

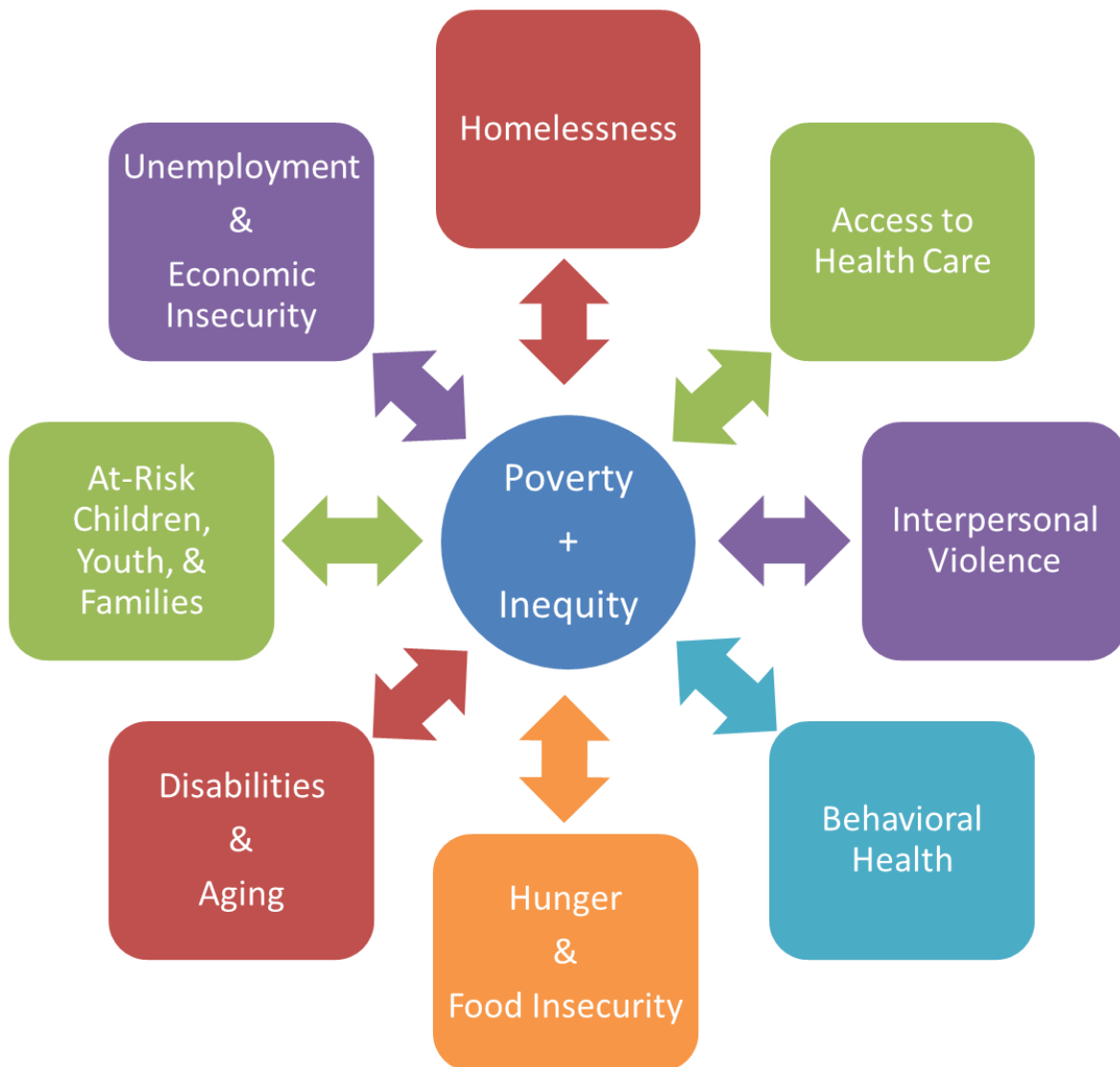


City of Columbia FY2018 Budget: Social Services Funding

For over 50 years, the City of Columbia has recognized that in addition to physical infrastructure and public safety, it must also make an investment in our community's social infrastructure. To this end, the City has both provided and purchased social services to ensure that adequate levels of these services are available to low-income residents of the City.

