training in a specific field, like construction, nursing or mechanics was especially helpful.
- We also found that there is a **high demand for training** in the North End, especially among people in low-skill jobs. Desire for computer training was the most frequently mentioned. Also, among residents who do not have their GED, nearly all want to get it. Reasons cited for not finishing high school or GED programs included not having enough time because of children and anxiety over school.

Childcare:

- **Most residents with kids have access to childcare**. However, most people do not use formal childcare (like a daycare center). Instead, most parents have created **informal childcare arrangements**. Informal childcare is when children are taken care of by family members, friends, and neighbors. Parents who have a partner (17 people) use bother informal (10) or formal childcare (7), while the single parents (13 women) use informal childcare (8) or have no form of childcare (5).

- Among parents who have access to informal childcare arrangements (a grandmother or a friend), employment is generally stable. However when parents don't have a network of friends and family in the area, finding a stable job is difficult.
- Informal childcare arrangements are a **mixed blessing** because although they allow parents to work, they also stop the providers (mothers, fathers, friends, neighbors, or relatives) from fully pursuing other work.
- Reliable childcare is also found to be **important for continuing education and training**. Without access to frequent, low cost and flexible childcare, most parents cannot find the time to continue training while holding a job.

Transportation:

- For people who have their own cars, transportation is not a problem. However, **2/3rds of the people we interviewed do not drive their own cars**, and for them the bus system is vital. The biggest problems people have with the Middletown buses were the lack service on Sunday and at night and the lack of more service to other cities.

Disabilities:

- About **20% of the people we interviewed have disabilities** ranging from physical to psychological problems. "Disability" was generally defined as injuries and health problems that get in the way of work. This group is either out of the work force entirely or has limited employment options because they cannot stand for long hours, lift heavy object, or have trouble interacting with others.

Phone: **11%** of residents we interviewed do not have reliable access to a phone.

Drugs/Alcohol: We interviewed a few people who either have or have had drug problems that affect their employment. They said that the availability of drugs in the North End obstructs their recovery and path to stable employment.

Language: We interviewed 5 Spanish speakers who wanted help with English in order to become more integrated into society.

Systemic Problems: Government benefit cuts, racism and the bad economy were all cited by residents as barriers to employment.

Strengths of North End Residents

The North End residents we interviewed are a diverse and interesting group of people with a variety of talents and skills.

- Many women work in the medical field or are advancing in the medical field.
- Many people have experience with construction or mechanical work.
- Over 2/3 of residents have computer skills
- There are dancers, poets and musicians, one of whom just recorded a CD.
- Community members can speak a variety of languages in addition to English, including sign language and Spanish.
- Many included in their job goals a desire to help the community by counseling kids, families or organizing unions.

Overall, the North End residents we interviewed are a resourceful group skilled at adapting to challenges.

Introduction

Since its inception six years ago, The North End Action Team (NEAT) has participated in significant changes in Middletown's north end. This report constitutes one result of NEAT's current efforts to empower and engage north end residents in the revitalization of their community. This project had two goals: first to create a job database containing profiles of neighborhood residents with which NEAT can facilitate neighborhood employment by matching community members with employers; and second, to produce a comprehensive report on employment, which attempts to document the multiple and interacting factors that have produced and influenced the neighborhood's current state of employment.

This report seeks to ensure the continuing participation of the north end residents as actors and benefactors in their neighborhood's revitalization by studying factors that effect stable employment. In 2001, the Middletown Redevelopment Agency adopted the North End/CBD Urban Renewal Plan, based on the concepts of neighborhood revitalization developed by NEAT (Middletown Redevelopment Agency). This plan includes the building of new mixed-income housing in the north end. NEAT is concerned that this project, combined with the ongoing gentrification of Main Street, may raise rents and force current low-income residents to find housing in more affordable neighborhoods. NEAT seeks a "neighborhood renaissance" for all and a situation in which current residents have the stable employment necessary to sustain themselves as their neighborhood changes. The long-term hope is that sustainable employment will endow residents with the ability to pay housing costs, and empower them to "retain a leadership role in defining the culture of the North End" (Lydia Brewster, Community Organizer).

This report was produced primarily by the labors of four undergraduates enrolled in the Community Research Seminar with Professor Rob Rosenthal at Wesleyan University. We interviewed over 60 people in the course of our study and gathered a unique body of information. For the purposes of analysis, the report is divided along significant areas relevant to employment.

Many factors affect the employment of north end residents. A category such as employment naturally varies a great deal from person to person, but some significant trends nevertheless emerge. For instance, analysis shows that people with a high-school diploma or GED alone do not have a higher employment rate than those without one. However, having additional training or short-term education beyond high-school correlates with having better jobs and job opportunities. Overall, a large percentage of north end residents expressed a desire for additional training, especially individuals working in low-skill jobs.

Many residents require childcare to support their employment. Most who need childcare do have it, and the use of informal child-care arrangements predominates.¹ Furthermore, the bus system is particularly vital to stable employment for north end residents as 2/3 of the residents do not get around primarily by driving themselves. Physical and psychological disabilities constitute significant obstacles to sustainable employment for many in the neighborhood, yet a few individuals show that these are not insurmountable barriers. Unreliable phone access, limited English skills, and drug and alcohol problems also negatively affect residents' ability to attain and hold jobs. Finally, larger systemic problems clearly exacerbate employment difficulties for some north end residents.

The following pages outline a path to these conclusions. The Literature Review seeks to orient the reader in theoretical grounding for carrying out this project. The Methodology section explains the process used to develop the instrument and the means for carrying out the research. Illustrating some of the larger systemic influences on employment, the Backdrop portion of the report contextualizes the north end. The Employment Demographics section profiles the three major groups making up the surveyed population: the employed, the unemployed, and individuals not in the work force. The Barriers and Needs section describes possible causes and effects of employment difficulties, and resident responses to these challenges. Finally, the Conclusion seeks to summarize the report and prescribe steps that can be taken by NEAT and other organizations in Middletown to increase employment, raise standards of living,

¹ See the Definitions section for an explanation of informal childcare.

and generally better the situations of north end residents while stabilizing and improving the long term prospects for the neighborhood.

Literature Review

Substantial sociological research has been conducted on factors that contribute to employment. The following is a summary of the studies that most informed this report.

Education

There is a general consensus that higher levels of specific training will lead to improved levels of employment, if not increase hours worked. Not surprisingly, the form that this training should take is under constant debate. Some argue that almost any opportunity to complete postsecondary education will yield in positive results. Diana Spatz outlines the effect of further education on welfare mothers who get a postsecondary degree: "A City University of New York graduate school study of poor mothers in that state who were on A.F.D.C. when they entered college shows impressive results. Within a year of graduation, 89% had jobs, 87% with earnings high enough to get off welfare" (Spatz). Similar results were found in Illinois, Pennsylvania, Wyoming, Washington and Tennessee. Spatz explains that training programs, while expensive, bring about an impressive return "of \$2.82 for every net dollar invested over five years" (Spatz).

Other sources argue that certain educational advancements by themselves, such as attainment of a GED, are not enough to influence job opportunities. Jian Coa et al. go analyze two studies that compare the effects of having a GED, a high school diploma, or neither, on employment opportunities. These researchers discovered that in both studies, having a GED or high school diploma does not effect the ability to find a job: "In general, we cannot distinguish among high school dropouts, GED recipients, and high school graduates in their hours of work" (Coa). What the researchers did find (in one of the two studies) is that the result of higher degrees of education was to make higher job levels more attainable: "For the family Income Study sample, GED recipients, high school dropouts, and regular high school graduates do not earn significantly different hourly

wage rates. However, for the NLSY mothers [the non-college study population], GED recipients fare better than dropouts, but worse than high school graduates” (Coa).

On a different note, other studies of education and training that relate to this report deal with the importance of computer training. There is a wide consensus that gaining knowledge of computers is currently one of the most useful training areas, and that knowledge of computers is often vital to attaining a higher paying job in today’s economy. In a report about computer training facilities across America, Beacham notes that: “Neighborhood Networks recognizes that computer literacy and access are absolute prerequisites for economic opportunity in the information age...” (Beacham). The California Wellness foundation says that “the fastest rate of job growth in California during the 1990s was the information-based sector; 54 percent of “wired workers” had incomes above \$50,000 per year. The average wage for the 24,000 jobs created in computer services and software in California in 1995 was more than \$58,000 per year” (California Wellness website). Although for many in the study population, such a job may be out of reach, the importance of computers in all sectors of the economy is constantly increasing and basic knowledge increasingly a standard requirement for a job.

Emotional state

Instead of stressing the practical effects of education on employment, many reports also stressed the emotional impact of being confident and surrounded by others in stable positions. “Sandra gets a life,” by Sasha Nyary and Arlene Gottfreid demonstrates the importance of emotional well-being and a stable environment for those transitioning from welfare to work. The report posits that other aspects of trainees lives will also improve in such surroundings. During her time in a supportive retraining program, the report’s ‘Sandra,’ started taking better care of her health and those around her also began to flourish.

In her study on a GED program that teaches young welfare mothers to read, Clara Jepsen tries to offer insight into the process of empowering people through education and training. She quotes a teacher who says, “when you feel you don’t have any control, you tend to react and live from day to day...But when they (the welfare mothers) read literature written by Maya Angelou and Sandra Cisneros and other women’s stories, it

helps them think about their own role as women—in terms of having a career and in terms of doing something with their lives.”

Childcare

There is a general consensus among sociological studies that a lack of quality, low-cost childcare exists in the United States. The Department of Health and Human Services declares that, using federal standards of eligibility for low-cost childcare, state programs are not meeting the demonstrated need. “Over half the states (26 states) [are] serving less than 10 percent of eligible children, with the remaining half (24 states) [are] serving between 10 and 25 percent of eligible children.”

Formal childcare is accepted among many childcare experts as the best type of care for the child. This argument is founded on the idea that children who have been in an educational environment and around peers before they enter kindergarten will be more likely to succeed. Studies like these claim that good childcare has “effects on peer relationships, classroom skills, cognitive functioning, language skills and academic readiness. In general, regular participation in quality formal childcare is found to be strongly beneficial for these important abilities and skills.” (Childcare Resource and Research webpage) In general, unregulated informal childcare providers are found to be less “child-focused” because childcare “is not a chosen profession but rather a way to help out a relative or friend” (Henley).

