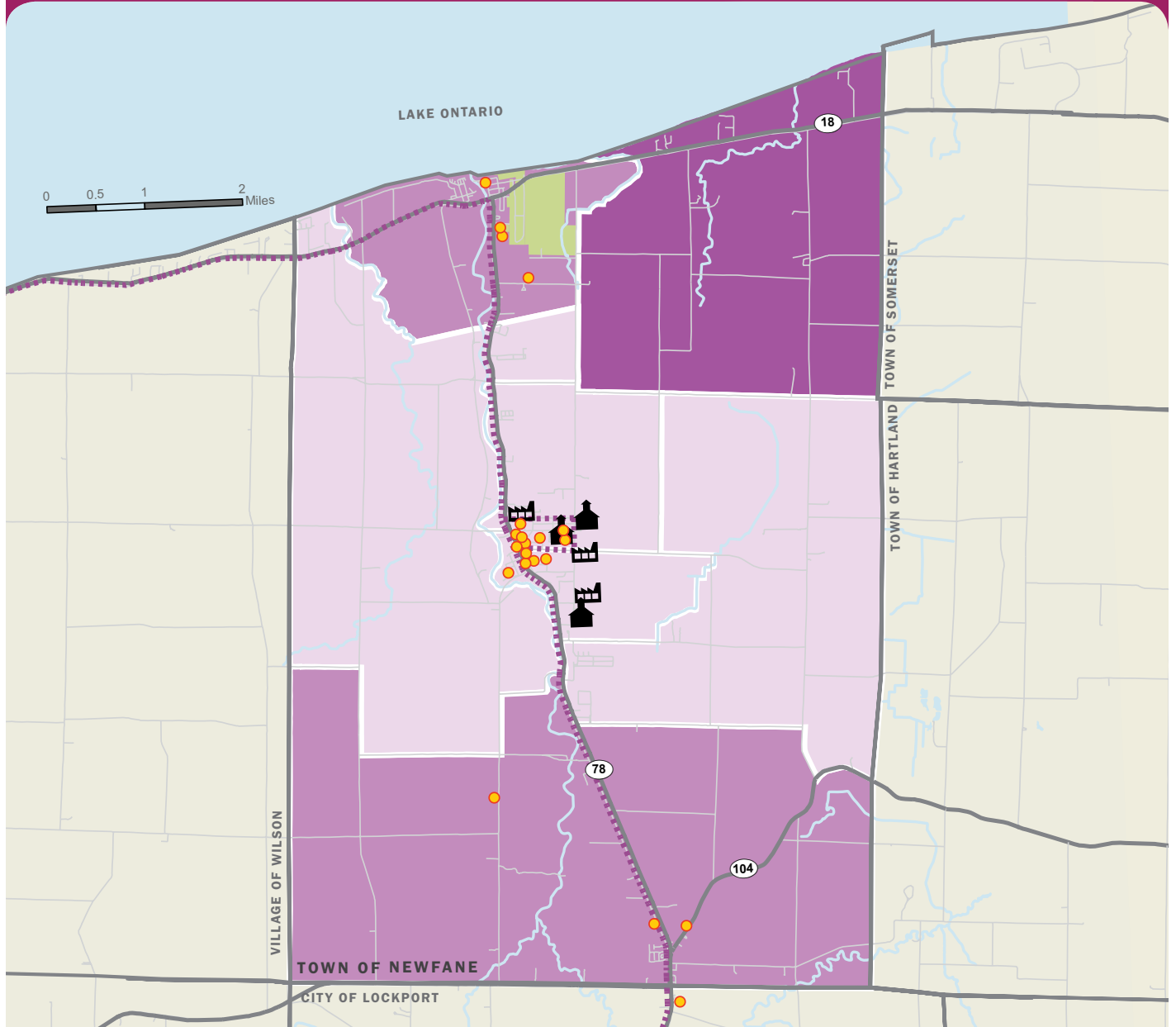


STRENGTHENING WNY's Safety Net

A COMMUNITY REPORT Town of **NEWFANE**



Report prepared for
The John R. Oishei Foundation
by the University at Buffalo
Regional Institute
September 2013



SERVICE PROVIDERS

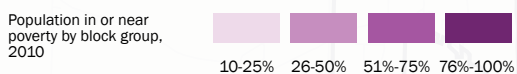
21 service providers employing almost 700 employees exist in Newfane to provide a range of human services.

TRANSPORTATION

Niagara County Rural Niagara Transportation Route

POPULATION IN OR NEAR POVERTY

About 2,470 Newfane residents live on incomes under or near the federal poverty level



SCHOOLS

Newfane Central School District:
1 elementary school
1 middle school
1 high school
about 1,890 students total enrolled

MAJOR EMPLOYERS

Eastern Niagara Hospital
Newfane Central School District
Newfane Rehabilitation

About This Report

Table of Contents

2	About This Report
4	Executive Summary
8	Context for Action
8	People in Need  Includes factors relating to individuals and families, work, income, poverty and education that may put residents in Newfane at risk.
13	Newfane's Most Vulnerable  A special look at the characteristics of this population, their demographics, human service needs and barriers they experience to getting the support services they need.
19	Places in Need  Indicators of high housing costs, transportation barriers and crime.
23	Landscape of Services  Includes the strengths of the human services system, gaps in services, barriers to connecting with residents and promising developments.
28	Insights from the Field: Recommendations and Best Practices  Recommendations and strategies for strengthening the landscape of services, along with models that are working in other areas.
35	Appendices

Background

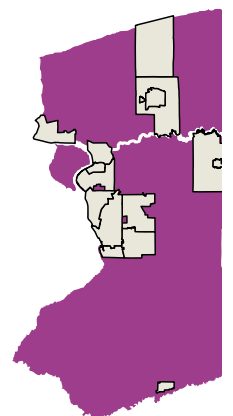
Between 2008 and 2009, regional employers shed almost 20,000 net jobs. The economic downturn, which continued into 2010, left large numbers of residents unemployed and unable to find new work for the first time in their lives. High levels of unemployment continue today. One out of 12 residents across the region seek work, and need for support continues to escalate. Caseloads reported by Niagara County Department of Social Services have reached a high. As of February 2013, over 42,000 individuals across Niagara County, about one in five, receive some form of support. Since 2006, enrollment in food, medical and public assistance programs has increased 84%.

While the majority of those in poverty live in urban areas like Niagara Falls and Buffalo, families in the region's suburbs and rural areas have experienced the biggest increase in poverty. One out of three with incomes below poverty now live outside urban areas where support services such as emergency food, housing and employment training are concentrated. Put another way, residents may be relatively far away from the services they need to get back on their feet. They may be unaware, too, of what's out there to help them. Meanwhile, service providers are challenged to expand capacity, improve access and generate additional revenues for expanded services, while at the same time, they may be dealing with funding cuts.



To strengthen the safety net in communities where residents are struggling the most, **The John R. Oishei Foundation created the Mobile Safety-Net Team Initiative in 2009** to go into dozens of communities in Erie and Niagara Counties to assess how the downturn in the economy is impacting residents, help connect residents with the services they need, build relationships with service providers and gather information about human service needs. The team has worked in 45 communities to date.

Twelve representative communities have been selected for additional assessment and investment as part of phase two of the Mobile Safety-Net Team initiative, which kicked off in 2012 and includes the team's partnership with the University at Buffalo Regional Institute. The purpose of phase two is to gather additional insights from residents, conduct focus groups, hear from organizations and develop a tool that will assist foundations and communities in strengthening the safety net of services. The Town of Newfane is one of the 12 communities selected. The in-depth analysis and recommendations contained herein are grounded in this work of the **University at Buffalo Regional Institute** and the **Mobile Safety-Net Team** and are intended to spur thought in the community on opportunities to create a stronger human services safety-net.



What Went Into This Report

Two Teams

This effort culminates months of research during 2012 and early 2013 by the University at Buffalo Regional Institute team, working in partnership with the Mobile Safety-Net Team.

University at Buffalo
Regional Institute

Mobile Safety-Net Team
an initiative of The John R. Oishei Foundation

The work of the teams
within Newfane over
several months...

Who We Talked to and What We Looked at

Residents and agency providers allowed us to explore how the system was currently working and gain insights into how to improve it.

Residents



Resident Survey

156 surveys were completed by residents in Newfane, providing new data on the demographics of the city's at-risk population, their needs, urgent concerns, utilization of human services benefits and barriers to support services.

Resident Focus Groups and Interviews

A focus group with senior residents and interviews with parents were conducted to gather insights into their most pressing concerns, barriers to accessing services and insights on how the system might be improved for them.

Agencies



Agency Interviews

Several human service agency representatives shared information on their programs and perspectives on opportunities.



Agency Focus Groups

A focus group was held with a Coalition of Churches, key providers of human services in Newfane, to gather perspectives on human services needs, barriers and strategies for improving the landscape of services.

Secondary Data



Data Sources

Information and insights were gathered from diverse sources, including the 2010 Census, 2007-2011 American Community Survey, Social Explorer Reports, NYS Department of Health, NYS Education Department 2011 School Report Card and Reference USA.

Understanding the Report

The months of information gathering provided the structure for understanding the needs, the barriers and the strategies for improving the current system.

...led us to explore...

...which resulted in:

People



Places



Services

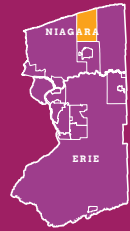


Insights &
Recommendations



STRENGTHENING WNY's Safety Net

A COMMUNITY REPORT Town of **NEWFANE**



A large population in poverty or close to it...

Among Newfane's population of 9,666...

...about

980

Newfane residents live on incomes under the federal poverty level.

...an additional

1,490

aren't in poverty but are close to it with incomes between 100-200% of poverty.

...about

2,470

are doing poorly or struggling financially. This is about one out of every four in Newfane.

Beyond poverty, other alarming indicators and trends...

Poverty is growing. At the same time Newfane's total population has held steady, the number of persons in poverty has increased over 50% since 2000.

Poverty is Growing

	2000	2011	% Change
Population	9,657	9,621	0%
Population in Poverty	641	979	53%

Single mothers with children represent over half of families living in poverty. Across age groups, children are most affected, with one in five children living in a home with great economic needs.

55% of families in poverty are single mothers with children

Newfane residents in need tend to be property rich and cash poor, with more house than they can comfortably maintain. Three-quarters of lower-income households own the home they live in, and 64% of these pay more than 30% of their income on housing costs.

Newfane is an older and aging community. The number of persons age 65 and up has increased 15% since 2000.

One of the town's two **food pantries reports empty shelves and an urgent need for food** and donations, affecting about 200 residents a month.

Job opportunities in town are shrinking. The overwhelming majority of working residents (82%) leave Newfane for work. At least 22% travel to places in Erie County which can be close to an hour's drive away.

Drug and alcohol use, especially among youth, is a significant challenge. Newfane is described as a drug access hub, and the town recently made headlines when a home-based methamphetamine lab led to two arrests.