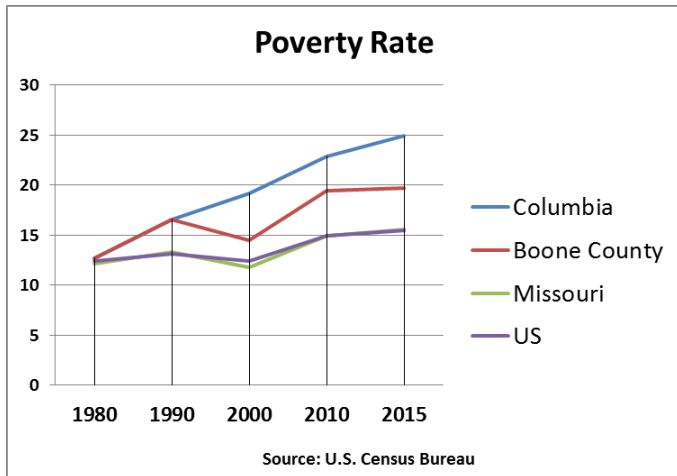
The Issues

The social services provided and purchased by the City address some of our community's most challenging issues, many of which are rooted in poverty and inequity.

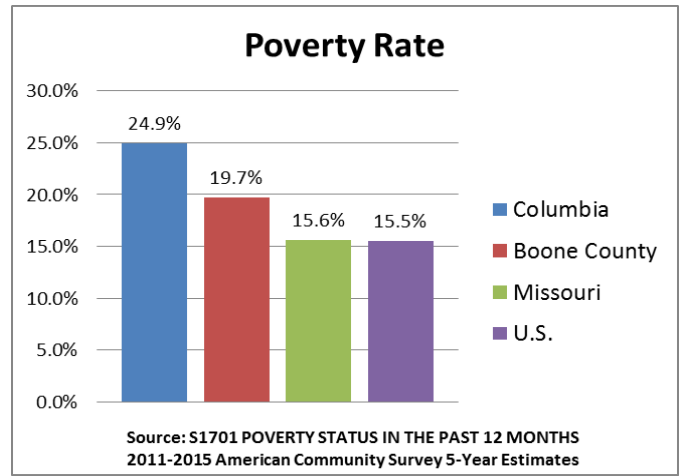


Poverty

Unfortunately, poverty is a persistent and growing issue in Columbia.

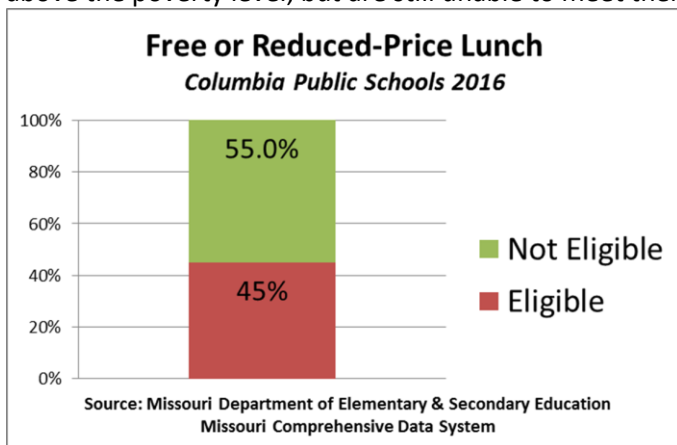


The poverty rate has increased steadily since 1980, when only 13% of Columbia residents lived in poverty.

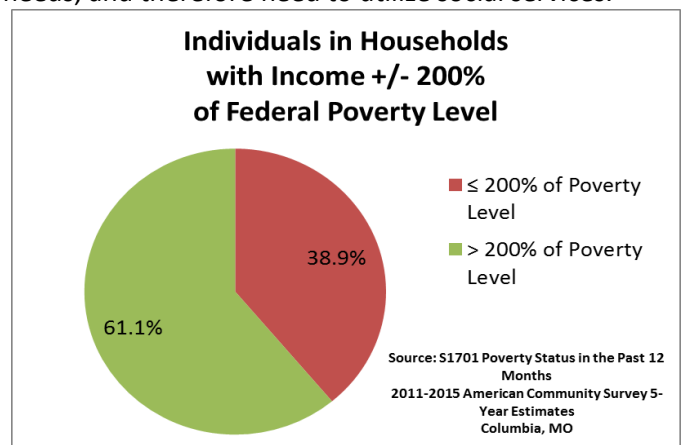


Currently, nearly 26,000 residents (24.9%) live below the poverty level.