In their discussion of a program called Crosswalk, Joanne Ray and Marilee Roloff discuss the necessity and success of providing nonstandard formal childcare for groups of parents with special needs. For the group of young single mothers at Crosswalk, most of whom had drug problems in the past, the typical Head Start Program did not work. Instead, the Crosswalk program adapted to offer two daily sessions for the children. This adaptation was combined changes in the parental education program, involving “fewer “formal” presentations and more on-the-spot, spontaneous, two-minute presentations.” The daycare teachers also make home visits with the social workers to better understand the home setting. (Ray)

Another study has found that with a lack government subsidized formal care, informal childcare is the most common type of care used by low-income households: “Low-income parents and the parents of young children disproportionately use relative

and non-relative family care, and most family and relative caregivers are unlicensed (Brown-Lyons et al. and Policy Initiatives website). Furthermore, the literature suggests that in addition to cost concerns, informal childcare is chosen for reasons of convenience. In Henley and Lyons's report on Child Care demands among low-income parents, they found that the top reasons for choosing specific child care arrangements, regardless of type, are affordability, convenience and safety/quality concerns. However, "Affordability and convenience, more than quality considerations, appeared to give preference to informal care." (Henley) Reasons given for why informal care is more often chosen include convenient locations and compatibility with parental work schedules (Henley).

There are studies showing that having children does not directly effect a woman's ability to be employed as long as there are programs to connect a young woman's goals to real job opportunities: "The number of children exerted only a small substantive influence on how much education and employment they (mothers) had amassed. Age at first birth had very little effect, directly or indirectly, on young-job success, and the age of the youngest child contributed to current unemployment for only a few, most of whom planned to return soon to the labor market" (Iversen).

A final study dealt with the issue of taking time off when a baby is born, or during the first months of a child's life. While the Federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), enacted in 1993, required that all employers of 50 or more workers allow all qualified employees 12 weeks of unpaid time off to take care of a newly born or adopted child, or a sick dependant, this only applies to half of all workers (those employed in companies with 50 or more employees). The other half of the workforce, many of whom are in lower-skilled jobs at smaller companies, have no guarantee of keeping their job when a child is born. This study discusses the possibilities of states using temporary disability or unemployment pensions to make up for this gap (Expanding Family Leave website).

Disabilities:

Studies of employment trends related to the disabled population show a large disparity in willingness to work and the ability to find suitable work. Despite the fact that 67% of American with disabilities indicate a willingness to work, "unemployment among

people with disabilities hovers at an embarrassing 70%, while the nation's general unemployment rate is at a thirty-year low of 3.9%" (Abilities Fund website). Other studies find that those with disabilities who have the best chance of succeeding in the workplace are in the higher socioeconomic classes with more extensive histories of education. Low-income disabled populations were found to be more severely limited in their opportunities.

An important response to President Clinton's promise to "end welfare as we know it" comes from Peter Edelman in Glenn Loury's article "The Return of the Deserving Poor." Edelman claims that "...much of the welfare policy is really better thought of as disability policy." Much of the population on welfare has a disability of some kind and "a third to a half of adult recipients seem to be unemployable, given that in the best "supported work" experiments many were still jobless despite three years of concerted searching." In light of this, Edelman questions the effectiveness of a welfare policy that concentrates on improving living standards only through employment, when many welfare recipients may never be able to hold a steady job. (Loury)

Despite these highlighted factors, many reports conclude that diverse, systemic factors were the underlying cause of unemployment. People who did best may not have had more childcare or more education, but may simply have been part of functioning support systems. Quoting Roberta Iversen: "Occupational attainment was a dynamic process involving a complex intertwining of personal actions and institutional factors, namely the availability of career information and guidance, role models, arenas for skill development, available jobs to utilize the skills, and personal support services, when needed, to take advantage of existing opportunities" (Iversen).

Methodology

There were two objectives behind gathering data about employment in the north end: to collect information for an employment database that NEAT is in the process of starting, and to produce a report on employment in the north end. In order to create an instrument that would effectively gather data useful for the employment database, the research team worked closely with Lydia Brewster, Community Organizer for NEAT,

and with Nora, a community member. In developing the survey, the range of factors deemed relevant to employment were initially defined. Naturally, factors such as education, transportation, children and childcare, and previous work experience were included, but the researchers also sought to find information about the kinds of jobs people liked as well as their goals. Additionally, the researchers sought to find out the residents' opinions on their own situations (see Appendix E for our instrument).

Interviews took place primarily on Rapallo Avenue, Green Street, and Ferry Street in Middletown, bordered by Main Street and Dekoven Avenue. When it was possible the range included the adjacent streets, including Miller Street, Bridge Street, Frazier Avenue, Portland Street and St. Johns Street. The goal was to sample as many people in the neighborhood as possible, and so the researchers canvassed door to door on the three primary streets multiple times. The target population was defined as every adult member of the north end. Each person interviewed was given the choice of whether to include her/his name for use in the jobs database or simply to remain anonymous and have the information included only in the general report (see Appendix F for the consent form). Provisions were also made for residents who were not comfortable with English through the development of a Spanish version of the interview and assigning the responsibility of those households to the two most fluent group members. All interviews were conducted with two people present, either two Wesleyan researchers or a Wesleyan researcher and a community member (see Appendix B for a discussion of participatory research).

The vast majority of interviews were carried out by pairs of student interviewers between mid-February and April 10, 2003. When someone was home, the researchers would identify themselves as working with the North End Action Team and mention that they were conducting a survey of residents regarding employment that had the potential to benefit the interviewee via the job database. When people were willing and available to be interviewed, researchers would usually enter their homes, and conduct the survey as conversationally as possible. Many people were very interested in chatting or telling their stories, and therefore it was decided early on to keep the interviews to a more open format instead of sticking strictly to the scripted questions that were initially prepared. For example, if someone answered one of the questions during a monologue, the answer

would be recorded rather than the question being repeated. This kept the interviews more conversational rather than formulaic (see Appendix D for further discussion).

Situations did arise where interviews deviated from the two students interviewing one person in a household format that was initially intended. If two of the researchers went into a household, felt comfortable, and two residents were available for interviews, they would be conducted separately. Or if the weather was nice and there were many people outside, researchers would approach people on the street or in their yards and inquire of their willingness to be interviewed. There were some concerns over confidentiality and people being comfortable in public settings, but most people were comfortable talking outside, and if not, interviews were moved to another location.

Throughout this process the researchers benefited from reviews by classmates, the Teaching Assistant Sarah Norr, and Professor Rosenthal. Nearly every week involved either a presentation to the class about the project and its progress, followed by questions, or a meeting with only Professor Rosenthal and Sarah Norr to discuss the project, questions about methodology, and any general concerns faced by the research team. These presentations and meetings provided valuable feedback and outside perspective on the project.

Backdrop Information: The North End in Profile

The Context: Connecticut

Connecticut is an affluent state as reflected in the 2000 census. The median household income was \$53,935. According to the numbers in the 2000 census, 5.5% of men and 5.1% of women in the state were unemployed. The region of Middletown in the Census Block map on the top of the next page presents a much different situation, based on the information from both the census and this project. To reiterate, our focus was on Ferry and Green Streets and Rapallo Avenue. Green Street is marked on the map below, and Ferry Street and Rapallo Avenue are on either side of it.

The north end is a racially-integrated neighborhood with many children.

People in the north end	Male	Female	Children
779	298	311	188

Race and Ethnicity in the north end	African-American or Black	White	Multi-Racial	Hispanic or Latino
779 people	181 (23%)	391 (50%)	67 (9%)	140 (18%)

There is a high number of one-person households, and also a high rate of single-female parenthood. Few people are married, and many women who are married do not live with their husbands.

Households in the north end	Family households	One-person households
407 total	172 (42%)	200 (49%)

Presence of children in single adult households	Single-female headed family households with children	Single-male headed family households with children
120 households	82 of 90 (91%)	17 of 30 (56%)

Marriage/partner status in the north end	Married	Divorced	% Married with absent spouse
Men	56 (19%)	72 (24%)	--
Women	76 (24%)	59 (19%)	29 of 76 (38%)

Only half of residents drive themselves, while walking and other forms of transportation are important.

Means of transportation to work	Drive themselves	Carpool	Walking	Mass transit ³
307 people	152 (50%)	46 (15%)	89 (29%)	0

The census showed a fairly low labor force participation rate, as well as an unemployment rate much higher than the national average.

Employment in the north end	In the labor force	Not in the labor force	Employed	Unemployed
Men	182 (61%)	116 (39%)	166 (91%)	16 (9%)
Women	176 (56%)	137 (44%)	147 (84%)	29 (16%)

Disability was a notable presence in the north end as reflected in the census and the research team data. The rate of unemployment for the disabled was higher than the rate for the general population. This can at least in part account for the low household income of the disabled population, and the high frequency of receiving various forms of government aid.

Employment in terms of disability, ages 21-64	Disabled and employed	Disabled and unemployed	No disability, employed	No disability, unemployed
Male	0	18 (100%)	137 of 222 (62%)	85 (38%)
Female	25 of 74 (38%)	49 (62%)	85 of 142 (60%)	57 (40%)

Household income	Less than \$10,000	Less than \$20,000	Median income
407 households	124 (30%)	222 (54%)	\$17,798

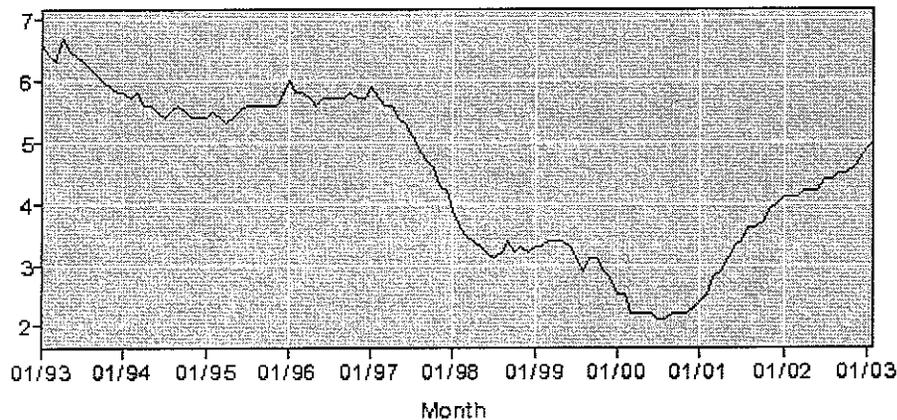
³ This lack of utilization of mass transit as reflected in the census is striking. The research project found significantly different results through interviews.

Government benefits by household	Social Security Income	Supplemental Security Income	Public Assistance Income
407 households	104 (26%)	39 (9.5%)	83 (20%)

All of the multiple person households that fall below the poverty line in the north end census block are either single women with children or unrelated individuals living together. In total, 29% (222 of 765) of people in the north end census block fall below the poverty line and 55 (24% of those living in poverty) were children under the age of 5. This strong concentration in the lowest age group is noteworthy and suggests that early childhood is the hardest time for parents to work or arrange childcare. Surprisingly, no elderly people were living in poverty.