THREE RECENT SUICIDES

The need for mental health supports is great. Within the past few months, two young adults and one teen from the community have committed suicide, according to a school district representative.

One in four vulnerable adults doesn't have health insurance, according to a resident survey.

COMMON URGENT CONCERN utility shutoff

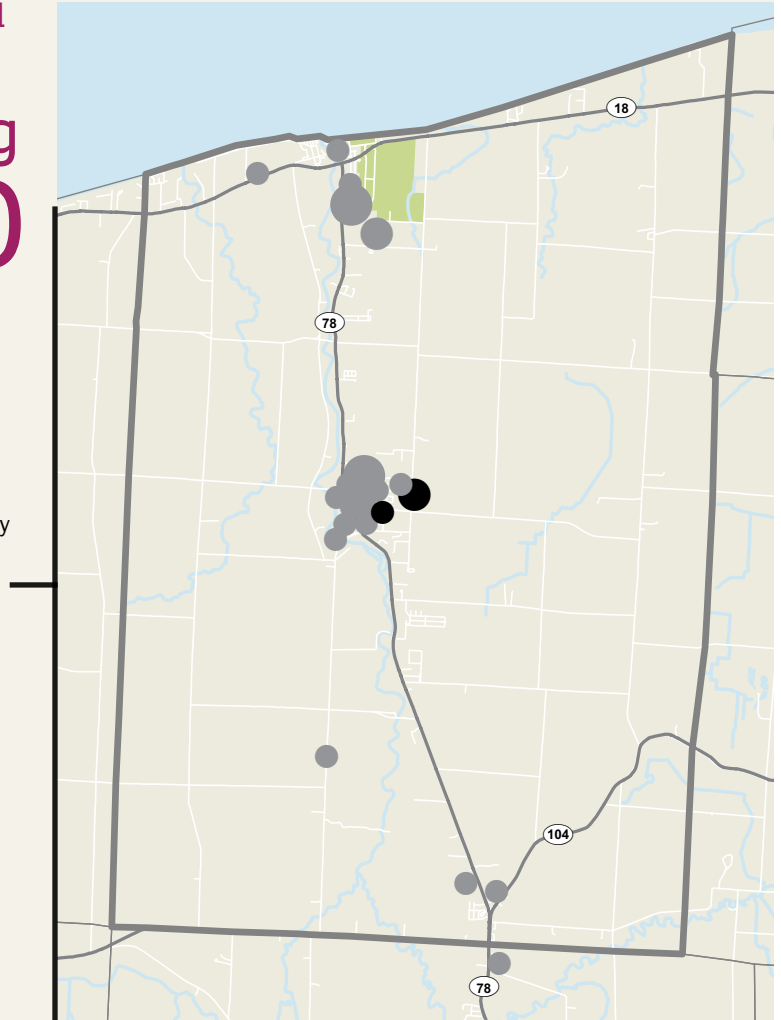
* Findings come from a survey of 156 at-risk households in Newfane, reflecting a statistically significant sample size at a confidence level of at least 95% and with a confidence interval of 7.

**Newfane's
landscape
of human
services
providers...**

21 public and
private
providers
employing
almost **700**

exist in Newfane to provide a limited range of human services to residents, from food, clothing, education, youth programs, information services and more.

Key human service providers and supports in the community include Newfane Central School District, Eastern Niagara Hospital and area churches.



strengths

Strengths of the system include a solid performing school district, a relatively new and well-used community center, food and social programs for seniors; an active business association to unite and help grow all businesses in town; and a community of churches that is trying to fill key human services needs.

gaps

Gaps in services exist for mental health services, especially for youth and families; drug prevention programming; parent supports; after-school programs, especially for teens; jobs training for adults; domestic violence services; and flexible and affordable transportation options for low-income seniors and other vulnerable families.

Barriers and systemic challenges...

1 out of 5 residents surveyed in Newfane say they have encountered difficulty getting services.



Income limits are the most common barrier reported, by 56% of those saying they have encountered difficulty in getting necessary services. Indeed, with the majority of vulnerable households in Newfane owning a home and a car and making more than \$2,000 a month, those in need may not be poor enough to fall within income and asset requirements for some support programs like Medicaid and public assistance.

Newfane is almost **1 hour** away from the region's urban core in Buffalo

Traveling difficulties are the second most common barrier reported, even though nine out of ten vulnerable households in Newfane say their primary mode of travel is in a vehicle they own.

What can make traveling difficult is distance. Newfane's safety-net of human services is thin, with many key services located outside the town. Moreover, with the town being situated at the northeastern tip of Niagara County, **Newfane is geographically isolated and a significant distance from services and jobs**, especially those in Niagara Falls (45 minutes away) or Buffalo (50 minutes away).

Transportation can create barriers to after-school programs, too, not because most families don't have a vehicle but because it's not always available during the hours needed.

Lack of affordable and flexible transportation options are the reasons some seniors in Newfane continue to drive past the point where it's safe for them to do so.

Lack of awareness of what programs and services are available also creates barriers.

Few residents seemed aware of centralized sources of information and referral such as WNY 211 or the Mental Health Association's directory and hotline. Word of mouth is how information tends to travel in Newfane.

Misconception about existing services and their eligibility requirements compound barriers.

For instance, many believe that the Newfane Agri-Business Child Development (ABCD) Program is just for migrant children when in reality, it's a strong resource available to other income-eligible families, with migrant children taking priority. Misconception may also exist about First Baptist Church of Newfane Food Pantry, formerly known as the Migrant Food Pantry, as it is open to everyone in the school district and not just migrants.

There are obstacles to collective action in areas of common concern such as affordable and flexible transportation options and aging-in-place supports for Newfane's seniors.

Misconceptions limit the reach of otherwise strong supports

The stigma associated with human services creates barriers. Seniors refer to the Medicaid van as the "welfare cab," a form of charity they will not accept. Residents express vulnerability in reaching out for assistance because it's something they have never done before. Providers describe residents as "proud" with some refusing to accept needed help.

Church-based supports are in place to serve church members first and may not be readily accessed by those not connected with the church.

Perceived competition among church-based food pantries, especially in regard to fundraising, limits opportunities to collaborate and grow capacities. Differences between pantry users (seniors and the working poor versus families on benefits) also create distinctions that hinder collaboration.

At the same time need continues to rise, donations have been declining. The situation has worsened to the point where First Baptist Church of Newfane Food Pantry, a member of the Food Bank of WNY, reports that its freezers are empty and its shelves are bare. Before this point, donations enabled families to use the pantry once a month, even though many are in need of food on a weekly basis.

Recommendations to strengthen the safety net of human services...

RECOMMENDATION	STRATEGIES	MODEL TO CONSIDER
Strengthen and support the existing coalition of churches	<p>Explore opportunities for the church-based coalition to network with other key providers in the community such as the school, and possibly with church providers outside Newfane</p> <p>Promote the coalition of churches as a vehicle for sharing and accessing human service information</p>	<p>Love, Inc. offers a model being used in rural Springville, NY for uniting and mobilizing the church community in addressing human service needs in the community. http://www.loveincspringville.com/</p>
Increase awareness of existing human services, both within and outside the community	<p>Maintain the newly created directory of providers and services</p> <p>Distribute to all providers and information hubs, especially schools, churches, the town hall, and library</p> <p>Use newspapers and the town's newsletter to raise awareness of needed services such as affordable health insurance, ABCD Program, mental health supports and HEAP</p>	<p>As information hubs and neutral spaces, libraries can play a role in raising awareness and centralizing information. The New Rochelle Public Library is a forerunner in New York State. http://www.nrpl.org/socialservices/</p>
Increase the availability of enriching after-school activities for teens	<p>Compile and raise awareness of all existing programs</p> <p>Explore creating a community service program for teens offering them opportunities to develop work and life skills while filling needs within the community</p> <p>Explore a partnership between the school district and business community to develop internship opportunities</p>	<p>Amherst Youth Engaged in Service (Y.E.S. Program) offers a model that several towns in the region have in place. http://www.amherst.ny.us/pdf/youth/yes_bro.pdf</p>
Strengthen supports for mental health promotion and intervention	<p>Raise awareness of depression and suicide prevention through a community forum held at the school</p> <p>Raise awareness of existing resources, including crisis service hotlines serving Niagara County</p> <p>Engage providers in tracking demand for mental health services, to demonstrate need for providers in Newfane</p>	<p>The Appal-Link Network of Virginia: Mental Health Services without Boundaries offers a model for mental health services in rural communities. http://www.cmcsb.com/appal.htm</p>
Engage the community in drug use prevention	<p>Develop a drug and alcohol prevention strategy that engages all stakeholders in the community</p> <p>Expand drug prevention programming for youth</p> <p>Raise awareness among adults on the dangers of substance abuse and resources to overcome addiction</p>	<p>Across Ages is a model for increasing the resiliency of youth through an intergenerational approach that engages youth, parents and seniors in the community. http://acrossages.org/</p>
Bolster supports for food and housing	<p>Raise awareness of and access to existing support programs such as HEAP, weatherization programs and SNAP</p> <p>Explore opportunities for greater collaboration between church-based food pantries and with the Food Bank of WNY to maximize impact and resources and build greater capacity</p>	<p>The Potato and Produce Project connects food pantries with potatoes and other farm produce that is perfectly edible but would go unused due to imperfections. http://endhunger.org/potato_project.htm</p>
Expand transportation and aging-in-place supports for seniors at risk	<p>Explore opportunities to formalize already established informal transportation networks for seniors using models such as Hearts and Hands</p> <p>Increase seniors' access to affordable services for aging in place through volunteer-based programs such YES, Hearts and Hands, and church-based outreach programs</p>	<p>Hearts and Hands Faith in Action is a faith-based ministry offering transportation and aging-in-place supports to seniors in several rural communities in Erie County. http://hnhcares.org/</p>
Strengthen family supports, especially for single parents in poverty and domestic violence victims	<p>Promote the ABCD Program to new parents, especially lower-income single parents</p> <p>Explore opportunities for vocational training at sites within the community to prepare adults in poverty for career paths</p> <p>Strengthen workplaces at sites for connecting low-wage workers with human services supports and jobs training</p>	<p>Bridging the Gap is an initiative that engages employers in connecting lower-wage workers with human services, thereby reducing the stigma associated with support programs. http://nationalassembly.org/fspc/BridgingTheGap/</p>