Often referred to as “the working poor,” we also have significant number of people living in households with incomes above the poverty level, but are still unable to meet their basic needs, and therefore need to utilize social services.

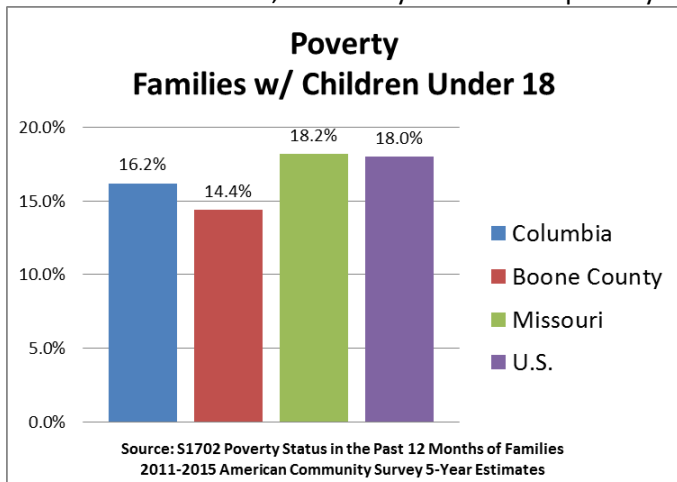


Over 41% of public school students qualify for free and reduced lunch, as compared to 27% in 2000.

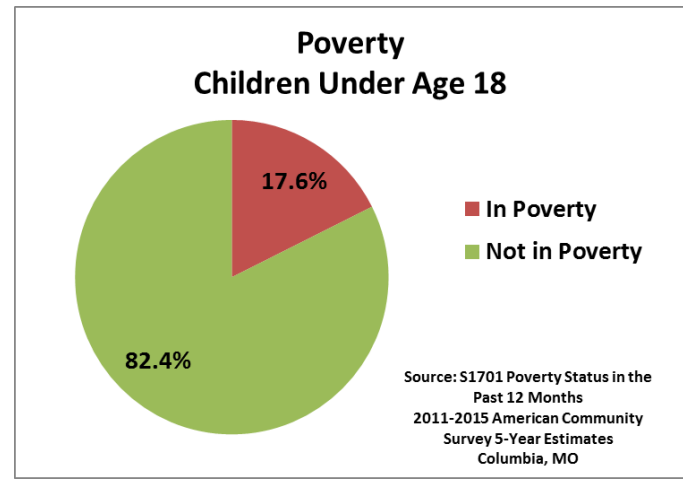


39% of residents are living in low-income households (≤200% of poverty level).

In order to mitigate the effect of college students on the poverty rate in Columbia, and because they are important stand-alone indicators, we closely monitor the poverty rates for families and children.



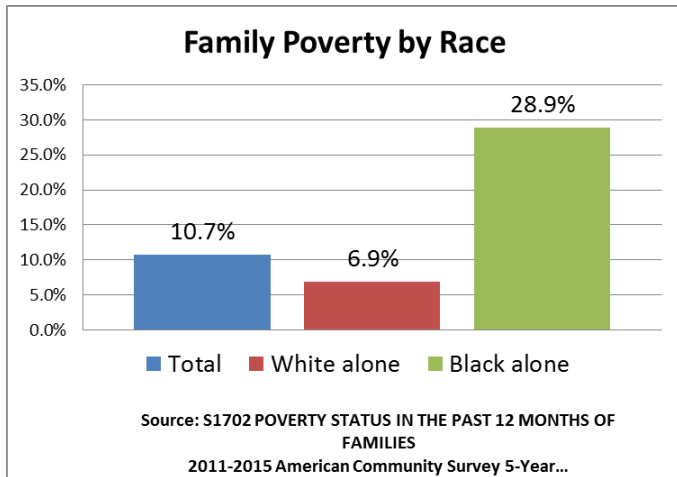
16% of families with children under 18 live in poverty.