The official unemployment rate for the state of Connecticut is represented in the chart below. Since the 2000 census factors such as employment have been negatively affected by an economic recession. This trend has hit neighborhoods that on rely lower-skilled jobs like the north end especially hard.

unemployment rate



North End Demographics Based on Research Team Sample

The data gathered by the research team reflects some of the same trends illustrated in the census. However, certain discrepancies emerge that reflect the differences between the larger census block and the three-street region that was the focus of this project.

The nearly equal division of women and men represented in the census block (311 women to 298 men) does not match with the sample the research team gathered, nor with their impression of the neighborhood. The research team believes that women do outnumber men in the north end based on who was interviewed. (See Appendix C for a discussion of the sample).

Gender breakdown in our sample	Number of Residents	Percentage
Male	24	39.3
female	37	60.7
Total	61	100.0

The marital or partner status of north end residents interviewed corresponds with the low marriage rate shown in the 2000 Census.

Marital or Partner Status our Sample	Number of Residents	Percentage
single	36	59.0
Live-in partner or spouse	25	41.0
Total	61	100.0

Of the 61 residents interviewed by the research team, 46 (75%) had children. Some of these adults were either partnered or married to someone who was also interviewed, making this percentage somewhat higher than the actual percentage of households with children. Nevertheless, children are a prominent presence in the north end and impact a majority of adult residents' lives.

Number of children in the households of our sample	Number of Residents With Given # of Children	Percentage
1	15	24.6
2	10	16.4
3	11	18.0
4	7	11.5
5	1	1.6
6	2	3.3
Total	46	75.4

The ages of the north end residents who make up the sample demonstrate the wide range of people and thus, the diverse issues facing the neighborhood.

Ages of those interviewed	Number of Residents	Percentage
Not given	1	1.6
25 and under	12	19.7
25-30	9	14.8
30-35	10	16.4
35-40	8	13.1
40-45	7	11.5
45-60	10	16.4
66 and over	4	6.6
Total	61	100.0

The fact that less than half the residents of the north end in the sample have their drivers' license reflects the neighborhood's dependence on alternative modes of

transportation. In addition to the dependence on walking and carpooling that was noted in Census 2000, a large number of interviewees cited their dependence on the bus system.

Possession of Drivers' License	Number of Residents	Percent	Percentage
yes	30	49.2	49.2
no	31	50.8	50.8
Total	61	100.0	100.0

Employment Demographics

Moving from the general picture of the neighborhood to a specific focus, the employment categories assigned to each resident surveyed form a central axis of analysis throughout this report. "Employed," in this report, is defined as currently having a full-time or part-time job. The break down of employed, unemployed and individuals who are out of the work force is represented in Chart 1.

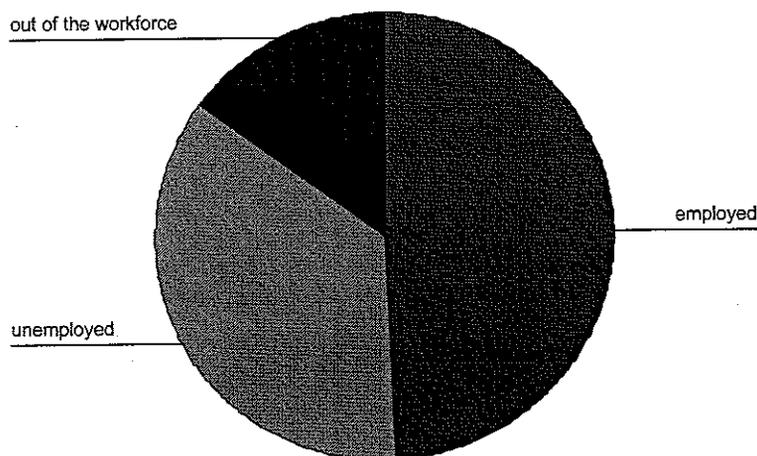


Chart 1

Chart 1

- 50% of residents interviewed are currently employed
- 38% of residents interviewed were unemployed
- 12% of residents interviewed were not in the work force

There is a noteworthy difference between women's rates of employment and that of men. (See Table 1)

Table 1: Gender vs. Employment status

Employment Status in the north end	# of Men	Percent of Men	# of Women	Percent of Women
Employed	7	29%	24	65%
Unemployed	13	54%	9	24%
Out of Work Force	4	17%	4	11%

To give a better sense of the individuals that comprise these employment categories and why, this section of the report breaks down each category in greater detail. Nine categories have been devised to describe employment in the north end in terms of employed, unemployed or not in the work force. For the population that is employed, groups were formed based on the current skill/education level required by their jobs as well as by residents' desires to have better jobs. In contrast, the section on people who are unemployed highlights short-term versus long-term unemployment and the level of education and training held by the individual. Additionally, the gender makeup of each group is noted. Chart 2, on the following page, shows the percentages in each section.

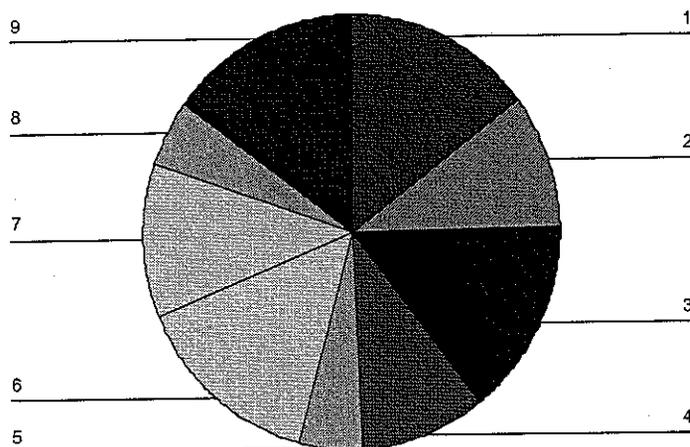


Chart 2

Key for Chart 2:The employed:

- 1=steady work in higher skilled job. (8 people)
- 2=steady work in lower skilled job. (6 people)
- 3=steady work in higher skilled job but looking for a better job. (10 people)
- 4=steady work in lower skilled job but looking for a better job (6 people)

Those unemployed:

- 5=short-term unemployed person who has formal education. (3 people)
- 6=short-term unemployed person who has on the job training. (9 people)
- 7=short-term unemployed person without specific skills. (7 people)
- 8=long-term unemployed person. (4 people)

Those out of the workforce:

- 9=people not in the work force. (7 people)

The following section gives a closer look at these categories.

Sub-Section Descriptions:

The Employed: 30 people, (49.2%) of the surveyed population.

1. Eight people comprise the **steady, higher skilled job** population.⁴ Interestingly, two of these individuals do not have their high-school diploma or GED. Four have their GED or high-school diploma with additional training, while two have completed higher education. Six of the eight individuals in this category are women. There are a variety of family types in this section, ranging from single parents, partnered parents, to those without children or adult children.

Types of employment in this population range from an account executive to an individual in sales with her BA. Many of the women are in the medical field.

2. Six individuals are in **steady, lower skilled jobs**. In this population two individuals do not have their GED, while the rest have no training or education beyond their high-school diploma or equivalent. All of the people in this category are women. Again there is a range of family situations, including single parents, partnered parents, and those without children or adult children. Steady, low-skilled employment includes working in retail, housekeeping, sewing and food service. Specific examples include working in a library, Wal-Mart, and a movie theater.

3. Ten surveyed residents are in **higher skilled employment, but want better jobs**. There is a range of education background in this section, including having no GED, having a GED with additional training, and higher education. It is noteworthy that six of the ten people in this category are under 25 years of age. In keeping with the higher rate of employment for females, 22% of females are in this category in contrast to 8% of males. All of the women in this group are parents.

The profile of this population's employment is similar to that of the steady, higher skilled job category, with one primary difference being the desire for better jobs. One

⁴ For definitions of bold terms, see Appendix A.

resident, currently employed at a childcare program, desires to become a veterinary technician or to get a childcare certification to start her own program. Many of the women in this group are currently CNA's, and are hoping to earn their LPN degrees.

4. The final employment category is composed of six people who have **lower skilled employment, but desire better jobs**. The education in this group ranges from having no GED or high school diploma to having a GED with additional training. There are equal numbers of men and women in this category, and all of them have adult children or no children at all. This point will be further discussed in the following pages.

Those in this category work in lower skilled jobs, which include, as mentioned earlier, jobs such as retail, maintenance, food service, and housekeeping. One man is working at a maintenance job that requires much lower skills than the jet engine repair experience he had for 20 years. Five years ago he was laid off. One of the women working in food service lost her job as a CNA, and a series of physical and psychological disabilities made it very difficult for her to get back on track. She currently earns much less and hopes to return to work as a CNA. Others who may work part-time aspire for full-time jobs with benefits, examples including an aspiration to be a massage therapist, or a desire to work with computers.

Unemployed: 23 people, or 37.7% of the surveyed population.

5. Three individuals are experiencing **short-term unemployment, but have a history of employment based on formal training**. All of them have their GED with short-term certificates. None of the residents from this group are single parents.

Examples from this group include: An individual who is in the middle of a training program to become a medical office specialist. She hopes to work in that field, but is having trouble finding entry-level positions. Another individual has a certificate in electrical repair from a technical training institution, and is hoping to work in a job in the technical field.

6. Nine individuals are categorized as **short-term unemployed with on the job training**. One individual in this population does not have her GED, while the rest have their GED with additional on-site training. The family situation varies in this group.

This group of individuals has a variety of job experience, including examples such as technical repair and clerical work. Some have been fired, others are trying to attend training or education programs, while some are having to take care of children or left work due to pregnancies. Many have experience in construction. One with construction experience also has experience as a musician and is attending school part-time. He aspires to be a full-time musician. Another individual was a union organizer, who desires to work in the culinary arts, but has had to quit her job to take care of a disabled child.

7. Seven people comprise the **short-term unemployed, with lower skills** category. The education background in this group includes not having a GED, having only a GED or high school diploma, to having additional training beyond a high school education. Again, the family situation varies in this group.

Maintenance, factory work, food service characterize previous employment history of this section. One individual in this group is currently enrolled to get his GED, but previously was employed in maintenance and factory work. One older woman is experiencing short-term unemployment because she feels bound to seasonal jobs, since harsh winters and make it difficult for her to walk to work. Another spent 16 years as a cook at the same workplace, but an injury caused her to lose her job. She is now seeking less physically strenuous employment. Another has worked as a waitress and dishwasher, and recently has visited many employers with no success.

8. Four individuals are categorized in our report as **long-term unemployed**. All of these individuals have their GED or high-school diploma, and two also have additional training. Two of these individuals are partnered parents, while two have no children or adult children.