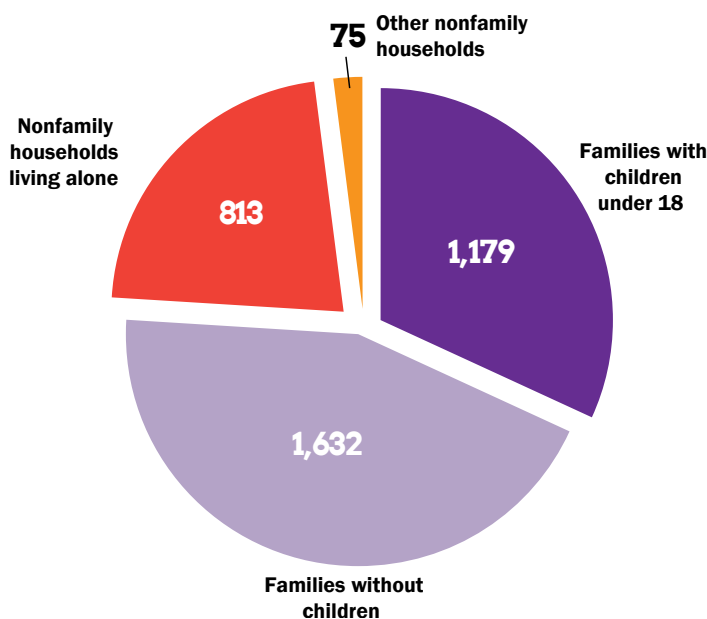
Context for Action

People in Need

Individuals
and families
of Newfane,
where we work,
how much we
earn and where
we go to school



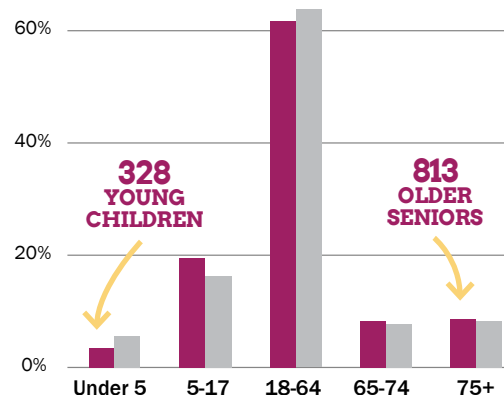
Households by Type, 2011



Source: 2007-11 American Community Survey

Population by Age, 2011

Newfane
Erie & Niagara
Counties



Potentially At-Risk Populations, 2011

Adults with HS education or less	3,336
Veterans	1,033
Single parents	393
Age 65+ living alone	344
Foreign born	150

Source: 2007-11 American Community Survey

Individuals and Families

As of the 2010 Census, 9,666 individuals resided in the Town of Newfane. This is essentially unchanged from 2000, but it represents a population increase of 7% since 1990. Indeed, Newfane's population grew during the last decade of the last century, bucking what was happening countywide.

What has changed over the past decade is the town's demographics. Newfane today is an older community than it was, with 15% more seniors than in 2000. At the same time, the town's population of youth has declined 14% since 2000. Today, seniors age 65 and up account for almost one-fifth (17%) of the town's population.

0% Population Change

Newfane's lack of population growth or decline masks some notable changes in the town's demographics over the past decade.

Source: 2000 Census and 2011 American Community Survey

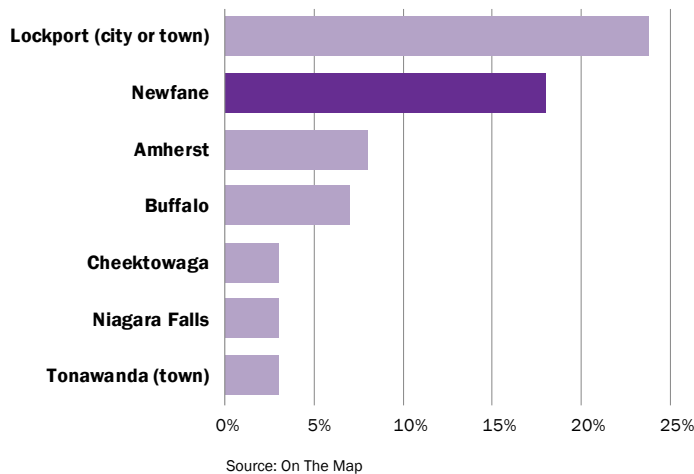
While Newfane is a town where families predominate, families without children under age 18 are more common than those with younger children, reflecting the aging nature of the community.

Adults with a high school diploma or less represent the town's largest population at risk, with nearly 3,340 individuals having no more than a high school diploma. These are individuals who will be unable to compete well in a job market where employers often select college graduates for positions that traditionally have not required a degree.

Veterans are another sizable and potentially vulnerable population in Newfane, as these are adults who may lack access to health care or may be challenged with health concerns related to their service.

Finally, Newfane has almost 350 single parents, another at-risk group. Indeed, 55% of families in poverty within the town are single-mothers with children under age 18.

Where Do Newfane Residents Go To Work?



Newfane's Top 10 Employers

Employer	# of Employees
Eastern Niagara Hospital	300
Newfane School District	204
Newfane Rehabilitation	203
Budwey's Supermarket	150
Ridge Road Express	85
Town of Newfane	83
Olcott Fire Company	64
Miller Hose Company	55
Stedman Old Farm Nurseries	40
Gordie Harper Bazaar	30

Source: Reference USA and New York State Education Department (for total school district employment)

Work and Income

Slightly fewer than 2,000 jobs exist in Newfane. This is about one job for every two residents in Newfane who work, an indicator of how limited job opportunities are for residents desiring to work where they live. The situation has worsened over recent years, as 7% of jobs were lost between 2002 and 2010. Decades ago, Newfane was a bedroom community for Lockport-based Delphi, which was the area's largest private-sector employer with over 7,300 jobs. Today Delphi employs just over 1,300.

Health care, education, transportation, public administration, agriculture and retail represent Newfane's largest 10 employers, which includes one company with only 30 employees. Indeed, most establishments in Newfane are small businesses having a median of only three employees.

With limited job opportunities, eight out of ten leave Newfane for work. Lockport is where about 25% of Newfane workers go. Other destinations for work are further out. Many are places in Erie County such as Amherst (a 40 minute drive one way), Town of Tonawanda (a 45 minute drive) and Buffalo (50 minutes away). Limited job opportunities in Newfane affect not only families who are trying to earn a living and improve their economic situation but also for

Newfane was once a bedroom community for Delphi.

teens who seek part-time job opportunities to develop skills, gain experience and save for college.

Those seeking work in Newfane face not only stiff competition for jobs but employment that tends to be lower-paying. In fact, of those residents who earn \$40,000 or more a year, 91% work outside of Newfane. With Newfane's distance from job centers past Lockport, those needing to work in town or nearby to care for children or aging parents are at a disadvantage, in terms of earnings potential. This may be one reason why the majority of single mothers in Newfane live in poverty.

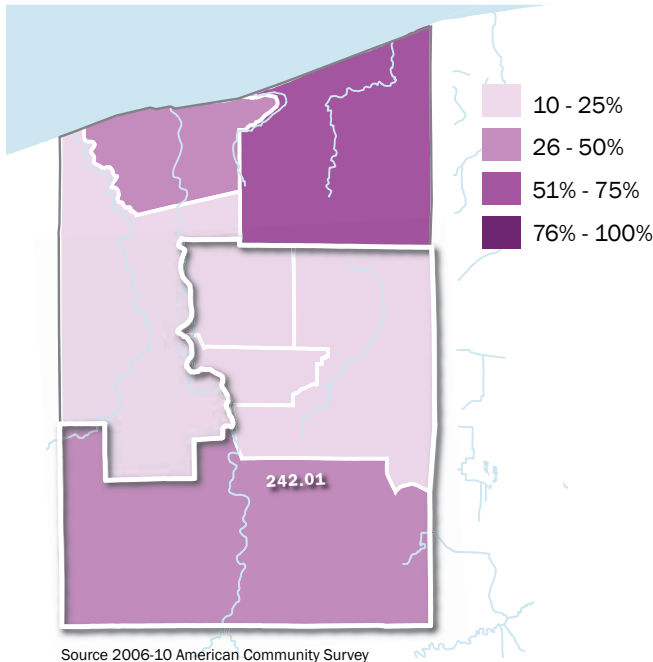
Nonetheless, Newfane has a larger middle class than the county as a whole, with nearly two-thirds of households living on more than \$25,000 but less than \$100,000 a year. The median income in Newfane is about \$51,500, almost \$5,000 more than across Niagara County (\$46,600).

% Households by Income Levels

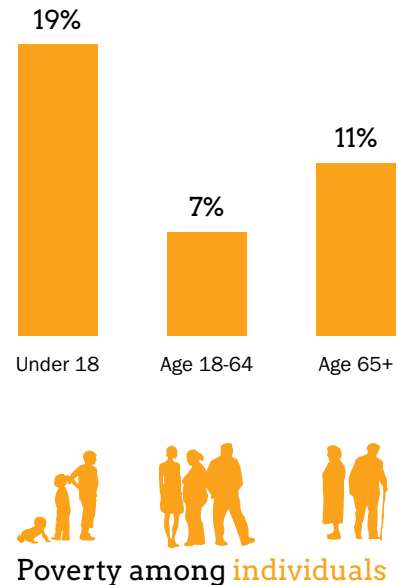
	Town of Newfane	Niagara County
\$0 - \$25K	23%	27%
\$25K - \$100K	63%	57%
\$100K+	15%	16%

Source: 2007-11 American Community Survey

Population in or near poverty, 2010



Population in Poverty by Age, 2011



Poverty

There are 979 individuals (one-tenth of the total) living in poverty (or on less than \$19,530 annually for a family of three as of 2013). Another 1,488 are struggling economically with incomes hovering between 100% and 200% of the federal poverty level. Altogether, one-quarter of the population in Newfane is either in poverty or at risk financially.

Poverty percentages are highest in the northeast part of Newfane, which is geographically furthest from both job centers and many

55% of families in poverty are single mothers with children

services. This area encompasses Appleton (a hamlet in the most northeastern part of Newfane), Olcott (a hamlet near Lake Ontario where Rt. 78 ends) and Burt (a hamlet south of Olcott). However, these percentages are not reflective of where most (about 70%) of people

in Newfane live, including those in poverty, as the majority are in Census Tract 242.01 which encompasses the mid to southern portion of the town.

Across age groups, children in Newfane are most affected by poverty, with one in five (420 altogether) living in a family earning under the federal poverty standard. Among families, single mothers with children account for over half of those in poverty.

\$12.00 Amount a family of three would pay for a single round trip by bus

\$17.84 Maximum daily amount a family of three lives on at the federal poverty level

\$20.08 Daily cost of owning and operating a car

Source: Rural Niagara Public Transportation, 2013 Federal Poverty Guidelines, and Edmunds.com

Schools in the Newfane Central School District		Enrollment, 2011	% Qualify for Free/Reduced Lunch
ELEMENTARY			
1	Newfane ES	379	40%
MIDDLE/INTERMEDIATE			
9	Newfane Intermediate	299	35%
10	Newfane MS	450	35%
HIGH			
11	Newfane HS	656	29%

Source: Enrollment is from the NYS Education Department 2011 School Report Card, while proportions qualifying for free and reduce-priced lunch reflects 2012/13 data from the district's SED BEDS reporting system



Source: NYS Education Department 2011 School Report Card and NYS GIS Clearinghouse

Education

The Newfane Central School District enrolls just under 2,000 students in Kindergarten through 12th grade. The district also offers an early childhood center enrolling about 80 children.