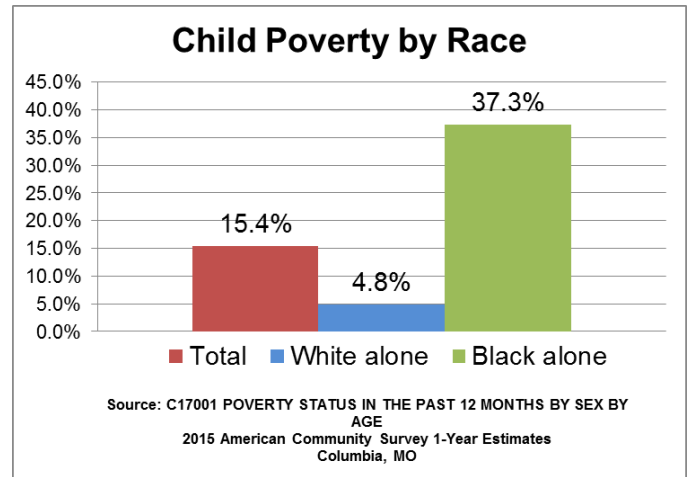
Almost 4,000 children (17.6%) living in poverty.

Disparities

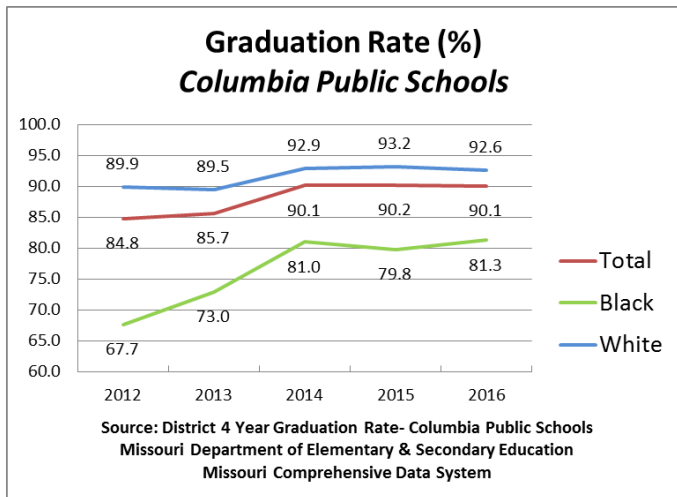
Social, economic, health, and educational disparities continue to be a significant issue in our community. African-Americans in Columbia experience disproportionately high rates of poverty, unemployment, and morbidity & mortality and disproportionately low rates of educational and economic attainment.



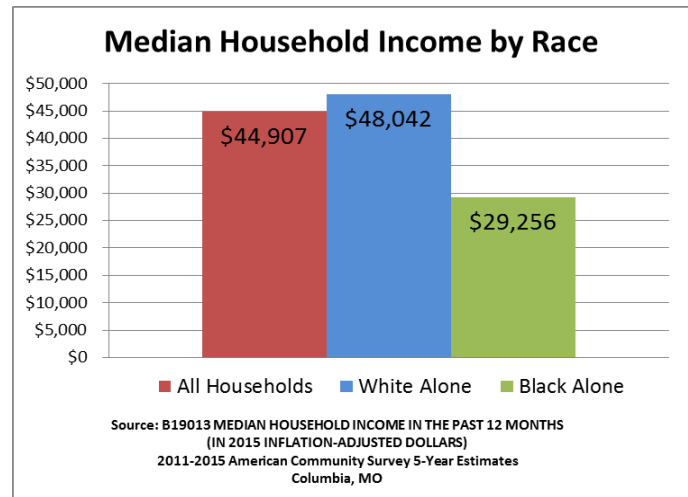
29% of black families in Columbia are living in poverty as opposed to only 7% of white families.