All of these individuals are either disabled, physically or with substance abuse histories, or are re-entering the workforce after parenthood. One individual worked in jet

engine repair for almost 30 years, and lost his job due to drug problems. He has since recovered and wants to find a job counseling children with drug problems. Another has experience in construction and food service, and is interested in a variety of fields like computer repair, or office help but his disability limits some of his physical capacities. Another woman is reentering the work force after raising children, and would like any job that does not involve childcare.

9. **Out of the Work Force:** Seven individuals, or 11% of the total surveyed population, constitute the out of the work force category. All seven have no children or have adult children.

For many of these individuals a retirement or disabilities have taken them out of the work force. One man worked in a factory for 14 years until eight years ago when an injury and a new disability caused his employer to fire him. He lives on a permanent disability pension, but misses his job. Three individuals are retired and a fourth retired early because of a disability.

Barriers and Needs in Employment

After profiling the interviewees and creating categories based on their employment situations, it became possible to analyze the impact of various factors on employment. The Barriers and Needs section identifies trends in these areas and provides general suggestions for a course of action.

A. Lack of Education

The surveyed population was divided into four education categories to provide a more nuanced view of educational achievement. (See Table 2)

Table 2: Resident's Education Levels⁵

	Number of Residents	Percentage of Residents
No GED/h.s. diploma	14	24%
GED/h.s. diploma only	28	47%
GED/h.s. diploma with additional training	13	22%
Degree in Higher Education	4	7%

Table 3: Education level vs. Employment status

	Employed	Unemployed	Out of the work force
No GED/ h.s. diploma	8 (57%)	5 (36%)	1 (7%)
GED/ h.s. only	9 (32%)	13 (47%)	6 (21%)
GED/h.s. with additional training	8 (67%)	4 (33%)	0
Higher education	4	0	0

Level of education certainly has an impact on employment opportunity. However, an analysis of the survey population's education and level of employment demonstrates that a GED or high-school diploma, despite the popular emphasis placed up on it, alone does not guarantee employment. In fact, a higher rate of unemployment was found among residents who have graduated from high school or gotten their GED (although the small sample does not necessarily establish a relevant correlation). (See Table 3). There were several examples of residents who had succeeded in finding steady jobs without having attained their GED, like a manager of a local restaurant or a CNA.

Yet while the preceding evidence may seem disvalue continuing education, the population of individuals who achieved training and education beyond their high-school diploma or GED testify to the greater worth of this course of action. Those who had received additional training or higher education later found an easier time finding stable,

⁵ Two residents did not reveal their level of education.

higher skilled jobs (which often equate to higher wages). Thirteen individuals surveyed achieved training or education beyond their high-school diploma or GED. Of these 13, seven (53%) are currently employed in higher skilled jobs as defined in the employment demographics section of this report. In contrast, of the 28 individuals surveyed who achieved only their GED or high-school diploma, only two (7%) are in higher skilled steady jobs. All four people who have completed a course of higher education have steady, higher skilled jobs. In terms of finding jobs that pay the bills, there appears to be a large advantage in having training beyond high school.

In our sample there was an expressed high desire for further training, especially amongst individuals with lower levels of education. In total, 45 of the 61 interviewees (73%), articulated a desire for more training, ranging from broad aims like furthering computer skills to specific personal career goals. Of those 45, 31 are individuals who have either not finished high school, or have gotten their GED or high-school diploma with no additional training. All of the 14 individuals who do not have their GED expressed a desire to attain it in the future. Additionally, some of these residents without their GED desire to have further training in areas such as childcare or Certified Nurses Aide training.

In spite of this desire for more education, significant obstacles have prevented many individuals from returning to school for either a GED or additional training. Four women and one man cited a lack of childcare as reasons for postponing the pursuit of their GEDs. Some women cited pregnancy as the factor that initially prompted them to drop out of high school or quit their GED programs. Three people said they are uncomfortable in the classroom setting and cited this as a reason for not getting their GED; one person expressed concern with his lack of math skills. Another three people cited a lack of time, and similarly one resident claimed his job schedule interfered with attending school. Finally, one person blamed not having a GED on her own laziness.

Another important statistic is that 64% of north end residents are interested in getting additional computer training. Although many people (over 2/3rds) already had some basic computer knowledge, this desire for additional training demonstrates the feeling among residents that computer skills are necessary for the job market found by many people in the neighborhood.

Needs

The emotional and psychological demands of returning to school, expressed by several residents, suggest that personal attention by means of tutoring and/or mentoring could be of great assistance. For example, one current CNA wants to pursue her LPN, but has not attained the required GED certificate. She feels she is capable of being an LPN, but has been hesitant to get her GED because she finds the educational system to be a barrier with its intimidating atmosphere and unfamiliar systems. Similarly, an older woman stated that her illiteracy makes her too scared to even try attaining her GED. This inability to read also directly affects her job mobility because she fears inquiring about jobs that involve reading. Even in a neighborhood like the north end with where the educational level is relatively low, the stigma of not being able to read impacts people's employment goals. Discreet tutoring could certainly help some people overcome these difficulties.

Getting a GED is an important step, but for many people it will not be enough to secure employment. There should be channels that connect residents who want to further a particular educational trajectory with appropriate programs. (See Appendices I and J on educational resources and employment resources for additional information).

B. Lack of Childcare

Of the 61 residents interviewed, 30 have children in the age range that require childcare. Of those parents 13 are single and 17 have a partner⁶. The partnered parents use both informal or formal childcare, while the single parents use only informal childcare or have no form of childcare (see Table 4). Examples given of informal childcare providers were grandmothers, neighbors, sisters, or the child's other parent. Partnered parents often have systems for sharing childcare. For instance, one of them might work three days of the week, and the other will work a different three, or one works morning and the other nights.

⁶ See definition of "partnered parents" in definition section of the appendix.

Of the 30 residents with young children, half have children under the age of kindergarten, a population that is particularly dependent on childcare because of not yet being enrolled in school.

Table 4: North End Access to Childcare

	Number of Residents	Percentage of Residents Using this Childcare Form
Uses Formal Childcare	7 (all partnered)	23%
Uses Informal Childcare	18 (8 single and 10 partnered)	60%
Lacks Childcare	5 (all single)	17%

Table 5: Employment Status Compared to Childcare Access

	Employed	Unemployed
Formal childcare	3 (all partnered)	4 (all partnered)
Informal childcare	11 (7 single, 4 partnered)	7 (1 single, 6 partnered)
Lacks childcare	1 (single)	4 (all single)

In select cases the number and ages of children does show a noteworthy correlation with a resident's ability to find employment. Of the 9 women who are unemployed, 8 of them had minor children (see Table 6). This effect is not seen in men.

Of these 8 unemployed women with children, 4 stated they are unemployed because they have no childcare. Of the other 4 unemployed women, all of who have access to informal childcare, one had quit work to have a baby, one had quit work to take care of an especially sick child, one was in the middle of a training program, and the last had multiple systemic factors contributing to her unemployment.

Table 6: People in the Work Force⁷

	Employed	Unemployed
Women with minor children	15 (65%)	8 (35%)
Women with adult children or no children	8 (88%)	1 (12%)
Men with minor children	3 (30%)	7 (70%)
Men with adult children or no children	4 (40%)	6 (60%)

However, these 8 unemployed women with children only make up 35% of the women with children in the work force. The other 65% of women with children (15) have jobs, and of those 15 women, ten have jobs that require some sort of training or certificate. Of these 15 women, 14 have access to informal childcare and one had no childcare, but works while her daughter is in school. These facts suggest that informal childcare is a sufficient arrangement to allow for steady employment. Furthermore, table #3 shows that access to formal childcare does not correlate with employment status since four of the seven residents using formal childcare are unemployed.

Interestingly, as long as informal childcare is available, being an employed single parent actually is more likely than being an employed partnered parent. Discounting the four single parents who cite being unable to work because they lack childcare, eight single parents are employed and only one is unemployed.⁸ On the other hand, of the partnered parents (all of whom have some form of childcare), only 7 are employed, while 10 are unemployed. There may be many reasons for these numbers. However, one trend may be that single mothers have more incentive to find stable jobs because they are the only source of income for their households.

In addition to a reduced ability to work, a major effect of having inadequate access to childcare, whether formal or informal, is an even greater reduced ability to continue training paths or further education. Many women cited losing jobs or quitting educational tracks when they became pregnant, and instead focused on a faster track to

⁷ The total number of residents who have children in this graph adds up to over 30, because a few of the males with children and a few of the females with children were partner parents.

⁸ There was also a single parent whose employment was unclear

stable employment, such as whatever job was available. A few had quit higher education, or a GED program when children were born. Two mothers cited continuing education training beyond the birth of their first children, but quit once the second was born.

This trend is also seen among fathers. One young man's planned career path of starting a small business was postponed when his baby was born and he had to find quick and stable work.

Once educational tracks have been halted for the sake of child rearing, most women delay returning to school until the child is old enough to take care of her/himself, or at least is enrolled in school. One woman works at a childcare agency and can bring her child there. She wants a better job, but cannot afford to sacrifice both childcare and income until her daughter is at least in kindergarten.

There are, however, cases of mothers who are continuing training. There are at least three single mothers currently training to be LPNs, despite having young children.

Another area in which childcare is inadequate is for partnered parents who use each other as sources of informal childcare. There is one case of a woman who wants to get specific training, but cannot because any time she has off from work she must be watching her children while her husband works. In another couple, the father has recently lost his construction job and the mother is only able to work full time because the father can take care of the child. Her job, however, has no benefits. If the father finds another job they could possibly receive benefits. However, she would then have to quit her job to take care of the child.

The dependence of children and other relatives with special needs also effects employment. There are at least two instances reported of an adult needing to take care of a sick elderly person instead of working regularly. Additionally, at least six people cited needing to care for children with special needs or illnesses as limiting their ability to seek and hold employment.

Needs

The main needs expressed for childcare are flexibility, unconventional hours, low cost or no cost, a local provider, and trustworthiness. People who work late shifts or night shifts need childcare that provides a place for their children to sleep. People that

work weekends or irregular hours need flexible childcare. Many parents do not have cars and cannot afford to put their children in childcare that is further than a walk away.

Three women cited a willingness to stay unemployed until they can find a trustworthy childcare provider for their kids.

Interestingly, a distinct need for childcare was rarely expressed. While 30 people have young children, only 5 cited that they have no childcare, and only another 5 noted that they need more childcare. Most parents feel their informal childcare is adequate. In addition to being too costly, formal childcare often will not fit the needs mentioned above, and is therefore simply not an option for people.

However, while the demand for formal care is low, there is an expressed need for more *low-cost* formal care among some residents. Three people are on the waitlist for CRT or Head Start. There are also two people who have not been able to get into these agencies because their incomes are declared to be “too high.” One woman who now has older children but always had used formal childcare and remained stably employed throughout their rearing said that the hardest thing she encountered in the early stages was finding quality, low-cost childcare in Middletown. At least three people asserted that there was “plenty of childcare available,” but the issue was the ability to pay for it.

