

Who are the New Neighbors?

Facts about Demographic Change in DuPage County



DuPage Federation on Human Services Reform, 2006

Like many suburban areas around the United States, DuPage County is experiencing a significant population change. The new residents in DuPage are increasingly likely to be members of minority groups, particularly Latinos, or international immigrants. Further, many more low income persons are and will be living in DuPage County.

DuPage County is the third most affluent county in Illinois, and the 21st ranked for median household income nationally, contributing to a widespread misperception that there are no poor people in DuPage County.

In reality, although a significant number of households in DuPage are affluent, almost 45,000 persons have income below the federal poverty level, and over 120,000 individuals have incomes less than 200% of the federal poverty level (U.S. Census ACS, 2005).

Fact 1: The number of low income residents in DuPage County is steadily increasing.

The number of DuPage County residents with an income over 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) has decreased by 3.32%, while the number of residents with incomes under 200% of the FPL has increased by 27.57% since 2000.

Fact 2: DuPage County is becoming rapidly and increasingly diverse.

The DuPage minority population has risen from 101,328 in 1990 to 242,624 in 2005, an increase of 139.4%. The most significant population growth was in the Hispanic/Latino population which rose 203% since 1990; the Asian and Black populations, which have both experienced a 125% increase.

Fact 3: The number of people with limited English proficiency is significantly increasing.

In 2005, 169,412 or 18.5% of population was foreign born, an increase of 130% since 1990. Twenty three percent, or 213,865, of DuPage residents speak a language other than English at home. And, 84,553 people over the age of 5 years report that they speak English 'less than very well.'

Fact 4: Nearly all of the population growth in DuPage County is among the immigrant, low income and minority populations.

Fact 5: Housing is becoming increasingly unaffordable, particularly for renters. The number of households paying more than 30% of their income for rent is increasing.

In 2000, 21,376 or 2.4% of DuPage households reported spending 30% or more of their income for housing. In 2005, 39% of owners with mortgages, 17% of owners without mortgages, and 42% of renters spend 30% or more of household income on housing.

Fact 6: In Illinois, poverty is moving to the suburbs. An increasing percentage of the state's poor population now live in the suburbs.

While the City of Chicago's poverty population has decreased from 592,298 in 1990 to 573,486 in 2005, or -3.18%, the poverty population of DuPage County has risen from 20,948 in 1990 to 42,161, or 101.27% in 2005.

Fact 7: Homelessness is a serious problem in DuPage.

Significant percentages of the homeless are working. The majority of the homeless persons served in DuPage homeless shelters are from DuPage.

Fact 8: The new neighbors are likely to be of either high or low educational attainment.

DuPage gained the largest number of residents with very high and very low educational attainment. It actually lost residents with some college but no degree or an Associate's degree. Since educational attainment is strongly predictive of income, this is another way of documenting that income.

Fact 9: Young adults are moving in, while older adults are moving out. Very old adults are moving in, also.

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Fact 10: The number of seniors will increase rapidly with the aging of the baby boomers, while the number of children will actually decline.

The number of persons in DuPage county who are age 60 or over will increase from 119,481 in 2000 to 279,285 in 2030, an increase of 133.7%. Over the same period, the number and percent of persons under age 20 will decline from 264,149 in 2000 to 251,860 in 2030, or -4.7%.

Income

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Low wage service jobs comprise an increasing percentage of the new jobs in the County, while the availability of high paying jobs is diminishing. The gap between rich and poor is widening. Employment in Illinois is changing from a tradition of high wage, often unionized manufacturing jobs to a new reality of lower wage service jobs. Due to powerful economic forces, many of the higher paying jobs are no longer available; the high paying jobs that do exist typically require advanced training and/or college degrees.

A major cause of poverty for many single parent families is ineffective collection of child support. In too many situations, the identity and whereabouts of the absent parent is known, yet the support is not collected for an assortment of reasons, some good and some bad. The usage of public assistance in DuPage County is growing rapidly, even though most immigrants are ineligible for many public benefit programs such as Medicaid and Food Stamps. Public benefits are filling the gap left as low wage jobs, often without health insurance and other benefits, become more prevalent.