The district stands strong against its peers, ranking at 156 out of 430 upstate New York districts. Rankings are based on student test scores and the percentage of students graduating with a Regents diploma.

In 2011, 93% of Newfane graduates earned a Regents diploma, and nearly a half graduated with advanced distinction. Across grades and subject areas, at least half or more of students are performing at or above standards. Science is a subject where Newfane students excel, with about 90% or more of 4th and 8th grade students achieving standards or higher. District leaders say that they would like to see Newfane become a premier STEM school with enhanced programming and resources in the areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

At the same time the school is a strong community asset in equipping the next generation with training needed for college and careers, the district has recently lost key resources for students and families due to budget cuts, including a school social worker and a family support center that was based in the elementary school. Meanwhile, district officials describe seeing an increasing number of students in crisis, with threats of suicide, drug use, behavioral problems, young children with nobody to go home to, and children living with grandparents. Overall, one out of three children (35%)

Educational Attainment of Adults Age 25+, 2007-11

	Town of Newfane	Niagara County
Less than High School	10%	11%
High School	39%	37%
Some College/ Associate's Degree	34%	31%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	17%	21%

Source: 2007-11 American Community Survey

across the district qualify for free and/or reduced price lunches. While the district makes referrals to community resources, the lack of mental health services in Newfane creates barriers to follow through by parents.

With Newfane being relatively far from any four-year college and higher-paying jobs, the loss of young talent spun off by the school district is another challenge facing Newfane like other rural towns. This rural brain drain contributes to relatively lower percentages of adults in Newfane with a bachelor's degree or higher.

Context for Action

Newfane's Most Vulnerable



Demographics,
service usage,
urgent needs
and barriers

Assessing the Need

156 Newfane households responded to the Mobile Safety-Net Team Community Needs Assessment.

This one-page questionnaire gathered data and information on demographics, urgent needs, concerns and barriers experienced by residents in getting human services.

Assessments were completed at a variety of sites including the Newfane Central School District, the Newfane Community Food Pantry, the Senior Lunch Program at Olcott Fire Hall, and at a Community Resource Event sponsored by the Mobile Safety-Net Team.

What human services are residents receiving?

Less than half (41%) of vulnerable individuals in Newfane are receiving some form of human services support or living in a household with someone who does.

The most common types of benefits reported by those who receive support

Food Stamps	70%
Medicaid Insurance	52%
HEAP	47%
SSI/SSD	36%
Public Assistance	20%

66%

of those receiving some form of public assistance qualify for and receive more than one kind of benefit.

Pending applications. Nearly one out of seven respondents indicated they have an application for public assistance pending, with 38% of pending applications for HEAP. Another 23% are for food stamps and SSI/SSD, respectively, and 11% of applications are pending for Medicaid. Almost all were current public benefit recipients seeking additional benefits.

Are there indicators of greater need?

The need for support with food, health insurance, housing costs and cash assistance is likely greater than indicated by the current number of recipients since both those receiving benefits as well as those who don't report experiencing access barriers. Altogether, about one in five (21%) says there is difficulty getting services.

26%

of survey takers report having an urgent concern.

The most urgent concerns of those surveyed

Homelessness Eviction Utility Shut-off	11%
No money for food	7%

Urgent Concerns. About one in four survey takers reported having an urgent concern, a slightly lower proportion than other communities like Tonawanda (30%) but more than double that in Newstead (10%). Housing-related concerns accounted for close to half (42% of total concerns noted), followed by concerns related to not having money for food.

Lack of Health Insurance.

Almost one in five reported that someone in their household lacks health insurance. Seventeen percent of respondents indicated that at least one adult in their household lacked health insurance. Children seemed more likely to be covered, with only 2% of respondents indicating that a child in the household lacks insurance.

What's causing this situation?

More house than what's affordable.

Over two-thirds of at-risk adults in Newfane report living in a house they own. Moreover, all of those with urgent concerns related to housing - utility shut-off notices and worries about foreclosure and eviction - report owning a home. This suggests that at-risk residents are struggling to maintain more home than what they can reasonably afford.

Options for more affordable housing are limited. Only a quarter of those at risk report renting and a tiny fraction of the total (6%) rent with any kind of rental assistance. Limited options for downsizing are further supported by the relative stability of residences in Newfane. Sixty percent have lived at their current address for at least six years. Less than 10% report living where they do now for less than a year.

Skills but potential barriers to jobs.

Almost half of those surveyed (46%) have at least a two-year college degree. Another 20% say they have at least some college or have completed trade school. Less than one in 20 reports not finishing high school. Put another way, those

156 surveyed

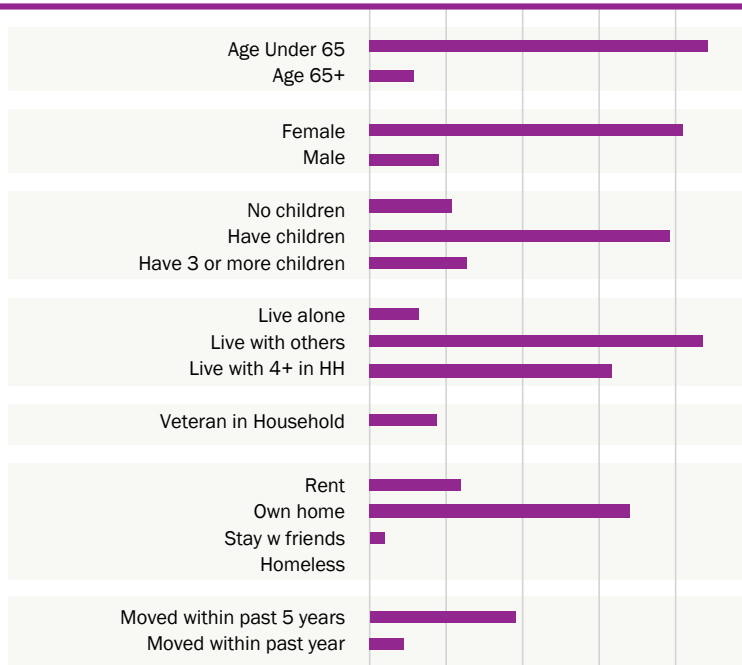
at risk in Newfane, are relatively well educated.

However, only 40% are employed full-time. Approximately another 10% work part time, and over 20% reports being unemployed, with the majority of these actively looking for work.

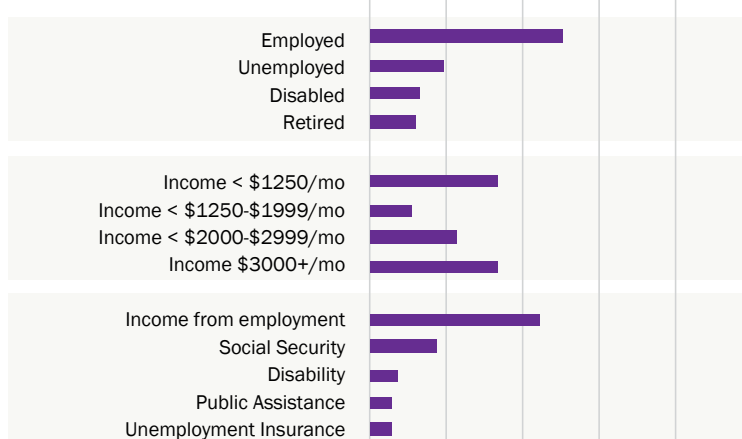
Although sample sizes for subgroups are small and not statistically significant, they suggest females, particularly those with children, experience the greatest barriers to employment, across all educational levels. All of those who reported their employment status as unemployed were female, with an average of two children. Just as many had a college degree as those stopping their education at high school. While few reported themselves as the only adult in their household, their lack of workforce participation may reflect barriers to work such as lack of child care and long commutes.

Income and assets may create barriers to benefits. Being turned away for services because of income limits was the most common barrier those at-risk in Newfane encounter. Over half of those surveyed reported a monthly household income of \$2,000 (\$24,000 annually), which is above the poverty line for a household of four, the median in Newfane. Moreover, with the large majority owning the home they live in as well as owning a car, it would not be surprising if their assets create additional barriers to benefits with stringent resource limitations such as Medicaid, SSI, and other temporary assistance programs.

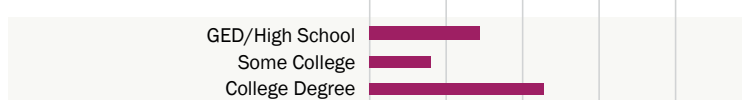
Individuals and Families



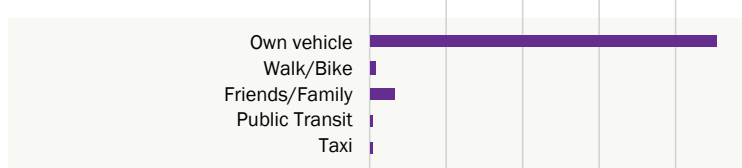
Work and Income



Education



Transportation



Source: Mobile Safety-Net Team Community Needs Assessment, 2012-13

Barriers Residents Face

Being turned away for services because of income limits was the most frequent barrier reported. Altogether, relatively few of Newfane's vulnerable (20% of the total) identified barriers to services. Difficulty associated with traveling was the second most common barrier described by survey respondents. What's notable is that the majority of those reporting difficulty in traveling actually own a car, suggesting that it is perhaps the distance related to necessary travel that's creating barriers.

Focus groups and interviews with residents in Newfane shed light on findings from the survey as well as reveal additional barriers.

A Voice from the Community

Stigma limits the distance residents will

travel and the transportation options they use. Most seniors participating in small group conversations at the Olcott Fire Hall admitted that they tend not to venture far from Newfane. Lockport is seen as the "big city," while Buffalo and Niagara Falls are generally viewed as destinations to be avoided because of crime and congestion.

Most seniors described driving where they need to go or relying on family and friends to get places. Few used alternative modes. The Medicaid van is viewed as the "welfare van" and a form of charity.

Lack of awareness and familiarity create additional barriers to traveling. When asked if they have ever used Rural Niagara Transportation

(RNT) to travel outside Newfane via bus, seniors expressed confusion about this service, not knowing where the bus stops or where it goes. They fear being stranded. These concerns are not altogether unsubstantiated since RNT doesn't have designated bus stops and return routes may not be clear to new service users.

Broader lack of awareness about where to go for help is also a concern for some. While many seniors mentioned Niagara County Office for the Aging, Dale Association, Lockport's DSS and word of mouth as connection points for services, those who may be newer to the community or less socially connected described lack of awareness. One renter, for instance, said she wouldn't know where to turn for help if she needed it. Another senior, who lives in a trailer, also described not knowing where to get help fixing a broken

appliance in her home.

For parents, the school tends to be the go-to resource, followed by word of mouth, with awareness of services lacking among those adults who are less socially integrated into the fabric of Newfane's community, including the community of faith. While churches offer key support services in and around Newfane, many vulnerable residents are not connected with a church. Even fewer, if any, seemed aware of 211.