Any greater availability of low-cost formal care would probably benefit partners who are currently relying on each other for care, and may give informal child care providers relief while possibly freeing them up to work. However, this care would be most beneficial if it held less conventional hours, and an alternative payment system such as vouchers was available. Free after-school programs in Middletown for elementary school kids like “Homeroom” were also said to be vital by several mothers who need to work later hours.

C. Lack of network/ Family type

As we saw above, informal childcare is the most used form of childcare within the sample, and is often sufficient to allow employment.

The reliance of single parents⁹ on these informal arrangements, however, implies that without a web of local family or friends, a single mother is highly limited in her options. One woman, who moved to the neighborhood a year ago, works only while her young daughter is in school. She struggles to find day to day after school arrangements for her daughter if she needs to work over time, and can rarely get out on weekends because she has no reliable friends to take care of her child. Another woman moved to the north end just a few months earlier and knows few of her neighbors. In her former neighborhood she had relied on her eldest daughter, who is in her 20s, to take care of kids. Now, however, she is delaying finding work because she does not trust any of her neighbors. One of her children has a serious illness and needs special attention.

In addition to childcare, networks can also provide a system of transportation. There are several cases in our sample of carpooling within extended families. One person, often the grandmother, will be in charge of the car and will drive both her children to work and her grandchildren to school.

Networks can also provide a sense of emotional security and a real financial buffer. In one family, the wife is in the midst of job training and is not working and the husband recently has lost his job. Between the two of them, however, there was not an extreme sense of urgency, which is in part due to the fact that the wife's mother and employed sisters both live with them or next to them. In another case, after being scared of the process for years, a mother expressed a willingness to try to get her GED if her two grown daughters would do the program with her. In a different case, a woman said that one of her children has recently become very ill. She has made the decision to quit her job in order to give her child the care she needs, but she has had this flexibility, at least in part, because she has a roommate (who also has kids) who is working and can pay all of the bills.

Those mothers who have no partner show more signs or insecurity in emergency or risk situations. One single mother has a stable job working as a CNA but had to take time off when her son became sick for a couple weeks. She is now worried about losing her job. A partner or an extended network may have been able to share in the care of the

⁹ In our sample, all single parents were mothers. Because of this single mother and single parent may be used interchangeably.

sick child, and, perhaps with another income earner, may have provided more of a buffer at the prospect of losing her job. Perhaps because of this insecurity, single women with children, while making up a secure category in terms of employment, are much less likely to be inclined to go back to school. One woman expressed a desire to go back to school and change jobs to something more mentally engaging. However, because her present job is stable and earns a decent income, she does not feel justified in changing jobs until her children are older due to her being the only breadwinner. With a partner, she may have been more inclined to fulfill her goals now.

Neighborhood networks offer creative options for increasing employment by providing informal childcare, carpool, and other support opportunities. However, while they enable work for many, they also take a disproportionate toll on some. In the case of our study, the individuals holding a lot of the weight are often the grandmothers, who take care of kids and drive everyone to work for no monetary compensation.

Needs

The simple need is to have some sort of informal support network available to all residents, particularly those with children. Mothers should have connections with other mothers they can trust, and the two could swap babysitting. This is currently a problem in the neighborhood, with at least ten parents expressing a concern at “just leaving their child with anyone.”

D. Lack of transportation

Reliable transportation to and from work is essential for steady employment. The interviews show that some residents lack adequate transportation. A cause of this that over 60% of the residents interviewed do not drive their own cars as their primary means of transportation. This population depends on the bus system, carpooling, and walking to get around and get to work. Such a system obviously limits the flexibility of those who are dependent on it. Of those residents interviewed that do not own a car, many stated that transportation is a limiting factor in finding a suitable job. A few residents stated that simply not having a car is an obstacle to finding employment opportunities. Another resident was forced to quit his job because his car broke down.

Needs

Due to the high dependence on public transportation, the limitations of bus service were frequently mentioned as hindrances to employment. Many suggestions for improvements in the bus system were mentioned during surveying. The most common transportation problem cited is the lack of bus service on Sunday. One woman explained that she cannot take jobs that require Sunday hours, because without bus service, she cannot get to the jobs. Service to other cities is also cited as inadequate. For example, one man is frustrated that he cannot work outside of Middletown, where he feels he has a better chance at finding a job, because inter-city buses are infrequent and expensive. A couple of people also cite the need for additional bus stops, particularly in the Miller and Bridge Street neighborhood, as well as more frequent service in general. Many people cite the recent increase in bus fare as a difficulty. Although this may not directly affect employment, it certainly cuts into the thin margin of survival for low-wage workers. In general, a more widely accessible and widely ranging bus system at a reasonable rate is necessary to improve employment prospects in the north end.

E. Disabilities

The impact of disabilities on employment in the north end cannot be underestimated. As is to be expected, disabilities frequently prevent constant or full participation in the work force. In our report we consider injuries and health problems that were mentioned as particularly hindering the ability to work as disabilities. Examples include learning disabilities, hearing problems, hip, back, hand injuries, and psychological problems. Nearly 20% (12 out of 61) of the interviewees have disabilities within this range. In this group, 4 are employed, 4 are unemployed, and 4 are out of the workforce. That disabilities keep people from the workforce is obvious, but other consequences ensue as well. One man stated that his disability severely cuts off his engagement in the community because of his job loss. Other people are prevented from returning to school to get their GED because of psychological disabilities.

The four people with disabilities who are out of the workforce are receiving pensions and no longer work. The four who are unemployed are looking for work that

can match their capacities, such as clerical work for someone not able to stand for long periods of time. The four employed people are examples of those who have found a niche that best suits their needs and capacities. One disabled woman who is currently working is part of a type of disabilities support group.

Needs

Family provides a significant resource for the disabled. Members of the north end's disabled population require different levels of attention and care, and these needs are often met by family members. Caring for disabled family members has an effect similar to that of the informal childcare system, demanding a great deal from some people close to the needy person, sometimes to the extent that the caregiver cannot work outside these responsibilities.

There is a need for help navigating the job search process for the north end's disabled population. Finding jobs that fit people's capabilities is an area in which NEAT can provide assistance. Or, if people are unable to work as may well be the case, NEAT could assist in making sure that residents are taking full advantage of the resources available to them through the government. (See Appendix K for information on disability resources) The research team noted a striking correlation between disability and low job aspirations in the north end. None of those with a disability cited looking for a better job that involved higher skills. There is an essential need for further engagement in the community whether through work or engagement in benefits and social activities for many in this population.

F. Drug problems

Although our survey did not explicitly inquire into alcoholism or drug addictions and their effect on employment, a number of residents volunteered their opinions and experiences as to how powerfully chemical dependencies affect them. One long-term unemployed individual has been battling alcoholism for a number of years, and has been in and out of detoxification programs. He expressed extreme frustration at only being able to find short-term jobs for which he is over-qualified. One recovering alcoholic claimed the presence of a drug trade and excessive alcohol consumption makes it very

difficult for him to stay sober; fears of picking up old habits keep him virtually paralyzed in his apartment. Another man has recently overcome a drug addiction and has turned that experience into a desire to counsel youth with drug and alcohol problems. While his addiction cost him his job, this experience now provides him with a focus for reentering the workforce.

Needs

There is clearly a need for a heightened campaign to reduce the availability of drugs in the north end, in part through better policing. Because of Middletown's prominence as a center for drug rehabilitation centers, many recovering drug addicts make their homes upon discharge in the north end. A reduction of narcotics sales in the north end could help this vulnerable population of recovering addicts to stay clean and enter the work force without continuing the cycle of relapse that characterized some people in the sample.

G. Difficulty with English

Spanish was the most prominent language after English found in the north end by the research team. Many Spanish speakers in the North End have done well for themselves, but many also face a limited range of employment opportunities and frequently have job goals limited by their language proficiency. Five out of the 61 residents interviewed speak Spanish as their first language, with English skills varying from someone who can hold a conversation in English to others who do not feel comfortable communicating in English. In comparison, the 2000 Census noted that out of 407 households in the north end, 39 used Spanish as their primary language.

All of these residents who were interviewed are eager to learn more English. A difficulty with speaking English is a clear barrier to obtaining employment that is satisfactory to the individual. One man who speaks some English but has difficulty carrying on a full conversation cited this as an obstacle to employment. Another who speaks only Spanish noted the general difficulty in negotiating work opportunities. One woman, with fairly good English skills, would like to obtain her CNA, but feels she cannot because of uncertainty with English.

An inability to speak English correlates with either being employed in a lower skilled job and not looking for better employment, or with being short-term unemployed from primarily lower-skilled jobs. Of this Spanish speaking group, the one woman who speaks the most English is in a higher skilled steady job and hopes to look for a better job. The residents interviewed who are not comfortable with their English in general do not aspire for better jobs, suggesting language is a prerequisite for labor mobility. This signifies the need for ESL help. In the course of interviewing, the research team came to suspect that the portion of Spanish-speaking people in the north end might have been higher than represented in the sample.¹⁰

H. Lack of Phone

Eleven percent of residents surveyed do not have a phone, and the absence of such a resource has a clear affect on a person's ability to find and hold a job. One resident is having trouble inquiring about jobs and setting up interviews largely because of her unreliable phone access. A second unemployed individual also finds it very difficult for potential employers to reach him because he does not have a phone.

Needs

Lacking a phone is often indicative of troubles that stretch beyond unemployment, and possibly the ability to make bill payments on time. Thus, simply to supply a residence with a phone would, in most cases, be addressing a symptom, as opposed to remedying the cause. However, for a resident who is in the process of getting back on her/his feet, help securing phone service may be much needed. Additionally, NEAT's work setting up residents with credit restoration advisers and steady jobs may be the most useful and sustainable solution to this problem. Connecting residents with the various local job banks that have access to phones for telephoning employers, surfing the Internet, and building resumes may be particularly helpful as well.

¹⁰ Because only two researchers could interview in Spanish, and could only do so when a translated instrument was on hand, many Spanish speaking houses were skipped.

I. Systemic Barriers

Racism, government benefit cuts, a lack of resources, and the bad economy were all cited by residents as barriers to employment. Instances in which these factors influence employment are, of course, quite difficult to define. But that racism is still a problem in American society and that the economy is currently not employing nearly as many people as it was a couple of years ago are undeniable. As such, these factors are noteworthy, but it is difficult to suggest a course of action for them on the local level. Two individuals cited racism as a factor in their unemployment. For one person, a racist remark directed at him sparked a conflict that cost him his job. Another woman believed that racism denied her entrance into a specific childcare center.