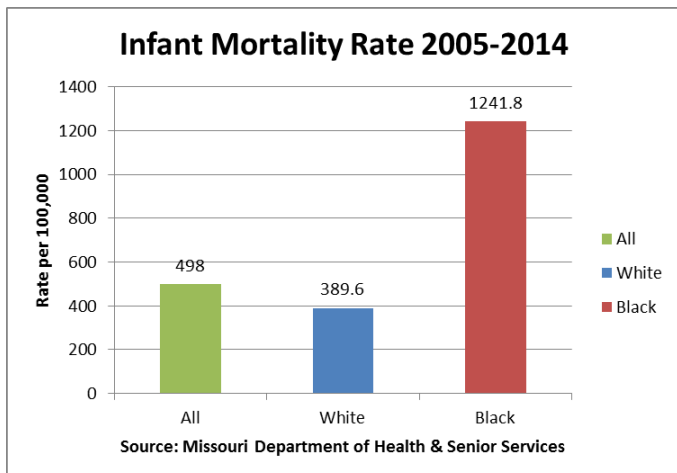
37% of black children in Columbia live in poverty as opposed to only 5% of white children.



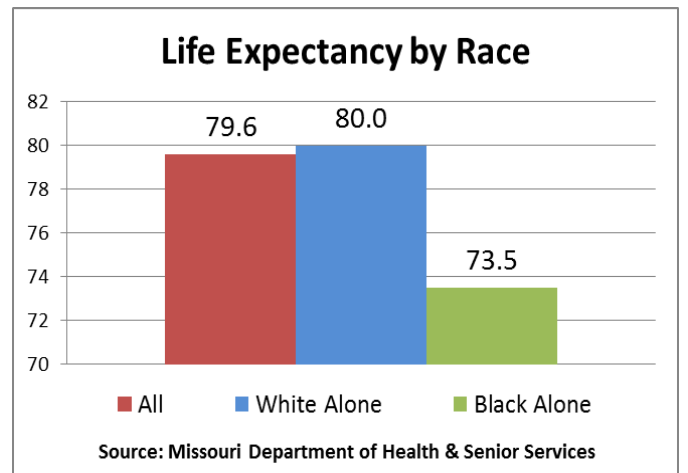
There is a persistent academic achievement gap between white students and black students.



Black household income is only 64 cents on the dollar of white households.



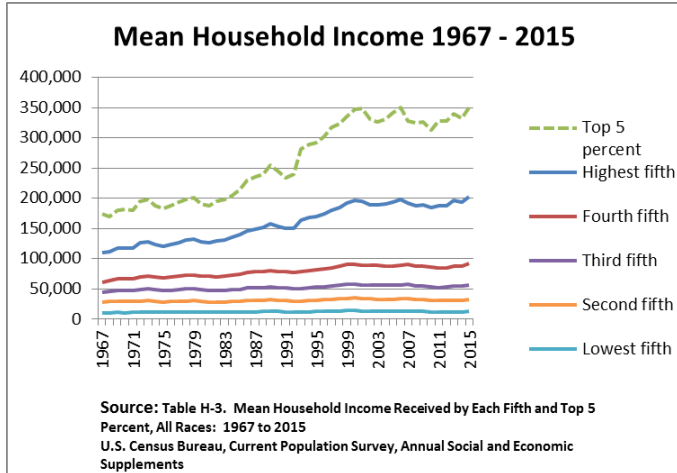
The infant mortality rate for black infants is 3 times that of white infants.



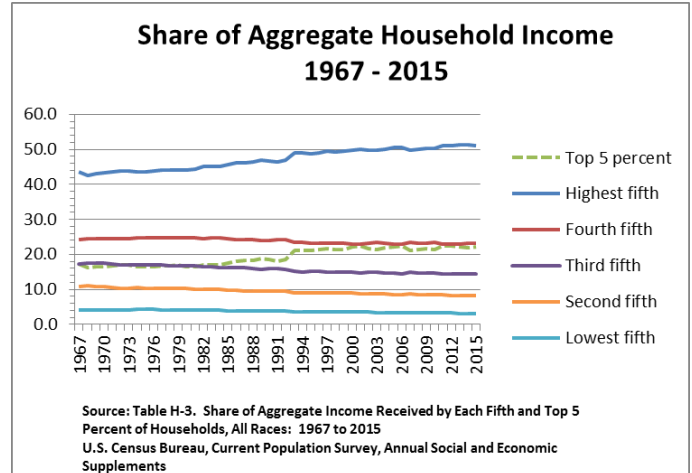
Life expectancy is significantly lower for African Americans in Columbia.