Cost of health services creates barriers. Several seniors talked about barriers to dental and optical care, as these are expensive services that aren't covered by insurance. Medical coverage itself is out of reach for other seniors who described themselves as too young for Medicare and not poor enough for Medicaid.

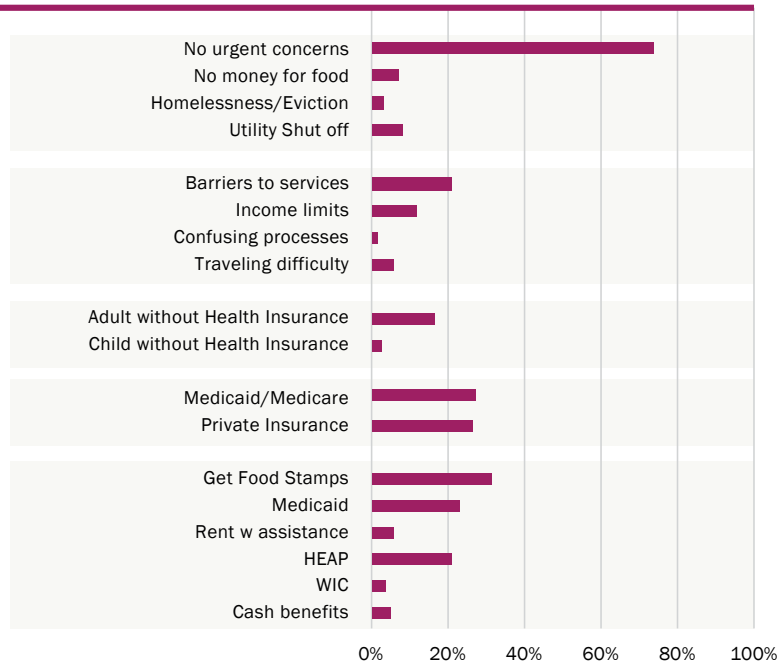
Lack of jobs creates

1 out of 5 residents surveyed in Newfane say they have encountered difficulty getting services.



foundational barriers. Most adults of working age said it's difficult, if not impossible, to find a job in Newfane paying a living wage or a job with benefits. Many jobs are seasonal, and as one parent put it, "minimum wage is the only option." Gone are the days when Delphi and GM were the big employers and families lived more comfortably.

Needs & Barriers



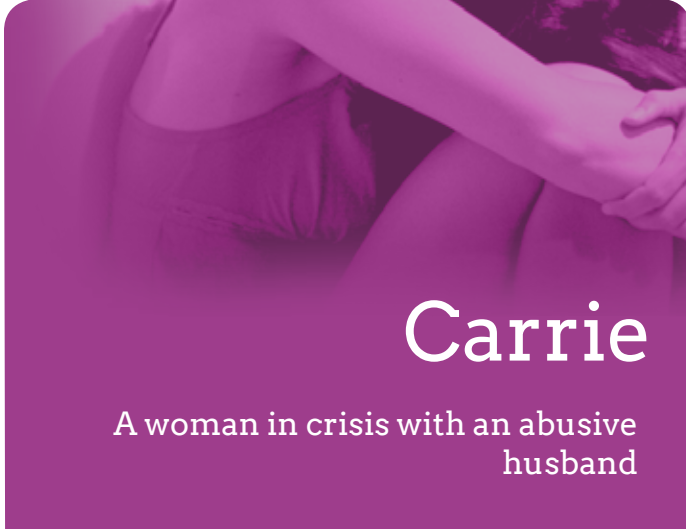
Source: Mobile Safety-Net Team Community Needs Assessment, 2012-13

Voices from the Community

Insights and perspectives from those with first-hand experience

These are stories about real people,* individuals in Newfane who agreed to talk with us and share some of their personal accounts. We asked them about the challenges they face, the services and supports that have been helpful to them, barriers, and their goals for the future. Through these individuals, this study's findings are humanized, and a clearer picture emerges as to the interconnectedness of issues.

**Names have been changed for privacy purposes*



Carrie

A woman in crisis with an abusive husband

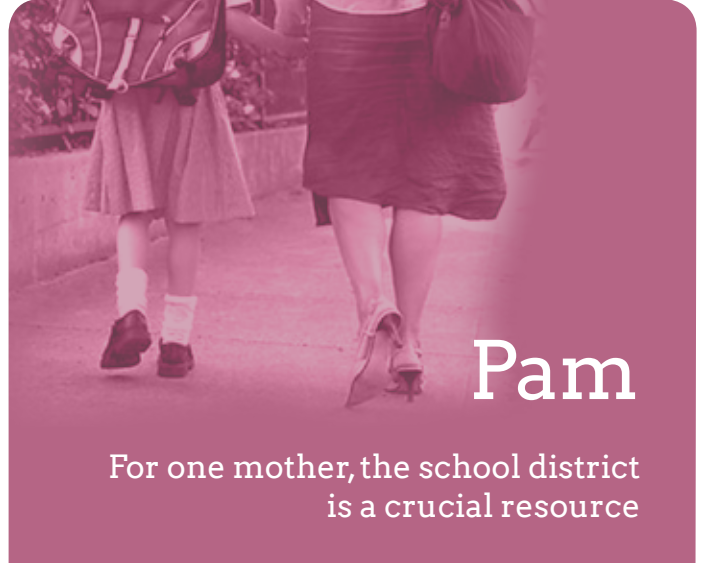
Carrie is one of five victims of domestic violence the Mobile Safety-Net Team met while working in Newfane. Her otherwise private struggle was brought to light when she identified domestic violence as an urgent concern on the resident survey she completed. When privately asked about her situation, she began crying, explaining she has no one, nobody other than her husband who is addicted to drugs and alcohol and violent towards her. Carrie has family but has been isolated from them as a result of the abuse.

Carrie looks for refuge when her husband indulges his bad habits; she knows well the signs that lead to the threats and attacks. Like other victims, Carrie hesitates to report anything when she is beaten. Newfane is a small town where everybody knows everybody else's business; the police officer may be the abuser's friend. The fear of retaliation is big.

While Carrie's husband is all she has, she's not financially dependent on him. She's actually the primary breadwinner of the two. With his addictions, he can't hold a job.

A Voice from the Community

Carrie considers escaping. She says she'd like to but becomes more hesitant when actual support programs are discussed. She agreed to the team following up with her, but was later unresponsive. "I never heard from her again," says the Mobile Safety-Net Team leader who spoke with Carrie that day.



Pam

For one mother, the school district is a crucial resource

Pam doesn't know what she or her one daughter would do without the school district which has been a key support for her. She explains that the only way she gets connected to anything is through the school's director of special education, or sometimes word of mouth.

She describes there being very few services to access in Newfane. Everything is far away. Moreover, she notes a decline in opportunities, especially for youth. Sure, there are afterschool programs but transportation as well as cost can be problematic. With sports, for instance, parents are responsible for transportation from practices and must pay for uniforms.

She expresses particular frustration at the lack of things to do for teens and twenty-somethings. Drugs are a big pull, and these young adults need role models, something to look up to, someone to aspire to be.

A Voice from the Community

What's in place now is a landscape of support that is reactive. By the time it's too late, help is available, at least from her perspective as a parent. Even then, there are six month wait lists and challenges in getting to help (everything is far away or in Erie County).

Pam doesn't even have health insurance. She was recently left with nothing. She's hoping her daughter, who has special needs, will qualify for Medicaid. As for herself, she recently went back to work as a bus aide, and is thankful for a job close by to home that offers some flexibility.



Rick

The challenges of a father and service veteran

Rick is a father of two grown sons. He’s also a veteran, and a long-time resident of Newfane. He appreciates the community’s safety but wishes there were more job opportunities. Rick works part time. He volunteers too. Those connections helped raise his awareness of what services are available, but he still doesn’t consider himself greatly aware. Word of mouth is how a lot of information travels in town.

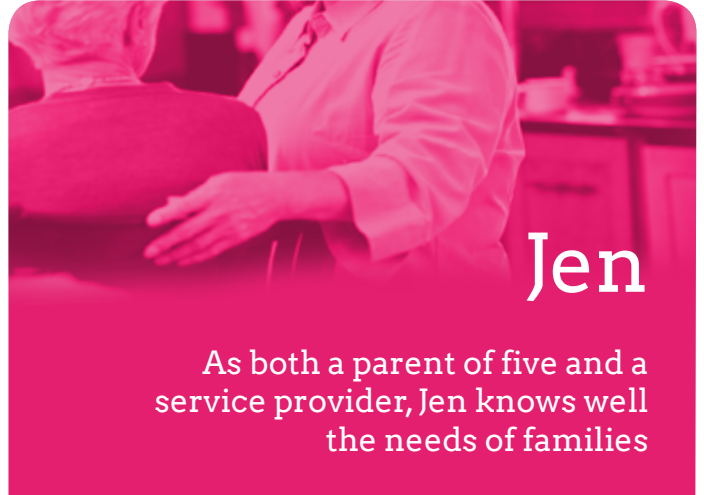
Rick wishes there was more for the kids in town to do. Having two sons, Rick mentions that sports are an option, but says parents have to pay for equipment. After that, there are the logistics of transportation to and from practices. Boy Scouts also runs through two churches. However, as Rick observes, the kids who are in trouble aren’t a part of a congregation. He also describes the use of alcohol by teens as “insane.”

A Voice from the Community

With a service-related injury, Rick connects with VA services in Buffalo.

While there’s a VA in Lockport, “it is just a screening station,” he says. (This VA in Lockport does, in fact, offer many services but not the ones Rick seeks.)

As a former emergency medical worker, Rick also mentions domestic violence as a community concern. From what he has seen, it’s a significant issue that goes largely unreported.



Jen

As both a parent of five and a service provider, Jen knows well the needs of families

Jen is a mother of five children, now in their teens and twenties. She is also the daughter of aging parents. Preferring not to focus on herself, Jen wants more than anything to help others, and she has worked tirelessly for the past 27 years to do so. In addition to her job at the school, she plays a critical role in the outreach programs offered by her church which includes a food pantry, community dinners, a Christmas toy drive, a summer lunch program for youth and more.

She explains that these programs serve the disabled and working poor, and not “career welfare recipients.” They are families trying to help themselves and oftentimes make just \$5 to \$10 more than the cutoff for supports for food and HEAP. Summers can be the worst time, when kids are out of school and parents need to provide three meals a day. Struggling to afford the essentials, there is no money left for extras like prom dresses, Christmas gifts, clothing for different seasons or even school supplies.

A Voice from the Community

For seniors in Newfane, “retirement in rural communities is far from joyful.” She sees retirees with prescription costs that exceed what some pay in monthly rent. The price of health care and prescriptions is so burdensome that groceries are put off. Yet many are too proud to accept help. Having worked hard their entire lives, they now prefer to simply go without. It’s hard for Jen to see. She says, though, it can be rougher when families have children.