The threat of government aid cuts provides a more clearly discernible relationship to employment. Many people cited a fear of losing government aid as preventing them from searching for further employment. A number of residents interviewed worry that if they are to earn more, they will lose government aid and end up in a worse economic situation than that which they face while they are on aid. One woman told the researchers that she cannot work more hours because her social security would then be cut. These are not unfounded fears, people have actually lost their aid. One man lost his disability pension because his wife started working more hours.

An additional issue cited by one middle-aged woman is that many programs are geared specifically to young women with children. People like herself without children or with grown children are left without programs and resources for reentry into the workforce, such as medical coverage and job training.

Strengths of the North End

The north end residents interviewed are a diverse and interesting group of people with a variety of talents and skills. Although there are many troubles in the neighborhood, there are also many reasons to be proud of the accomplishments of residents and to be hopeful about the future. Many women work in the medical field or are advancing in the medical field. Many people have experience with construction or mechanical work. Over 60 percent of residents interviewed have some computer skills. There are dancers, poets and

musicians, one of whom just recorded a CD. Community members can speak languages in addition to English, including sign language and Spanish. As part of their job goals, many residents expressed a desire to help the community by counseling kids, families or organizing unions.

Overall, the north end residents interviewed are a resourceful group skilled at adapting to the challenges of life. Where formal transportation or childcare systems were unfeasible due to a lack of funding, researchers found innumerable examples of creative informal arrangements and collaborations.

Conclusions

Ultimately a complex mixture, rather than one defined barrier affects an individual's ability to maintain steady employment that fits her/his needs. These factors range from the personal to the systemic, reflecting individual talents, problems, and situations in the context of a broader community. Affecting change for individuals is a complicated process, and at best recommendations contained in this report can help segments of the population. Nevertheless, small changes in the systems that define people's lives can provide the critical mass for neighborhood transformation. Hopefully, the analysis and suggestions of this report can make a small contribution to that broader project.

As was noted, more education does not alone guarantee success, but education and better jobs and opportunities were related. People who do not have their GED are not necessarily prevented from getting jobs, but their incidence of getting good jobs is very low. People in the north end desire training in general and the demand is particularly noteworthy among people in low-skill jobs. Knowledge of computers and desire for additional computer training are both quite high. The high demand demonstrates the importance of connecting neighborhood residents with available local programs. The NEAT jobs database has the potential to be a resource for north end residents in employment. However, expanding it to include information about and references to training programs would make it even more useful. As noted earlier,

additional training can be more fruitful in sustaining employment, rather than simply gaining a GED. However, among the residents we interviewed who do not have their GED, all cited a desire to work towards getting a GED, and could benefit simply from overcoming this first hurdle in the path towards better employment. The anxiety over going back to school faced by many residents may hinder their ability or willingness to attend a GED program and is a problem that should be addressed. A more comfortable, perhaps one-on-one tutoring situation could benefit residents who would like to continue education but have reservations. Wesleyan University may be a resource for the beginning of a mentoring program or for providing childcare for those hoping to get their GED or additional training.

The relationship of parents to employment is more complicated than that of non-parents because they need to worry about providing care and stable income for their dependants. Parenthood limits which hours in the day a person is available to work, training opportunities that could be taken during after-work hours, and the flexibility of changing jobs. Women are especially targeted in this area. All of the single parents in this sample were women. Furthermore, all but two women had gone through periods of pregnancy and newborn care in their life. Throughout the interviews, pregnancy was one of the most frequently cited reasons for quitting school, training, or a job.

Informal childcare arrangements, when available, are by far the most common solution to taking care of children in the north end. Among single moms who have arrangements, employment is usually stable. However, for some parents, the lack of people to depend on for childcare leaves them unable to work. Such a situation needs to be addressed and remedied. Additionally, although informal arrangements offer great flexibility, these situations can prevent the informal providers, such as grandmothers, mothers, fathers, friends, neighbors, or relatives, from fully pursuing other work themselves. Informal arrangements between parental partners were also shown to be less than adequate for the same reason.

Criticizing informal childcare arrangements is difficult, because they do offer a solution to a vexing problem. However, the need for childcare expansion in the north end is demonstrated by the over-extension of informal childcare providers, particularly grandmothers, as well as the underemployment of others engaged in informal

arrangements. NEAT should investigate the prospect of a childcare incubator¹¹ from the Middlesex Community College or another source. Additionally, connecting low-income residents with the Connecticut Childcare Assistance Program should be investigated as a means to secure funds for childcare. This prospect could potentially reimburse informal providers (See Appendix H for details). The construction of a north end childcare center would probably not be useful at this time because many residents do not even consider formal care an option due to budget and schedule constraints. A more useful systemic solution would be the enactment of a childcare voucher system along with assurance of reliable and *flexible* childcare in Middletown, especially for women who wish to continue education or training. Perhaps in the future, if the plausibility of formal childcare becomes more grounded in resident demands, a neighborhood care center could be discussed.

An adequate transportation system is necessary to get to and from work. Many residents interviewed cited various suggestions for improvement in the public transportation system. The centrality of the bus system for employment in the north end cannot be underestimated with 2/3 of those interviewed not driving their own cars. The biggest transportation problem cited was the lack of service on Sunday and insufficient service at night. Sunday service and better night service are concrete steps that could be taken to provide north end residents, who frequently work in service sector jobs that demand untraditional hours, a better chance at steady work. Service to other cities was also cited as inadequate. With improved inter-city bus service, more residents of the north end could hopefully find employment in nearby cities.

Disabilities often keep people out of steady employment. About 20% of the people we interviewed have disabilities ranging from physical to psychological problems. A more active engagement on NEAT's part could involve seeking out residents with disabilities and encouraging engagement with community activities, as well as ensuring full service by governmental programs and agencies. These residents should receive help to focus on job goals that agree with their specific needs, and should be connected to low-cost health services and support groups.

¹¹ A childcare incubator involves a childcare training program as well as a providing of childcare

11% of residents interviewed do not have reliable access to a phone. Assistance in finding inexpensive phone service could aid the process of working and finding employment.

The north end is the home to many people who have gone through alcohol and drug rehabilitation in Middletown and the availability of drugs in the neighborhood to those who already struggle with drugs is a significant problem, particularly in maintaining steady employment. Support groups and more extensive post-discharge involvement by treatment centers with patients may be helpful.

Five people out of the 61 residents interviewed spoke Spanish as their first language and have difficulty with English. Spanish speakers would benefit from ESL programs that could be made more accessible, such as Middletown Literacy Volunteers or Wesleyan University student ESL programs.

Finally, the roles of systemic barriers to employment cannot be underestimated. Unfortunately, little can be done to influence them. Racism, government benefit cuts, and the bad economy were all cited by residents as barriers to employment, and must be taken into account.

An important final point to keep in mind is that many residents are affected by more than one of these categories and live a more complicated reality than can adequately be summarized in a report. This report tries to represent these various realities as accurately as possible and to prescribe actions that will improve the situations of residents of the north end. Inevitably, things have been missed, but undoubtedly recommendations in this report, if means to carrying them out are realized, will improve the job and economic situation of north end residents. Hopefully, the goal of a "neighborhood renaissance" can be realized *for all residents* just as it has been envisioned.

Appendices

Appendix A: Terms and Definitions

The following are terms throughout the report that may be unclear.

-Informal childcare: Childcare arrangements consisting of childcare provided by a family member, friend, or neighbor.

-Formal childcare: Childcare arrangements consisting of enrollment in an established childcare program.

-Single mother or single father: These individuals primarily have sole custody of their children. They are either divorced, separated, single or widowed parents. (No men were actually found to fall into this category.)

-Partnered parents: These individuals are parents with joint or shared custody of their children, regardless of formal marriage status.

-Steady, higher skilled job: A job that requires either formal or significant on-the-job training.

-Steady, lower-skilled job: A job that does not require a GED or high-school diploma, including food service, in formal child care, retail, construction.

-Higher skilled employment, but want better jobs: These individuals are employed in work that requires either formal or significant on-the-job training, but cite a desire for a better job.

-Employed in a job that does not require training, but desire better jobs: These individuals are employed in a job that does not require training, and are hoping to find a better job.

-Short-term unemployment: Seasonal or periodic unemployment, or unemployment lasting no more than the past year and a half.

-Short-term unemployment, but have a history of employment based on formal training: These individuals are short-term unemployed, and have a history of past employment that required formal training.

-Short-term unemployed with on the job training: These individuals are short-term unemployed, and have previously worked in jobs that required on-the-job training.

-Short-term unemployed, with lower skills: These individuals are short-term unemployed, and have previously worked in lower skilled jobs.

-Long-term unemployment: Unemployment that has lasted for more than a year and a half. Individuals in this category had been unemployed for up to eight years.

-Additional training beyond a GED/high school diploma: This category, also described as short-term certificates or training, describes non-four year degrees, such as electrical/technical degrees, nursing degrees (CNA, LPN), childcare certification

Appendix B: Participatory Research

The Wesleyan/North End Action Team project was grounded from the outset in principles of participatory research. Class reading for the Community Research Seminar exposed the researchers to a variety of theories, ranging from those advocating participatory research as a means to raise community consciousness to a level of rebellion to more moderate texts suggesting participatory research as a means to carry out better research. An explicit agreement on which theoretical foundations to base this project was never reached, (though fomenting rebellion never seemed particularly realistic) however, the group reached a general consensus that as much as possible, this would be a participatory research-oriented project. Constraints that became apparent over the course of the semester in carrying out participatory research included: insufficient time, inadequate community interest, and shortcomings in understanding the community on the part of the researchers.

The process of developing the instrument and interviewing reflected this commitment. The researchers developed an instrument and submitted it to Lydia Brewster and an officer from NEAT for review. Their reaction criticized the instrument for being insensitive to a generally low-skilled, low-income population. The researchers revised it to make it more sensitive, and resubmitted it to a positive response.

Initially, a goal of the project was to involve a community member as one of the two people interviewing whenever possible. Interviewing with community members, an idea suggested by Ms. Brewster, was intended to keep the researchers closer to the goals of participatory research by actively involving community members in a project that would hopefully be to their benefit as well as making the project more accessible to those being interviewed. The involvement of the community members was also intended to

give the researchers more credibility in the neighborhood in order to conduct better interviews. Ms. Brewster provided names and phone numbers of several community members who were affiliated with NEAT and had shown interest in interviewing along with the student interviewers. However, in spite of many attempts by the student researchers to make interviewing with community members a regular part of the project, it often proved difficult because of busy schedules and quite frequent cancellations on the part of community members. Busy schedules were understandable, but cancellations often seemed to reflect a lack of interest. The researchers, while still valuing the goals of neighborhood involvement advocated by participatory research, also found it to be less feasible in reality than some authors had made it sound.

