

### Article 25 of the UN Declaration of Human Rights.

- (1) Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.
- (2) Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

### Newburyport Poverty

**Up and Down the Economic Ladder:** The total estimated % of people in poverty or at risk of poverty in Newburyport has remained the same at 44%. However approximately 670 families, the numbers in the 3 categories, (severe, moderate and at risk) have shifted downward indicating that more and more people in Newburyport are going down the economic ladder.

**At Risk:** The at risk population, based on the federal poverty level, has increased from 14.3% to 18% indicating that 4% of the middle class has moved to the at risk category.

**Moderate:** The moderate poverty population category has gone down from 5.2% to 4%, moving down the economic ladder.

**Severe:** The severe poverty category has slightly more than doubled to in the past year increasing from 2.6% to 5%. This is very concerning.

### Areas of Concern

**Average Household Expenditures:** The average household expenditures, \$66,450 is more than what over half the population in Newburyport earns in a year. The average non mortgage debt is more than what 18% of the population earns annually.

**Average non-mortgage debt:** Newburyport's average at \$25,559 is about \$9,000 higher than the national average.

**Children:** The number of school aged children living in poverty has increased from 189 children to 203. Of the 203, 158 receive school lunches which has increased by 39 children since 2006 and 45 receive reduced school lunches which has increased by 20 students since 2008. Last year there were 14 McKinney Vento students and so far this year there are 12. In 2007, there were 7. Along with the increase in children living in poverty, the number of students graduating from high school has declined from 93.4% in 2009 to 89.9% in 2010.

**Housing:** Of the 7622 households, 454 people live with relatives with 131 over 65 and 870 live with non relatives for a total of 1,324 people sharing homes. Whether this is due to economic reasons or life style choice is not clear. If due to economic reasons, it is an indicator that people are sharing homes due to being homeless, adult children returning home or they are between homes. Further there are 648 vacant homes (6.78% ) in Newburyport as well as of the date of this report 16 foreclosures. In addition, there are 196 homes with a second mortgage and 9 have both a second mortgage and a home equity loan. Another issue in Newburyport is there isn't enough affordable housing. The years - up to 8 years - wait to get into section 8 low income housing translates for a family into: where do I live till then folks?

**Divorce:** There has been an increase in the number of divorces and separations which may be due to the economy.

**Substance Abuse and Domestic Violence:** At the time of this report, there have already been 5 cases of drug arrests at the high school. Alcohol use among Newburyport teenagers is going up according to the Beacon Coalition. There is an increase in domestic violence. Substance abuse and domestic violence generally increase in times of economic stress. In Newburyport, the Current on October 7-13, 2011, states that Newburyport "sees 20-30 reports per month" of domestic violence.

**Donations:** Considering that Newburyport is a wealthy town, one would expect higher than average donations. According to city-data.com Newburyport donates less than the state average. In Newburyport the annual average charity contribution deduction is \$2,009, less than 1.8% of annual gross income compared to MA average of \$3,295.

**Assets:** There is not only income poverty but also asset poverty to take into consideration. Without assets and a security net of financial resources, the poor, lower middle class, and upper middle class without assets will always be one disaster away from poverty or falling further into poverty. The median value in Newburyport of various savings: \$59,441 in stocks, \$46,801 in mutual funds, and \$100,554 in retirement funds. However, off-setting the savings, the median debt is: mortgage debt \$82,669, home equity loans \$236,678, credit card debt \$10,096.

**Elderly and Retiring Baby Boomers:** There are at least 72 elderly women in Newburyport, Newbury and Salisbury who are low-income. One concern is that large numbers of pre-retirees who will be 65 in the next five to 10 years have either been living off their retirement funds to survive the economic crisis, lost much of their retirement funds when the market nose dived, refinanced or took out second mortgages on their homes to cover expenses. They don't have the work years left to rebuild their retirement, and the population of elderly poor is likely to increase.

For full report: [www.povertyprogram.com](http://www.povertyprogram.com).