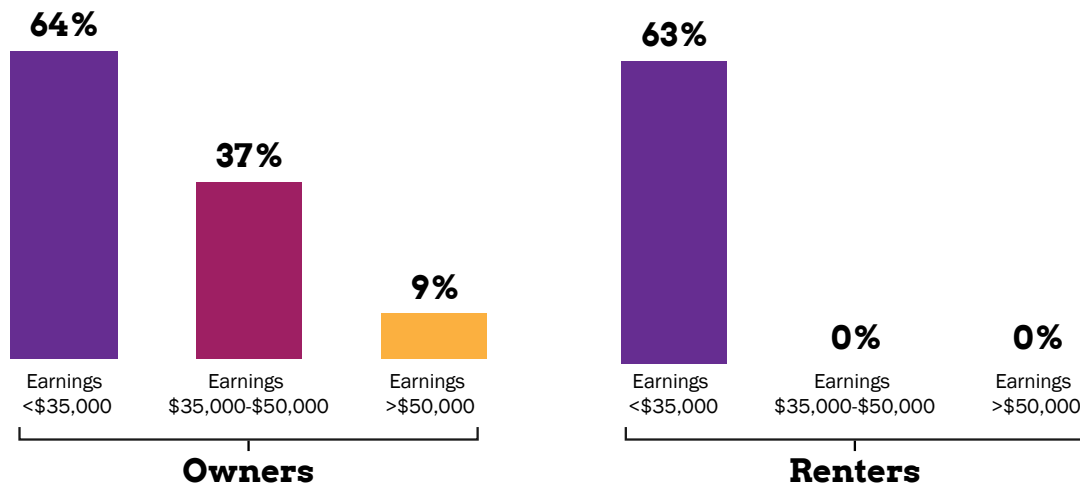
Context for Action

Places in Need



Where we live,
how we travel
and the safety
levels in our
community

Households in Newfane Paying 30% or More of Their Income on Housing, by Income Category, 2011



Source: 2007-11 American Community Survey

Housing

There are about 3,700 occupied housing units in Newfane. Almost nine out of ten (85%) are owner occupied. Indeed, the housing market for those desiring to live in a smaller structure is slim. There are fewer than 500 rental units in Newfane, and only about 270 mobile homes.

While home prices in Newfane are on par with homes across the county, with a median of \$100,000, rentals are more expensive, perhaps because the supply is so limited. The median monthly rent in Newfane is \$694 a month, about \$65 more a month than across Niagara County as a whole.

While Newfane offers affordable housing for those with solid earnings, housing is expensive for those with lower incomes. Human services providers describe it as a matter of being “property rich and dollar poor.” Altogether, almost two-thirds of lower-income households (those living on less than \$35,000 a year) pay more than 30% of their income on housing. By comparison, fewer than 15% of those earning above \$35,000 annually pay more the 30%

threshold on housing-related expenses. At the same time about equal proportions of lower-income homeowners and renters are affected by high housing costs, the number of homeowners who are cost burdened is about triple the number of renters. It’s a concerning indicator, particularly for older households that may face increasing maintenance costs on fixed incomes.

3 out of 4
lower-income households in Newfane own the home they live in.

What are the traveling options for those in Newfane without a car?

Provider	Qualifying Populations	Description of Transportation Services	User Cost	Advance Notice	Wheelchair Accessible
Medicaid Van, Niagara County Dept. of Social Services	Medicaid recipients	Transportation for non-emergency appointments, coordinated by Medical Answering Service.	Free	48-72 hours	Yes
Bus, Rural Niagara Public Transportation	All	The bus comes through Newfane four times a day, taking residents to destinations in Lockport and Sanborn.	\$2 standard fare	Residents requesting deviation from the fixed route give one-day advance notice	Yes
Senior Medical Van, Niagara County Office for the Aging	Age 60+	Transportation for medical appointments only to destinations in Niagara or Erie Counties.	\$7-25 round trip, depending on distance	2 weeks	Yes
Taxi	All	Transportation to any area destination.	About \$3 per mile (e.g. \$27 one-way to Lockport)	Less than a day	Some

Transportation

To get to work, the large majority (96%) of Newfane residents ages 16 and up depend on a vehicle. Another 3% do not travel because they work from home, while 2% say they walk to work. Nobody in Newfane relies on public transportation for work.

While Niagara County Rural Niagara Transportation has a bus route through Newfane that takes residents to destinations outside the town in Lockport (for instance, the Dale Association and Walmart) and Sanborn (such as NCCC and BOCES), the bus travels through Newfane only four times a day, Monday through Friday, and does not offer the flexibility in scheduling most workers likely need. Moreover, while the bus will deviate up to 3/4 of a mile along the main thoroughfare it travels, those in town living further out may need a ride from family or friends to reach a stopping point. The bus doesn't have designated stops, but rather the bus driver will stop anywhere along the route where they see someone waiting. At the same time this offers greater flexibility for riders, feedback from seniors in Newfane suggests that it also creates confusion.

While life in Newfane is largely car dependent, 144 households are without a vehicle. Although this is under 5% of the total, these households are more likely than not to be headed by someone of working age, under the age of 65, than by a senior. They are also more likely to be homeowners than renters.

For those without a vehicle, isolation and difficulty connecting with

services and jobs is a concern, as there are limited alternatives. While conversations with residents revealed limited use of the bus, such as to travel within Newfane or as a backup when the car breaks down, ridership among residents is low. Some expressed frustration, saying there is no schedule made available and they don't know where the bus goes. (The bus does not have designated stops.)

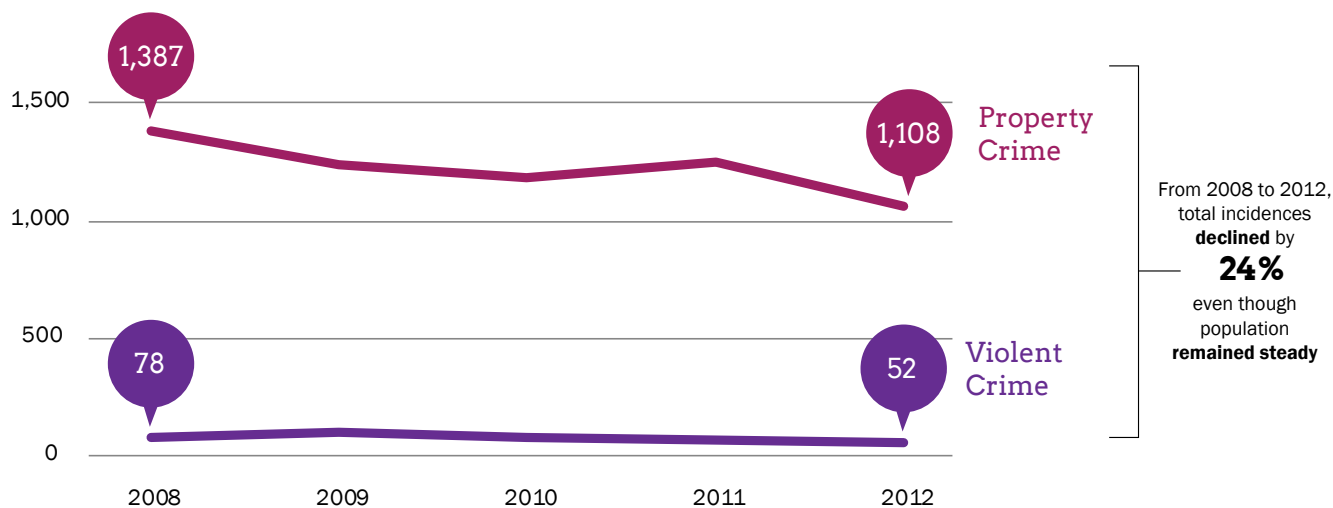
Other, more affordable, options are primarily for medical appointments. Yet a representative from the Niagara County Department of Aging says ridership from Newfane is low (less than a handful of users). Taxis are available too, but described by residents as too expensive.

Characteristics of Householders Lacking a Vehicle, 2010

Household by Age	# Renters	# Owners	TOTAL
Householder Under Age 65	45	51	96
Householder Age 65+	13	35	48
Total	58	86	144

Source: 2007-11 American Community Survey

Incidences of Selected Crime in Newfane and Other Rural Areas Covered by the Niagara County Sheriff



Source: NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services, Index Crimes Reported to Police, 2008-12

Crime

Newfane is described as a safe community where residents can leave their doors unlocked. Most residents are homeowners who have been invested in the community for a long time. In fact, the majority have been in the home they are in now for over 10 years.

While detailed crime statistics aren't available for the town (coverage for Newfane and other rural areas of Niagara County is provided by the Niagara County Sheriff which reports only aggregated data, as shown in the chart above), conversations with both human services providers and residents identified two significant trends that warrant mention.

Newfane is described as a Drug Access Hub

An uptick in drug and alcohol use is one. Human services providers describe a town where there is a lot of self medication, or the use of drugs and alcohol, especially among youth. More alarming, they describe Newfane as a "drug access hub" because of the town's

location along Routes 78 and 31. Newfane, in fact, has made news headlines several times between 2011 and 2013 for drug raids and the discovery of home-based drug labs.

This availability of drugs in Newfane puts youth at risk. Conversations with parents reveal drug and alcohol abuse among

young adults as a major concern. It's fueled, in part, by the lack of work and other constructive opportunities for teens, as well as a system of support that's considered reactive rather than preventive.

Domestic violence is another concern both providers and parents raised. It's perceived as being a problem though largely unreported. Substantiating this, only 93 incidences of domestic violence were filed in the Town of Newfane in 2012. This is 11% of the 842 total incidences reported to the Niagara County Sheriff in 2012 and less than 5% of the 3,400 incidences reported across all police departments in Niagara County.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that these statistics on domestic violent, because of unreported cases, underrepresent the issue significantly, especially in rural communities. In the short time the Mobile Safety-Net Team spent in Newfane, at least five victims of domestic violence were identified and shared with us their personal struggles and experiences of living with an abusive partner or spouse. One of these victims is profiled in this assessment (see page 17). What this and the other stories reveal is that there are far too few resources to assist victims of domestic violence in remote areas of our region, even with the existence of outstanding organizations such as the Family Justice Center, Crisis Services, the YWCA Tonawandas and the YWCA Niagara. Improved accessibility of services for victims is needed, even in communities like Newfane that don't have a critical mass of need.

Landscape of Services



Newfane
service
providers,
their strengths,
system gaps,
barriers and
promising
developments

Landscape of Services

Under two dozen public and private human service supports exist in the Town of Newfane offering residents food, clothing, youth programs, health care, information, referrals and more. A handful of agencies have programming that targets seniors, a group that tends to be vulnerable.