Income Inequality

While we are achieving some improvements in disparities, this may in part be due to growing income inequality, which has placed more people at or near poverty, and is keeping them there.



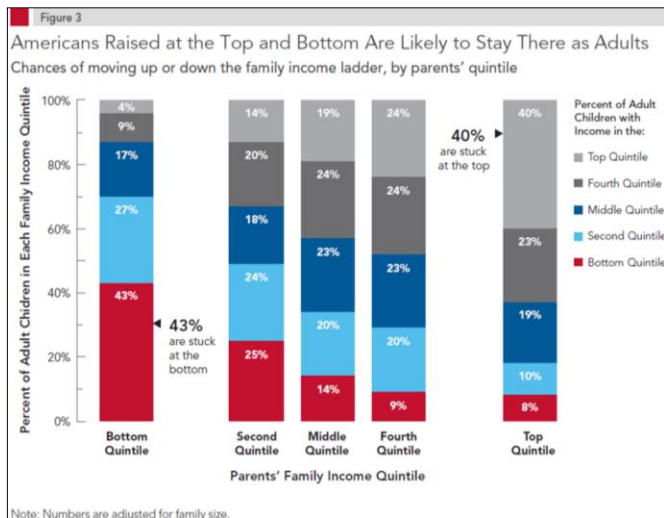
Household income for middle and low income households in Columbia has been very flat over the last 50 years.



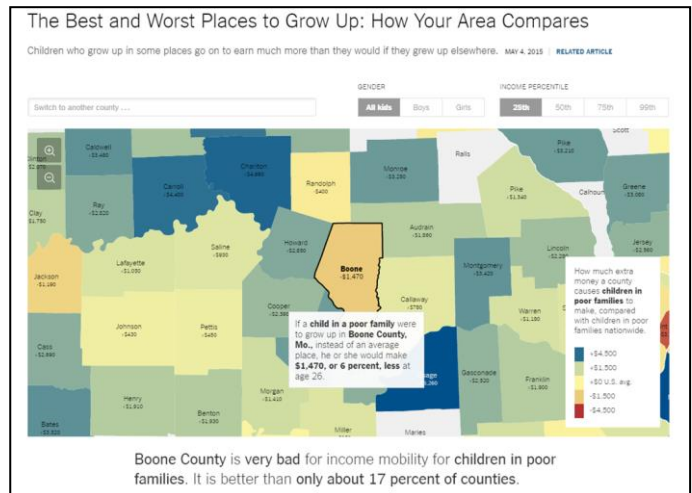
The share of household income in Columbia has become increasingly unequal, with all gains since 1967 going to top 20%.

Economic Mobility

Additionally, we are learning that for persons born into poverty, economic mobility is highly limited, particularly in our community.



Moving out of the bottom income quintile is substantially less likely than in the upper quintiles.¹



The Columbia area ranks in the bottom 17% of communities in the nation when it comes to income mobility for children from low-income households.²

A Strategic Investment

While the City's investment in social services is not adequate to fully address these issues, it does substantially increase the availability of services in Columbia. Examples of services the City purchases include:

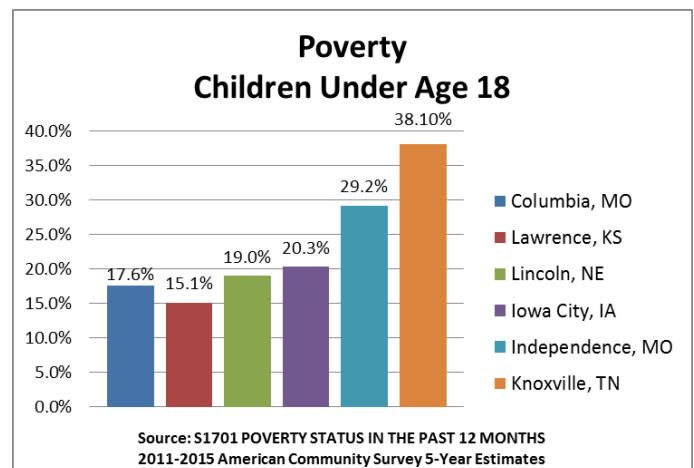
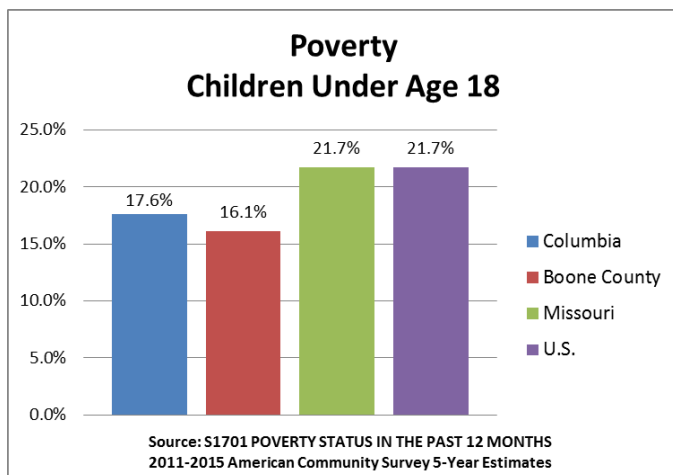
- Employment readiness and support from Job Point, Youth Empowerment Zone, and In2Action
- Emergency shelter from Salvation Army, Welcome Home, Rainbow House, and Reality House
- Positive youth development and tutoring from Boys and Girls Club, Columbia Housing Authority, and Fun City
- Domestic violence services from True North
- Nutritious supplemental foods from the Food Bank, Community Garden Coalition, and Meals on Wheels
- Behavioral health services from Compass and Phoenix Programs

Without funding from the City, many of these services would simply be unavailable to our community's most vulnerable residents.

\$58:1

The City's investment also allows our contracted partners to leverage additional, external resources which further increase the community's capacity to deliver social services. In our most recent analysis, we found that for every \$1 the City of Columbia invests in local social services, our contracted providers generate \$58 additional dollars... a \$58/\$1 **return on investment**. In addition, a significant portion of these revenues is obtained from sources outside our community. Our relatively small investment makes Columbia very competitive in obtaining shrinking resources from external funders which are increasingly requiring local matching funds.

As an indicator that this investment works, the child poverty rate in Columbia is lower than state and national rates and the rates of similar Midwest communities.



The investment in social services directly supports the City's Strategic Plan, which includes as strategic priorities and questions:

- Economy: Jobs that support families - How do we create more living wage jobs?
- Social Equity: Improving the odds for success - How can we strengthen our community so all individuals thrive?

The City's Vision Plan also calls for high quality social services with the goals of:

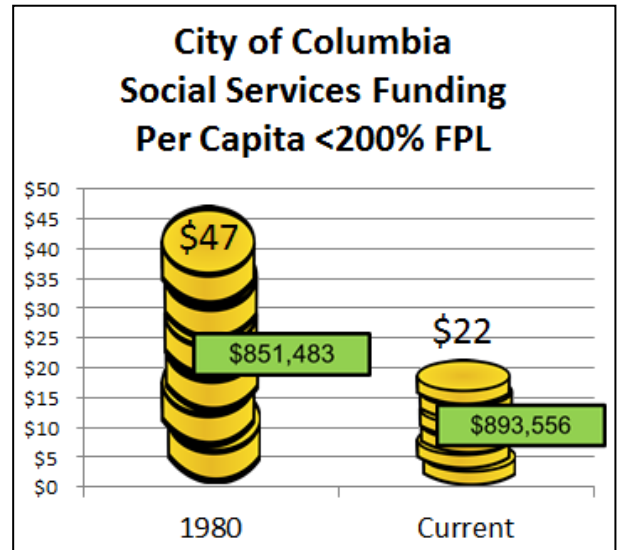
- Supporting quality points of entry to access information for high quality and affordable social services to support children, youth, adults, seniors, persons with disabilities, and people with cultural barriers.
- All social services will be sufficiently funded to work toward the elimination of poverty.