Transportation

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It is becoming more and more difficult for low income people to get to work and to essential services because the cost of transportation exceeds their ability to pay it. Although DuPage has three commuter train lines and multiple bus lines, these resources are typically designed to transport suburban residents to jobs in downtown Chicago at traditional rush hours. Increasingly, however, that is not where DuPage residents need to go. The employment centers and low income housing in the County are less well served, and some are completely without public transportation.

Human services professionals and low income persons often cite problems with transportation as a serious barrier to self sufficiency and a reason that low income resident cannot get better jobs, cannot get to health care, etc. We believe that problems with transportation are one manifestation of a complex interaction among a variety of problems, involving jobs with low wages that force low income households to select housing that is poorly served by public transportation and highways, coupled with their inability to afford reliable cars. These issues, all posing a significant challenge to members of low income households, combine to effectively frustrate their efforts to escape poverty.

Housing and Homelessness

Many people who work here cannot afford to live here. Homelessness is a serious problem in DuPage County.

The cost of housing is a major, even overwhelming expense for low income households in DuPage. Affordable housing is defined as housing that costs no more than 30% of the owner or renter's gross income. There is a severe shortage of affordable housing in DuPage County for both renters

and would-be owners, and many low income households are paying far more than 30% for housing. These households are at high risk of homelessness, and are often described as being "one paycheck away from homelessness."

Child Care

The need exceeds the supply for early child care and education in the County.

In 2000, there were 41,901 children under 6 in DuPage County from households where all parents were in the labor force. In 2004, this had risen to an estimated 46,074 children. Early child care and education is a major expense for working families, often amounting to over 10% of average family incomes. Without reliable, affordable child care, parents cannot be reliable workers. Yet Illinois Facilities Fund found in 2002, "annual, full-time center-based care for an

infant cost more than resident undergraduate tuition at the University of Illinois." There are not enough child care subsidies to serve low income families. "Over 1,000 DuPage children, and 69% of those in Addison qualify for subsidized care, but cannot be accommodated by the current supply." In DuPage, second in the state in need of additional pre-kindergarten, 4,488 preschoolers are competing for 1,026 pre-kindergarten spots.

Health Care

About 5-7% of the population of DuPage County lacks health insurance at any one time.

Lack of health insurance means lack of health care.

Lack of health care is a major impediment to work.

DuPage County is part of a national trend of declining access to insurance and hence to health care. About 5-7% of the population of DuPage County lacks health insurance at any one time. A common misperception is that uninsured persons can get the health care they need through emergency rooms. In reality, research shows that lack of health insurance means lack of health care, and that lack of health care is a major impediment to work. The health care needs of low income persons and those with limited English proficiency pose a daily challenge to health providers in DuPage County.

DuPage County is part of a public private partnership that has taken several important steps toward development of a comprehensive health care safety net, including the establishment of the DuPage Community Clinic (1989), Access DuPage (2002) and the first Federally Qualified Community Health Centers (2003, 2005). Several additional steps have been recommended, including the formation of an overarching planning body, the DuPage Medical Access Coalition and the establishment of at least two more Community Health Centers. Further, increased resources for mental health care and dental care are needed.

Law Enforcement

Although the overall crime rate is declining in DuPage, an increasing number of persons are being discharged to DuPage from state prisons.

Although the overall crime rate is low, DuPage County had a 16% increase of arrests made by law enforcement agencies from 1994 to 2003, and most arrests are property and drug offenses. DuPage County's property index offense rate was 7% higher than other Collar counties. Arrests for drug violations more than doubled, from 1,613 in 1994 to 3,876 in 2003. The number of those convicted of a felony and sentenced more than doubled, from 1,430 to 2,912 between 1994 and 2003. More DuPage County individuals convicted of a felony are sentenced to prison than probation. Although the data demonstrate a decline in the crime rate, DuPage County is still impacted by discharges from the Illinois Department of Corrections. Both the populations of the prisons operated by the Illinois Department of

Corrections and of the DuPage County Jail are increasing. Although DuPage County has experienced a decrease in the reported incidence of domestic violence from 1996 to 2002, in 2005 - 2006, DuPage County police departments responded to 7,435 domestic violence calls (Family Shelter Service, 2006). Of these, arrests were made in 1,666 (22.4%) instances. Although the numbers of murders in DuPage are very low, three of the nine murders that took place in DuPage in 2003 were related to domestic violence. Domestic violence is a serious and ongoing problem in DuPage as in many other communities, and a serious effort to improve the way it is treated in DuPage is warranted.