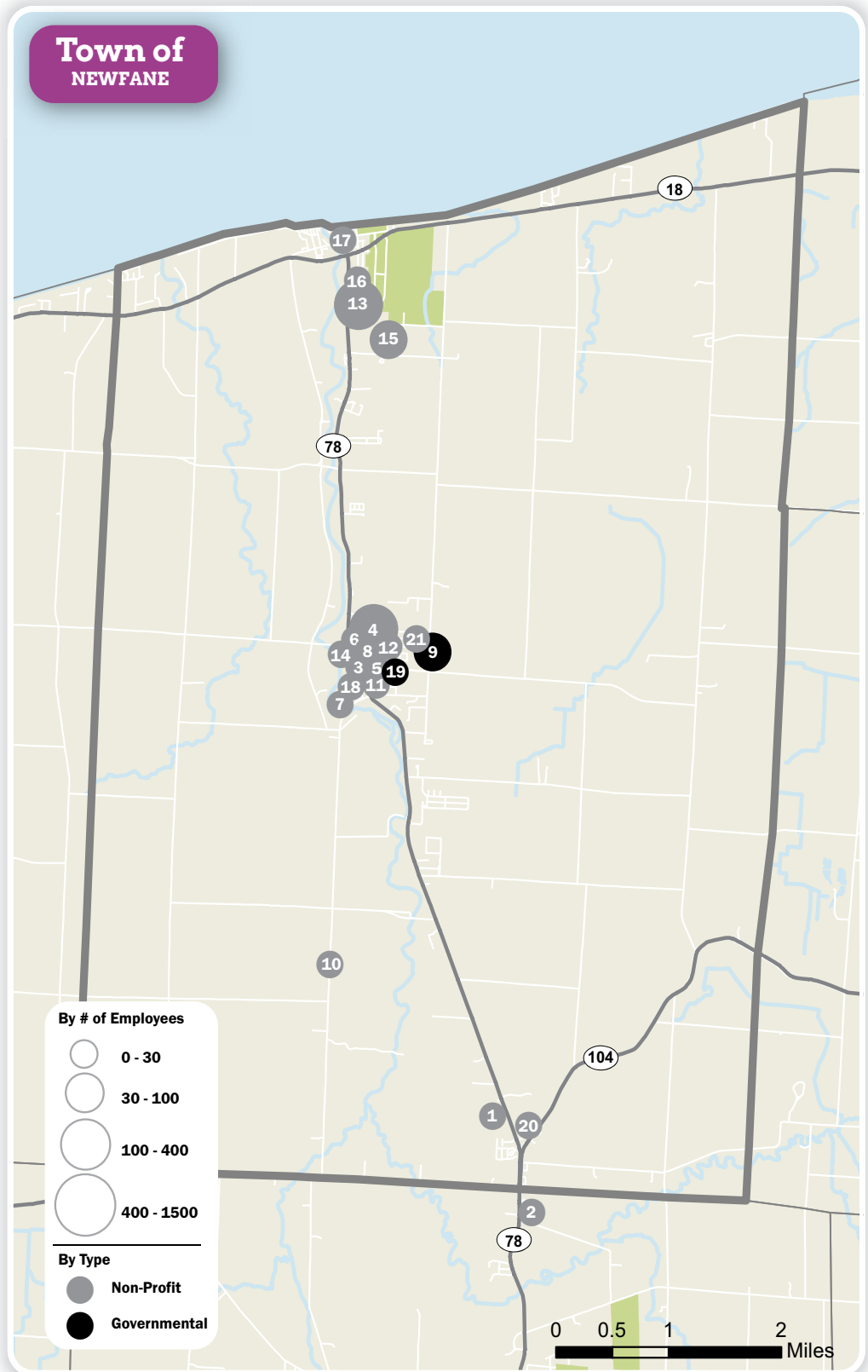


At the same time, there is no specialized programming in town for other vulnerable groups such as young parents, veterans, or the homeless.

The typical service provider in Newfane is a small nonprofit with under 10 employees, located in the middle of town along Route 78. There is also a small cluster in and around Olcott.

The school district and hospital are the town's largest human services supports, in terms of employment. The most cross-cutting in terms of services include the school district as well as Agri-Business Child Development (ABCD).

Almost 700
employees across
21 providers
in Newfane offer core
human services to
those in need.



HUMAN SERVICES: AGENCY NAME		Target Population				Services											
		Teen Parents	Veterans	Seniors	Homeless	Food	Clothing	Education Training	Affordable Housing	Transportation	Mental Health Addictions	Health/Wellness	Legal	Youth Programs	Financial Literacy	Crime/Juvenile	Information/Referral
1	Agri-Business Child Development (ABCD) at Newfane																
2	Boy Scout Troop 40																
3	Boy Scouts Cub Scout Pack 44, at Newfane United Methodist Church																
4	Eastern Niagara Hospital																
5	First Baptist Church of Newfane Food Pantry and Outreach Ministry																
6	Girl Scouts of WNY																
7	Grace Bible Church																
8	Newfane Business and Professional Association @ Town Community Ctr																
9	Newfane Central Schools																
10	Newfane Community Food Pantry, at St. Brendan on the Lake																
11	Newfane Free Library																
12	Newfane Golden Agers																✓
13	Newfane Lions Club																
14	Newfane United Methodist Church																✓
15	Niagara County Head Start																
16	Olcott Fire Hall Nutrition Program, Niagara County Office of Aging																✓
17	Olcott United Methodist Church																
18	Rainbow of Help																
19	Town Of Newfane																
20	Wright's Corner Presbyterian Church																
21	YWCA at Newfane Middle School																

See Data Sources and Notes for definitions

Strengths of the System

At the same time the Newfane Central School District has lost significant resources due to funding cuts, **the school district remains a focal point for children and families**, and parents speak highly of the district's director of special education as a connection point for families with children with particular needs. Academically, the district is relatively strong as well, standing in the top half of all districts in Upstate New York.

A relatively new community center exists in Newfane alongside the Town Hall. It's conveniently located on Main Street and used by several not-for-profit groups, including the Newfane Golden Agers, Newfane Small Business and Professional Association, Girl Scout troops, community watch programs and others.

The Town of Newfane offers a STAR (School Tax Relief) program for home-owning seniors, providing an exemption from school taxes and making home ownership more affordable for lower-income seniors. Applications can be filed with the Town of Newfane Assessment Department.

Seniors in Newfane have some strong human services supports. These include a nutrition program offering lunch and more on weekdays through the Niagara County Office of the Aging, which also operates Meals on Wheels for homebound seniors in the area. The Newfane Golden Age Club is a notable social program for seniors that is financially supported by the town, offering lunches, informational programming, crafts and trips, both day and overnight. While it's not currently a powerful connection point for human services, it offers an additional framework for such.

The **Junior Fire Department is a resource for youth**, offering much needed mentoring and coaching.

The **Newfane Business and Professional Association is a membership based organization, uniting human services and other agencies and businesses** for the purpose of helping them grow and be successful.

Newfane's proximity to Lockport, about 10 miles south, offers access to a more robust human services safety net. For instance, in Lockport Newfane residents can access legal aid, available through Neighborhood Legal Services' satellite location at the Mental Health Association where they meet with clients one day a week, offering assistance with foreclosures, domestic violence and other legal concerns.

Gaps in Services

Newfane has a thin and limited human services safety net, with only 22 providers located within the town's boundaries. No service providers were identified in the areas of affordable housing, financial literacy, and crime/juvenile delinquency. Nor are there any providers for those at risk of homelessness, veterans or teen parents.

Mental health services in Newfane are lacking, especially for young adults, a population that has experienced three recent suicides. The school district says that threats of suicide are referred to ECMC in Buffalo, and notes a lack of mental health supports in the community, despite a rising number of families and children who are in distress and in need of counseling.

Drug prevention programming is much needed; currently, the only supports that exist, such as the City of Lockport Drug Court, are reactive, catching those with drug-abuse problems at points of crisis, such as an arrest for drug dealing.

Residents describe a town where **there is nothing for youth to do after school hours**. While after-school activities such as sports are available, these require the purchase of uniforms, equipment and travel that lower-income families can't manage. Moreover, for teens, there are insufficient job opportunities for them to learn skills to prepare for work and career.

Seniors note **gaps in affordable dental care. Even those with insurance don't have coverage.** Nearest providers of sliding fee based care are located in Niagara Falls and Buffalo. Affordable eyeglasses were also identified as a need by seniors.

There are **insufficient supports for parents, especially single parents in poverty**, such as parent training for hard-to-manage children, which the school has been seeing on an increasing basis. **Adult job training and opportunities for skills development are also lacking.**

Affordable and flexible transportation options are an area of need, especially with Newfane's large and growing senior population. While Rural Niagara Transit offers routes, they are described as very restricted. Taxis are another option but too expensive for low-income seniors. Other options are primarily for medical appointments, and most seniors who don't drive rely on family and informal social networks.

The
SCHOOL
is a focal point
for services

**MANY
HUMAN SERVICES
ARE NOT THERE**

Barriers to Connecting with Residents

Fears, stigma and pride create barriers. Residents would rather forego than accept help and feel vulnerable because they have expressed a need. Seniors describe transportation for Medicaid recipients as the “welfare van,” a form of charity they won’t accept. Providers also describe seeing families and individuals in need who, out of pride, won’t accept help.

The **decline in the number of youth in Newfane (by 14% since 2000) has made it difficult for churches and other providers to achieve a critical mass** needed to offer youth activities.

Funding cuts within the school district resulted in the elimination of a family support center that used to exist in the elementary school; the district has lost its social worker as well. State funding for an after-school program for middle-school students, provided by the YWCA for about 10 years, has also been cut.

Geographic distance between Newfane and places like Sanborn, Niagara Falls and Buffalo create barriers. Residents in Newfane see Lockport as the “big city” and rarely travel as far as Buffalo, viewing it as a place with congestion and crime.

Lack of awareness and **confusion over how Niagara Rural Transit buses work** create barriers to more residents using this service.

Residents describe waiting lists for mental health services at Monsignor Care and for respite care, as well as for drug treatment and rehabilitation.

Competition among church-sponsored food pantries limits partnership, capacity and impact.

Many in the community are unaware of the scope of services provided by the Agri-Business Child Development (ABCD) program, which offers to eligible migrant and farm-working families early childhood education and other services such as special needs services, health, transportation and family supports. The center is a strong but underutilized community resource. While often near capacity during the agricultural season, as migrant families leave the area, significant space is available and underutilized.

The Golden Age Club is perceived by some seniors as mostly a travel club for higher-income seniors, creating a notable division within Newfane’s community of seniors.

There is a lack of job opportunities in Newfane to lift families out of poverty and equip youth with skills needed for careers and college, while giving them something productive to do outside of school.

Residents lack awareness of comprehensive information and referral resources such as WNY 211 or the Mental Health Association’s directory and hotline.

Promising Developments

Newfane Central School District has goals of becoming a premier STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) school and is trying to garner federal funding to help make this happen. With funding from the state, the district has also recently initiated a national program called Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID). The program offers a range of supports for at-risk middle school students, offering them foundational skills and helping them to dream big in terms of college and career.

Nearby job opportunities for residents in Newfane will improve, as Yahoo! recently announced plans to expand its presence in Lockport with a data and customer care center that will add 115 jobs.