Appendix C: The Sample- who was interviewed/ the slant of the instrument

The population that the research team interviewed represents an area of the report that deserves further explanation. Ms. Brewster of NEAT applied to have a survey carried out in large part because of a grant NEAT received to help young women with children in the neighborhood. Based upon Ms. Brewster's knowledge of the north end and her expectation that door-to-door interviewing would turn up a majority of women, the research team structured some of the questions to find out information that would be more relevant to such a population (such as childcare) than it would be to single men. Aware that data from the project would be used to justify the grant, the researchers were conscious of both the suspected high percentage of women in the north end and the need to interview substantial numbers of people from this population.

Early on in the project, it seemed to the researchers that a large percentage of interviews, possibly a majority, were being conducted on single men, after they were either approached on the street or found at home. This seemed a problem, and the researchers adjusted accordingly, avoiding the practice of approaching men hanging out on the street and going to knock on doors where it was more likely that women and sometimes women with children would be present. Men in homes were nevertheless always interviewed.

This practice may seem problematic in terms of objectivity, but at the same time it can be framed as ameliorating one of the primary inequalities observed by the researchers in the north end. Basically, it seemed that men had far more free time than women, in particular because of children and the responsibilities associated with them. Initially then, single men may have been making up a disproportionate number of our interviews relative to population prior to the adjustment away from interviewing men on the street because they were more often available to be interviewed. This shift was further counterbalanced when on several occasions upon approaching single women on the street or knocking on their doors, researchers were told to come back later because women had to go to work or pick up a child, while men rarely, if ever, responded similarly.

Appendix D: Softness of our instrument

The initial instrument submitted for feedback was blunt. It contained direct questions such as “Do you have a criminal record?” Based on feedback from NEAT, the instrument was revised to be more conversational and less judgmental of people and their situations. In terms of compiling data for the final report, one unintended consequence of this change was that the indirect, friendly questions, sometimes failed to attain the hard data sought for the report. The most glaring instance is the fact that the instrument never explicitly asked those being interviewed to explain their current employment status. The question: “Are you presently looking for a job?” came closest to attaining employment status information. Unfortunately, this question usually elicited a yes or no answer.

The effect of this gentleness was frequently mitigated by the more conversational tone that was created. Researchers found out a great deal about the interviewee’s situation, even if this did not include all of the particular details of employment status. Based on the data gathered, the researchers were able to compile a profile of each person in terms of employment and to categorize their situations and experience.

Appendix E: The instrument

Survey on the employment skills and needs in the North End of Middletown

Name: _____ Gender: _____

Address: _____ Middletown, CT 06457

I. Interests, Goals, Strengths

What kind of a job do you think you would like?

Can you think of any skills or interests that you have that might be helpful in finding a job? Examples: Experience in other jobs, possibly construction, typing, sewing, mechanical work, childcare, computer skills, driving skills, license, special license, food service, other.

II. Previous Experiences

If you have had a job, where have you worked before? What did you like about that/those jobs?

If credit has ever been a problem for you in the past, would you like to meet with a credit restoration adviser provided through NEAT and a local bank?

III. Limitations

-Has it ever been hard to keep or find a job...whether it was a bad boss, a disability, a language problem, lack of childcare, car trouble, a criminal record, not enough education, or something else?

-Have you had trouble changing jobs or moving to a job you would like more?

-Are you worried about your job or financial situation changing in the future? For example, do you foresee benefits, government aid, or insurance being cut or changing?

IV. Resources

-Do you have any experience with languages other than English? _____ Do you feel comfortable with your English skills? _____

- Do you drive? _____ Do you have access to a car? _____ Do you have a driver's license? _____ Have you used the buses in Middletown? _____

-How, generally, do you get around?

-Do you have suggestions for improvement in public transportation, or community organized transportation?

-Do you have reliable access to a phone? _____ If so, what is your phone number? _____

-Do you have a computer? _____ If not, would you like a computer if one is available? _____ Do you (or someone in your family) know how to use a computer and the internet? _____ Would you like to be trained in computer skills?

-Have you either graduated from high school or gotten your GED? _____
-Have you gotten any other training or education?

-If you have kids, do you have access to childcare? _____ If no, do you need childcare? _____ If you do have childcare, please describe it below (organized daycare, extended family, school):

V. Other

-Are you actively looking for a job?

-Would you like NEAT's help in finding educational, training and/or job opportunities? Would you like help with applications and/or resumes? Do you need or want transportation or information about transportation?

If you don't have your GED, do you want to get it? _____ Are you interested in a program to get your GED? _____ There are lots of reasons people don't get their GEDs, is there anything in particular that keeps you from getting yours, such as not being interested, having a hard time with math or reading, not having enough time or not having childcare?

-Are you interested in getting training in other areas such as computers, childcare certification, LPN (Licensed Practical Nurse) certification, or something else (what in particular)?

-Would you like to talk to the research team again?

-Did we forget to ask anything that you want to tell us about for the Employment Survey?

-What did you think of the survey? Were there any parts that you liked or didn't like? Do you think that we should change anything?

VI. Demographics

Age: _____

Kids, ages (?) _____

Marital status Single / Partner / Married / Divorced

Phone (if available): _____

E-mail (if available): _____

Appendix F: The Consent Form

Consent Form for A research project on the employment skills and needs in the North End of Middletown

This form requests your consent to join our research team in gathering information to help the North End Action Team (NEAT) develop an employment resources database.

Your contribution to the research will be participation in one interview. We may contact you later for further information, but you are free to decide whether or not to talk with us. We also welcome any suggestions, comments or help on our research (contacts listed below).

You are free to decide to take part in this interview or not. If you do choose to participate, you may later decide to stop—at any time for any reason.

If you wish, you may remain anonymous. If you do include your name it will be put into the NEAT employment resources database (If you choose to remain anonymous, we will not be able to enter you into the database nor contact you with employment opportunities or services in the future). Information in this survey may be used in a research report, however no names will be included. A copy of the research report will be available to the public at the Russell Library and the NEAT office once completed.

If you would like to know more about this project, or contact us for any reason, feel free to contact research team member Meg (685-5315), Annie (685-6012), Aaron (685-6098), or Mary (685-4431), or email all of us at neatjobsurvey@hotmail.com . You may also contact Wesleyan Professor Rob Rosenthal who is overseeing this project at (860) 685-2943, or rrosenthal@wesleyan.edu.

Thank you for your help!

Please check one of the following:

--I would like my name to be put into the NEAT employment databank: _____

--I would like to remain anonymous: _____

“I give my consent to participate in this research project regarding the employment skills and need of the North End of Middletown.”

Signature _____ Date _____

Appendix G: Credit Problems

In order to gather data for the employment database's resource aspect, a question was included in the survey regarding resident interest in meeting with free credit restoration advisor from a local bank. The instrument asks: "If credit has ever been a problem for you, would you like to meet with a credit restoration advisor provided through NEAT and a local bank?" Reflecting the agenda of building the community at the same time it is being surveyed, Ms. Brewster asked the researchers to inquire about interest in the credit service during the survey. This information is not directly related to the analysis, but very relevant to helping people towards the path of stable living situations, including steady employment.

Of the 61 residents interviewed, 31 cited a desire to meet with a credit restoration advisor. The reason most often expressed for not wanting to meet was simply that there were no problems with credit. A few people also felt their credit was beyond repair or that they already knew what steps to take to rebuild their credit. Of those who did cite problems with credit, most wanted to meet with a restoration advisor.

Appendix H: Childcare issues and resources in Middletown and the north end

Childcare remains a difficult area to address in terms of facilitating employment, especially for a low-wage neighborhood like the north end. The cost of formal childcare is prohibitively expensive for most residents and informal arrangements are made to suffice. The State of Connecticut's Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) offers some help to low-income parents in paying for childcare. In particular, it is geared towards parents who are reentering the workforce after receiving direct state aid.

In general, CCAP benefits are available to parents who are working, are enrolled in an approved training program, who have a verified need for childcare, and who are using a legal, eligible provider. CCAP is a CT Department of Social Services (DSS)

program operated by MAXIMUS, Inc. DSS is responsible for setting childcare policy and overseeing the operation of CCAP. The status of the CCAP program is somewhat in jeopardy with the current state budget crisis and the program has suspended new enrollment except for those parents leaving direct state aid. It is still a potentially valuable resource for north end residents who are reentering the workforce. Parents who are eligible fall into one of the following program categories:

Work Related Child Care (WRCC)

- Adult applying must be receiving state cash assistance (Temporary Family Assistance)
- Parent must be working (Provide verification of the last 4 weeks of earnings with pay stubs, CCAP Employer Disclosure Form, or letter from employer on company letterhead stating start date of employment, work schedule, rate of pay, signature and title of employer.)
- Maximum child care payment is \$325 per child per month (\$435 for child with documented special needs)

Job Connection Child Care (JCC)

- Adult applying must be receiving state cash assistance (TFA)
- Parent must be attending an approved training program. (Provide a completed Child Care Authorization Form, available from the Department of Labor)
- Maximum child care payment is \$325 per child per month (\$435 for child with documented special needs)

Transitional Child Care (TCC)—possibly suspended

- Adult applying must have stopped receiving state cash assistance (TFA) within 6 months of child care assistance application date, and have received cash assistance for at least 3 months out of the 6 months prior to the case closing date
- Parent must be working (Provide verification of the last 4 weeks of earnings with pay stubs, CCAP Employer Disclosure Form, or letter from employer on company letterhead stating start date of employment, work schedule, rate of pay, signature and title of employer)
- Child care payment is based on hours of need/Co-pay is required based on total household income and family size
- Income limit for continued eligibility is 75% of the state median income level which is updated annually in July

Child Care Certificate Program (CCC)—probably suspended

- Parent must not be eligible for the other 3 child care programs
- Adult applying must be working (Provide verification of the last 4 weeks of earnings with pay stubs, CCAP Employer Disclosure Form, or letter from employer on company letterhead stating start date of employment, work schedule, rate of pay, signature and title of employer), a teen parent attending high school, or a pregnant mother attending an approved substance abuse treatment program
- Child care payment is based on hours of need up to a maximum of 35 hours per week/Co-pay is required based on total household income and family size
- Income limit is 50% of the state median income level, which is updated annually in July, for initial eligibility.
- Parents are allowed to earn up to 75% of the state median income level for continued eligibility

Work Related Child Care/Job Connection Child Care/Transitional Child Care Payment Rates

Listed below are the payment rates for childcare in the WRCC, JCC, and TCC programs. The rates are used to calculate childcare benefits. If the childcare provider charges more than the amount in the table, the parent is responsible for the difference. Benefits for the childcare can be paid only while the parent is working or enrolled in an approved training program. Care for 35 hours or more per week is considered full-time. Anything less than 35 hours is considered part-time. Documented costs for children with special needs are accommodated on a case-by-case basis. For determining childcare rates, the state is divided into three regions, REGIONS A, B & C. The region is determined by the town where the child receives care, not by the town where the child lives. Middletown is in region B. Children under the age of 3 years are considered INFANT/TODDLER. Children aged 3 to 6 years are considered PRESCHOOL. At age 6, children are considered SCHOOL AGE.