Education

The number of low income and minority school children is rapidly increasing.

Despite this, the graduation rate and drop out rate is stable.

Education in a broad sense is critical if a worker is to find a sustainable niche in today's economy. A young person who fails to complete high school faces a serious barrier to future economic self sufficiency. Indeed, more and more jobs that actually pay a living wage require post-secondary training or education. Yet an increasing percentage of the high school dropouts in DuPage County are immigrants and members of racial and ethnic minorities. As in the rest of the country, minority students in DuPage County are far

more likely to drop out of high school than are whites, and males of all groups are more likely to drop out. An expanded effort to address the educational needs of minority students is needed.

The immigrants and other newcomers to DuPage County have either very high or very low educational attainments. Expanded opportunities for English as a Second Language training and/or high school completion course are needed.

The Future

2030 Forecasts

The Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission reports that, by 2030, DuPage County will be part of a region of over 10 million people. The County will contain the third largest population in the state, having been overtaken by Will County.

DuPage County will be a major employment center, with nearly as many jobs as people. As is the case today, many people will commute into the County for work. The decline in high wage jobs will continue as part of a nationwide trend.

No major change is anticipated in the powerful economic forces that are currently pushing more and more persons into poverty or near poverty. The need for an expanded array of supportive services for low income persons will be even more acute, and governments and private organizations serving DuPage County should continue their efforts to access increased funding to support these services.

The aging of the baby boom generation will present acute challenges to the County. Public support for educational expenditures may decline, with the anticipated decline in the number of children. The need for an expanded health care workforce will become critical, with particular unmet needs in the nursing field.

Federal policies have decisive impact on the number of immigrants in our County, and DuPage has a high stake in the current debates about immigrant policy. Unless truly draconian changes are implemented at the Federal levels, we can anticipate continuation of current trends toward more diversity.

Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission 2030 Forecasts of Population, Households and Employment by County and Municipality (as endorsed September 30, 2003)						
	Population		Households		Employment	
	2000	2030	2000	2030	2000	2030
Northeastern Illinois	8,091,720	10,034,835	2,906,925	3,627,752	4,323,207	5,563,934
Cook County	5,376,741	5,938,248	1,974,181	2,224,929	2,841,941	3,318,234
DuPage County	904,161	1,002,325	325,601	361,978	646,610	830,394
Kane County	404,119	692,346	133,901	234,617	206,107	342,684
Lake County	644,356	844,315	216,297	292,253	354,114	461,487
McHenry County	260,077	449,823	89,403	155,108	105,118	167,765
Will County	502,266	1,107,778	167,542	358,867	169,317	443,370
<i>DuPage County Selected Municipalities</i>						
Addison	35,914	38,561	11,649	12,876	33,415	42,024
Aurora (excluding Kendall)	142,150	190,167	46,171	66,722	63,143	106,677
Bloomington	21,675	28,818	8,219	10,244	14,432	19,345
Bolingbrook	56,321	88,548	17,416	28,404	20,393	31,783
Carol Stream	40,438	41,604	13,872	14,765	19,902	25,582
Downers Grove	48,724	60,153	18,979	23,515	38,534	59,459
Elmhurst	42,762	43,075	15,627	15,809	41,429	41,572
Glendale Heights	31,765	35,059	10,791	11,661	12,164	13,584
Glen Ellyn	26,999	32,291	10,207	12,303	9,527	10,609
Hinsdale	17,349	22,000	5,977	7,211	13,304	13,396
Lombard	42,322	50,618	16,487	20,527	26,846	36,914
Naperville	128,358	168,096	43,751	58,316	66,209	149,931
Oak Brook	8,702	9,613	3,124	3,396	58,745	66,738
Villa Park	22,075	22,991	7,810	8,201	12,279	15,281
West Chicago	23,469	41,632	6,379	12,090	11,508	36,308
Wheaton	55,416	61,960	19,377	19,653	27,289	28,131