A Declining Investment

Unfortunately, the City’s investment in social services has not kept pace with the growing rate of poverty in our community. City social services funding was reduced from \$903,743 in FY2009 to \$893,556 in FY2010 (a reduction of 1.1% or \$10,187) and has been held flat since that time.

In 1980, the City’s investment in social services was the equivalent of \$851,483 in today’s dollars, or a rate of \$47 per low income resident, as compared to the City’s current investment of \$893,556, a rate of only \$22 per low income resident.

During this same period, state and federal resources have also declined.



Collective Impact

The investment in social services also empowers the City to be a leader in convening diverse stakeholders to address our community’s complex social issues. Because we are operating in a resource-scarce environment, we have embraced and led a collective impact approach, in the spirit of moving the needles together rather than in silos.

Collective Impact

Strategically building and aiming resources to positively impact social issues.

- Establishing common goals and progress measures
- Leveraging strengths
- Building core capacities
- Prioritizing mutually beneficial activities
- Continuous communication and coordination

The City, County, and United Way, through a collective impact collaborative we are calling the [Boone Impact Group](#), continue to successfully align plans, policies, and practices in order to further develop our capacity to effect positive change at the community level.

As an example, we have developed and are utilizing a web-based funding management system shared by all three organizations. This has resulted in one system in which providers can apply for City social services, CDBG, HOME, and CHDO funding, County Children’s services and community health funding, and United Way community impact funding. A shared system has reduced expenses for the City, reduced the administrative burden on funders and providers, and allowed us as funders to further coordinate our efforts and better measure our collective impact.

We are also working together to convene the community around the issues. For example, the Boone Impact Group convened several community stakeholders to organize the recent Homelessness Summit, at which we provided a clear picture the issue using data, shared evidence about what works, and developed community goals around the issue. We have also been working together through the Cradle to Career Alliance to address the persistent achievement gap in our schools.

In order to inform and align our work and to measure our progress in improving outcomes and narrowing disparities, we are currently building a data warehouse which will be used to populate the [Boone Indicators Dashboard](#), a web-based, interactive platform which will provide a broad array of socio-economic, health, education, and housing indicators, at both the City and County levels. The project will make community level data easily accessible to the City, our partners, and the community.



The Process

The Human Services Commission (HSC) and the Department of Public Health and Human Services are charged by the Columbia City Council to make annual recommendations for the purchase of social services, utilizing the City's social services funding. In order to target limited resources, social services funding is allocated to address five issue areas reflecting the funding priorities identified by the HSC and approved by the City Council. "Requests for Proposals" (RFPs) and the resulting purchase of service contracts are issued by these issue areas in a staggered, three year cycle:

Issue Area	Target Funding Parameter	Funding Cycle
Children, Youth and Families	15-35%	2018 - 2020
Basic Needs and Emergency Services	15-35%	2017 - 2019
Economic Opportunity	15-35%	2016 - 2018
Independent Living	5-25%	
Behavioral Health	0-20%	

For detailed information regarding the social services funding allocation process, please reference the [City of Columbia Social Services Funding web page](#).

Summary

As outlined in this report, the issues of poverty and inequity conspire to keep too many of our community members from realizing their true potential. The Human Services Commission applauds the City's strategic plan which seeks to better address these issues. We continue to hope this results in an increased investment in social services, which not only assist people in meeting their basic needs, but also build the skills and assets people need to move up and out of poverty.

The members of the HSC would like to thank the City Council for its longstanding support of the City's investment in the social infrastructure of our community. The HSC looks forward to the opportunity to present the FY2018 social services contract recommendations to the City Council on December 18, 2017.

Sources

¹ Source: *Pursuing the American Dream: Economic Mobility Across Generations* The Pew Charitable Trusts

² The New York Times: http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2015/05/03/upshot/the-best-and-worst-places-to-grow-up-how-your-area-compares.html?hp&action=click&pgtype=Homepage&module=second-column-region®ion=top-news&WT.nav=top-news&_r=0&abt=0002&abg=0