Region B	Infant/Toddler		Preschool		School Age		Special Needs	
	P/T	F/T	P/T	F/T	F/T	P/T	F/T	P/T
Center	\$ 4.10	\$ 4.10	\$ 2.70	\$ 2.70	\$ 3.00	\$ 3.00	\$ 4.60	\$ 4.60
Group Home	\$ 3.70	\$ 3.70	\$ 2.90	\$ 2.90	\$ 3.00	\$ 3.00	\$ 4.10	\$ 4.10
Family Day Care	\$ 3.10	\$ 3.10	\$ 2.90	\$ 2.90	\$ 4.00	\$ 4.00	\$ 3.50	\$ 3.50
Other (Informal)	\$ 3.10	\$ 3.10	\$ 2.70	\$ 2.70	\$ 3.00	\$ 3.00	\$ 3.50	\$ 3.50

Child Care Certificate Program Payment Rates

Listed below are the payment rates for childcare in the CCC program. The rates are used to calculate childcare benefits. Again, if the childcare provider charges more than the amount in the table, the parent is responsible for the difference. Benefits for childcare can only be paid for parents who are working, teen parents who are attending high school, or pregnant mothers attending a treatment program.

Approved Rate Table

Region B	Infant/Toddler		Preschool		School Age		Special Needs	
	P/T	F/T	P/T	F/T	P/T	F/T	P/T	F/T
Center	\$ 4.14	\$ 145.00	\$ 2.71	\$ 105.00	\$ 3.00	\$ 105.00	\$ -	\$ -
Group Home	\$ 3.71	\$ 130.00	\$ 2.86	\$ 118.00	\$ 3.00	\$ 140.00	\$ -	\$ -
Family Day Care	\$ 3.14	\$ 110.00	\$ 2.86	\$ 100.00	\$ 4.00	\$ 105.00	\$ -	\$ -
Other (Informal)	\$ 2.43	\$ 85.00	\$ 2.14	\$ 75.00	\$ 2.14	\$ 75.00	\$ -	\$ -

Family Share of Child Care Payment Amount

Parents receiving Transitional Child Care or Child Care Certificate Program benefits are responsible for paying a share of the CCAP monthly approved amount towards their child care costs. Parents receiving state cash assistance/TFA who are receiving Work Related Child Care or Job Connection Child Care benefits are not required to pay a share of the CCAP monthly amount.

Transitional Child Care & Child Care Certificate Program Co-Pays:

<u>Family Co-Pay =</u>	<u>If Household Income Is</u>
2% of Gross Income	less than 20% SMI
4% of Gross Income	less than 30% SMI
6% of Gross Income	less than 40% SMI
8% of Gross Income	less than 50% SMI
10% of Gross Income	less than 75% SMI
	Example: CCAP approved amount is \$300. With a household income of \$9000, or \$750 per month, with a family size of 2, family co-pay is 2% of monthly income or, \$15. CCAP will pay the remaining \$285 to the provider.

GROSS ANNUAL INCOME BY STATE MEDIAN INCOME LEVELS					
Effective 7/1/01					
<u>Family Size</u>	<u><20% SMI</u>	<u><30% SMI</u>	<u><40% SMI</u>	<u><50% SMI</u>	<u><75% SMI</u>
1	\$7,853	\$11,779	\$15,705	\$19,631	\$29,447
2	\$10,269	\$15,403	\$20,537	\$25,672	\$38,508
3	\$12,685	\$19,027	\$25,370	\$31,712	\$47,568
4	\$15,101	\$22,652	\$30,202	\$37,753	\$56,629
5	\$17,517	\$26,276	\$35,034	\$43,793	\$65,689
6	\$19,933	\$29,900	\$39,867	\$49,833	\$74,750

The information provided by the state of Connecticut on its childcare assistance program suggests that it is a useful tool for parents transitioning to work or whose income is too low to pay full price for childcare. However, based upon an interview with a local home daycare provider, there is reason to believe that the state program still falls somewhat short of adequately subsidizing childcare for the very poor. In particular, the cost limits that are imposed above a certain cost level, for instance the \$325 monthly limit for children without special needs in the JCC and WRCC programs, does not match with the cost of actual childcare.

The cost of daycare at Brenda Isleib's Family Daycare in Middletown ((860) 344-8247) is \$160/week per child. That totals \$640/month, far exceeding what is available through state subsidies. Ms. Isleib is a provider certified through the Child Development Association and teaches as well as cares for children. Her services are not out of the ordinary however, and neither are her prices. A local daycare center she is familiar with charges \$260/week for childcare. Even with the increased stipends provided by the state for a daycare center over home childcare, a parent receiving benefits from one of these programs would fall far short of being able to pay for childcare without substantial out of pocket expenses. The high cost as well as the limited hours most daycares are open (Ms.

Isleib's is open from 630am-430pm, Monday through Friday) explains the prevalence of informal childcare arrangements in the North End.

One bright spot in these programs is the stipend that is available for informal providers. The possibility of informal north end childcare arrangements becoming sources of income for providers should be investigated. The following lists the types of care and the eligibility requirements for providers to receive payment through the state.

Family Day Care Home- licensed by the Department of Public Health

Child Care Group Homes- licensed by the Department of Public Health

Child Care Centers- licensed by the Department of Public Health

School-based Child Care Programs, Church-based Child Care Programs, Summer Day Camp Programs- not required to be licensed by the Department of Public Health

Relative Child Care Providers- A close relative of a child is eligible to provide child care in the home of the child or in the home of the relative. Close relatives are usually grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc. by blood or marriage.

Individual Child Care Providers- An individual not related to a child can only provide child care in the child's home.

More information on the CCAP program can be found on its website at:

<http://www.dss.state.ct.us/ccare/MCCare.htm>

Another option for low cost childcare is the YMCA's Early Head Start program, accessible at 343-6907. They accept only 12 children ages 0-3, however, and there is always a waitlist. The qualification for this program is that the parent is either in school or training for at least 30 hours a week and falls below the federal poverty line. There is also a program for 3-5 year olds at the YMCA, with the only specific limitation being the requirement that 60% of the children be from families below the 50% in income. Additionally, there is a Kids Corner program in elementary schools that provides after

school care on a sliding cost scale. Additional information on this and other Head Start programs is available through the Head Start office for Middletown at 109 Broad Street or at 343-9640.

Appendix I: Educational Resources in Middletown

There are variety of resources for adults wanting to continue their education in Middletown.

- Middletown Adult Education available at (860-343-6044) offers GED, ESL, computer, and other training.
- McDonough school in Middletown, near the north end, is reachable at (860-347-8553) and offers a GED program with free childcare, as well as a family resource center with parenting classes and early education for children.
- Middlesex Community College (860-343-3800) has a Summer Bridge program, which offers educational preparation courses as well as providing childcare.
- Literacy Volunteers of Greater Middletown offers ESL and literacy training to people with all levels of language ability.
- Russell Library offers computer training courses at 347-2528

Appendix J: Employment and Training Resources in Middletown

There is a surprising array of employment training and services available in Middletown. Connecting with, being motivated, and being comfortable may be the most significant obstacles facing residents.

The Middletown Chamber of Commerce offers many employment and training services for Middletown residents from its office at 393 Main Street. They offer a two-tiered job-training program that is helpful for those reentering the workforce, at no cost to the trainees. The courses meet for two semesters every year. The basic program offers basic computer literacy and math skills. The Advanced reentry program is for those who

have been out of work longer. It provides the same training and skills as the basic program, but goes into more depth with computer training. Additionally, it uses the Meyers-Briggs as an aid with career counseling. The Chamber of Commerce will also send people to Cook/Chef Training at Vinal Institute. The city of Middletown also provides job coaches--well known residents of the city who can help people with job hunting. The city will also send fliers about their services to workers in businesses carrying out layoffs. Additionally, the state Department of Workforce Development works out of their office to provide job coaching. The qualification for this service is a poverty level background. They will help people develop their resumes, or if need be deal with drug and alcohol problems.

The Connecticut Works program through the Department of Labor is another employment resource. People who file for unemployment are informed of the existence of the office at 645 S. Main St. or (860) 344-2661, and can go in if they choose. The office has a job database that employers post to and residents can access. A person going into the office registers, fills out an employment history, and is oriented to the resources available. There is little direct counseling. The database has a wide array of jobs at various skill levels. Some money for training has been available through this department in the past, but with the state budget up in the air, the future resources are uncertain. Those who do use this resource to seek training must get educated in a field for which there is a demonstrated demand.

United Labor, located at 100 Riverside Center or at 347-8060 is a statewide non-profit employment agency. It provides help with job searches and career counseling for the general population, and in addition provides job search and career counseling services for those with addiction problems. After an orientation appointment, clients can use their phones, faxes, and internet access as well as receive help with cover letters and resumes. The agency also provides advocacy in worker's compensation cases.

The Connecticut Department of Higher Education serves as a clearinghouse for information on education of all sorts. They can be reached at (800) 842-0229. They do not provide placement, but have a brochure and webpage which offer sources for use in job searches.

Contact, a non-profit organization located at Middlesex Community College is a resource for low-income people seeking training. The organization will help people waive application fees for forms such as the FAFSA, and is particularly oriented toward helping first generation college students. Rene Moreno works at Middlesex Community College and is available at 343-5800, x6999.

Appendix K: Disability Resources in Middletown

The State Department of Rehabilitation Services provides some resources and assistance for the disabled population. Their office at 117 Main Street Extension in Middletown can be reached at 704-3070. They are able to offer help with grants, public assistance, and Social Security, as well as information on other resources.

Appendix L: Discussion of women in the medical field

Many more women than men have additional training after high school, without having enrolled in college. While only one man achieved other training (not college) after receiving his high-school diploma, 10 women sought short-term training in the medical field. The prevalence of women in this field and at this training level suggests significant benefits that are realized from this pursuit. Perhaps these numbers reflect recognition among these women that the most viable options for secure employment involve such short-term training and certifications, especially in the medical field.

Appendix M. Flyer posted in early February

NEAT/Wesleyan Resident Survey

We are working to find out about resident employment, education, and child care needs to go into the NEAT Jobs Database.

NEAT Members and student surveyors will be going door to door from Mid-February to the End of March.

If you have questions, call NEAT at 346-4845 or stop by the office.

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