Yahoo! will add
100+ jobs
in Lockport

Newfane Golden Agers will be hiring a director, a position that is partially subsidized by the town and which serves as a liaison between the town and the club. It opens up the opportunity to fill the position with someone who will be a strong advocate for the town’s entire population of seniors, potentially expanding the club’s reach, membership, impact, and collaborations. Currently, the club partners with the Lion’s Club and the Niagara County Office for the Aging.

Churches have the potential to play a bigger role in the provision of human services, primarily in the areas of food, clothes and support for youth. Building blocks are in place, consisting of smaller support programs that serve primarily church members. These could be strengthened and grown for the benefit of the town and the churches themselves through collaboration, outreach and strong leadership of the now loosely organized Coalition of Churches which recently has lost its leader.

Situated at the heart of the Niagara Wine Trail and recently designated as the nation’s “ultimate fishing town,” Newfane and Olcott boast many solid tourism assets. **Tourism, in fact, is a sector that holds future promise and has been garnering state investment on a regional level.** Through partnerships and connectivity, Newfane could position itself to capitalize on what’s happening regionwide.

Insights from the Field

Recommendations and Best Practices

Where we gathered our information and what we are reporting

These insights, recommendations and strategies for achieving them are intended to spur thought and assist the community in developing its own priorities and action plans.

They come from a distillation of information gathered from a wide range of sources: over a half dozen agency interviews conducted by the Mobile Safety-Net Team, follow-up interviews and conversations conducted by the University at Buffalo Regional Institute with Newfane Golden Agers, the Supervisor for the Town of Newfane, First Baptist Church Missions Outreach, Food Bank of Western New York, and Wright's Corner Presbyterian Church (as leaders of the Coalition of Churches), the ABCD Program and Neighborhood Legal Services.

A focus group with the Church Coalition was held in February 2013. Resident input was gathered through conversations with seniors at the lunch program held at Olcott Fire Hall. One-on-one conversations with parents conducted by the Mobile Safety-Net Team offer insights from younger adults in the community.

Local data from secondary sources also inform these findings and recommendations.



Strengthen and support the existing Coalition of Churches

A Coalition of Churches exists in Newfane offering a forum for area clergy and lay leaders to meet, share information and collaborate. At the same time the coalition is a notable asset, especially given the church's important role in delivering human services in Newfane, additional support of the coalition could strengthen it and assist members in addressing common interests and challenges. These include aging congregations and the need for additional senior services, rising levels of need in the community, doing more with less and reaching the unchurched when clergy and lay leaders are already stretched thin.

STRATEGIES

Explore opportunities for the church-based coalition to network with other key human services providers in the community to meet identified human services needs in areas such as senior services, youth programs and food. This might include partnerships with the senior nutrition program, the Newfane Golden Agers, the school district and hospital, as well as church providers from outside of

Newfane that are providing services such as Hess Road Wesleyan Church in Appleton.

Consider opportunities to strengthen existing services provided by the church or to incubate a new service that would involve multiple partnerships, both within the coalition of churches and with other community groups. Hearts and Hands Faith in Action offers a model for church-based partnerships that address senior needs.

Promote the coalition of churches as a vehicle for sharing and accessing human service information. This might include making a directory of human services available to residents through the churches.

WHO NEEDS TO ACT

All congregations in Newfane, especially those already providing human services such as First Baptist Church, St. Brendan On the Lake, Wright's Corner Presbyterian Church, Grace Bible Church, and Olcott United Methodist Church. Potential church partners from outside the community might include the Hess Road Wesleyan Church in Appleton. Non-church representatives may include Rainbow of Help, Niagara County Office of the Aging, the Lion's Club, and Love, Inc.

MODELS TO CONSIDER

Love, Inc. offers a model that is being implemented in rural Springville, NY for uniting and mobilizing the church community in addressing human service needs within the community. <http://www.loveincspringville.com/>

MODELS TO CONSIDER

Love INC. of SPRINGVILLE, NY

An affiliate member of Love INC National, Love INC is a Christian-based non-profit that provides a broad array of comprehensive services to families and individuals in need in the 10-12 mile radius of Springville, New York. People with food, clothing, shelter, budgeting assistance, emotional and family support and other needs are referred to the Love INC office by churches, agencies, and others who know of the ministry. Staff then work cooperatively with the person or family and local agencies to analyze the need and determine next steps and referrals. Requests for services not available through local agencies are referred to a Love INC Church Ministry Coordinator to identify the volunteer or resources, within their church, best suited to meet the need. A volunteer is then assigned to start a helping relationship. The Love INC office follows up with the Church Ministry Coordinator and the person with the original request to make certain that the service goals are achieved. Established in 1996, Love INC has grown to 5 staff members and runs three other specific programs – IMAGE (promotes a personal Christian connection between church volunteers and those in need); GAP Ministries (a church fills a need that has been identified through Love INC and is not being filled by any other source, such as food pantries, essentials for newborns, prescription drugs, furniture, etc.) and SCENE (promotes aging well for the elderly). <http://www.loveincspringville.com/>



Increase awareness of existing human services, both within and outside the community

Word of mouth is the way information in Newfane tends to travel. However, this leaves gaps in awareness, even for individuals with relatively large social networks. Indeed, lack of awareness and misinformation create barriers to services in Newfane. For instance, some providers are not aware that the Agri-Business Child Development (ABCD) Program is open to non-migrant children. Residents who are unfamiliar with the Migrant Food Pantry and Clothes Closet at First Baptist Church might also be unaware that it's open to all residents in the school district and not just to migrants. Residents also lacked awareness of centralized sources of information such as WNY 211 and the Mental Health Association's Help Book for human services providers in Niagara County.

STRATEGIES

Maintain the newly created directory of providers and services created by the Mobile Safety-Net Team. Distribute to all service providers and make available at information hubs, especially schools, churches, the new community center and the library. Town of Newfane Supervisor Horanburg believes the town hall would also be a good location for the directory since the town tries to guide residents in the right direction.

Use newspapers and the town's newsletter to raise awareness of services that address identified needs such as affordable health insurance through New York State, the ABCD Program for child care, affordable housing supports and crisis hotlines for suicide prevention. Supervisor Horanburg says that articles are always welcome for the town's newsletter.

With many critical services located outside Newfane, the directory should include where the nearest services are available, including those available via telephone, especially for issues of concern such as domestic violence where help is available through Neighborhood Legal Service's in Lockport, either at the Mental Health Association or at the YWCA, or via telephone for selected cases. The Niagara County Sheriff's Office has a Domestic Violence Intervention Program that would be appropriate for a directory, to help raise awareness.

WHO NEEDS TO ACT

The Mobile Safety-Net Team, the Newfane Central School District, area churches, especially First Baptist Church of Newfane Food Pantry which seeks to expand its information and referral supports, Newfane Free Library, and the Town of Newfane.

MODELS TO CONSIDER

As information hubs and neutral spaces, libraries can play a role in raising awareness and centralizing information. The New Rochelle Public Library is a forerunner in New York State.

<http://www.nrpl.org/socialservices/>

MODELS TO CONSIDER

Across Ages

Established at Temple University Center for Intergenerational Learning, ACROSS AGES is a mentoring initiative designed to increase the resiliency and protective factors of at-risk youths through a comprehensive intergenerational approach to substance abuse prevention. The program pairs older adult volunteers with students to create a special bonding relationship. The project also uses community service activities, provides a classroom-based life-skills curriculum, and offers parent-training workshops. Older mentors—by acting as advocates, challengers, nurturers, role models, and friends—help children develop the awareness, self-confidence, and skills they need to resist drugs and overcome overwhelming obstacles. Evaluation results indicate significant positive outcomes on numerous resiliency factors for at-risk youths. Evaluation studies also indicate that mentoring was critical to the success of the program. A two day training plus follow-up technical assistance is recommended for implementing the Across Ages program.

<http://acrossages.org/>



Increase the availability of enriching after-school activities for teens

Both providers and parents described a need for more affordable and enriching activities for youth, especially teens, who should be maximizing capacities for college and career. With the number of jobs in Newfane so limited, there are currently inadequate opportunities for teens to work and cultivate skills. At the same time, opportunities for high-risk behavior are plentiful. Parents describe an alarmingly high level of drug and alcohol use among youth.

STRATEGIES

Compile and raise awareness of all existing programs and activities for youth through the program and service directory developed by the Mobile Safety-Net Team. This should include a six-week, full-day summer program sponsored by the town and run by the school each summer that draws anywhere from 150-180 children. Distribute the directory of programs to all parents through the school district.

Explore opportunities for creating a community service program for teens offering them opportunities to develop work and life skills while filling needs within the community as volunteer workers.

Several municipalities in the region sponsor something like this, including Amherst, Cheektowaga, Hamburg and West Seneca. While Supervisor Horanburg says the town could not afford to sponsor something like this, in addition to the summer youth program it invests \$35,000 in, grant funding and in-kind support from the school and agencies that stand to benefit from such a program, including the local hospital and nursing home, may make it financially feasible.

Explore and expand partnerships between the school district and business community to develop co-op and internship opportunities for students, both over summer months and during the school year. Strengthen mentoring and scouting programs through partnerships with churches and the business community, to help grow the base of potential leaders and mentors from the community.

WHO NEEDS TO ACT

The Mobile Safety-Net Team, Newfane Central School District, Town of Newfane, Newfane Business and Professional Association, Boy Scout Troop 40, Boy Scout Cub Scout Pack 44, Girl Scouts of WNY and area churches.

MODELS TO CONSIDER

Amherst Youth Engaged in Service (Y.E.S. Program) offers a model that several towns in the region have in place.

http://www.amherst.ny.us/pdf/youth/yes_bro.pdf

MODELS TO CONSIDER

Youth Engaged in Service (YES)

Established in 1974, the Youth Engaged in Service (YES) Volunteer Program provides opportunities for students ages 12-21 to engage in community service. Students serve a broad array of constituents, including children, senior citizens, low-income families, persons who are mentally and/or physically challenged, and charitable organizations. Currently 375 students participate in the YES program from the Town of Amherst. Students sign up for activities on a monthly basis. These include visiting libraries to assist with children's reading activities, visiting nursing homes to assist with recreation programs, helping PTA parents attend meetings by providing child care, visiting the WNY Food Bank to sort food and volunteering at Habitat for Humanity. Youth performed more than 6,000 service hours in 2012. The program is funded through a combination of sources, including the Town of Amherst, the NYS Office of Children and Family Services, periodic donations from agencies served, and fundraising efforts. The YES program is staffed by a full-time coordinator and 5 part-time employees, whose work schedule ranges from 4 hours per week to 15 hours per week.

http://www.amherst.ny.us/pdf/youth/yes_bro.pdf



Strengthen supports for mental health and intervention

In recent months, three suicides have occurred. One was a teen who took his life; the other two were young adults. All three point to the lack of mental health services in Newfane. Providers say self-medication is common, and it leads to drug abuse. While churches and the school district makes referrals, traveling to provider locations in Lockport and beyond can be difficult for parents and other individuals. Parents also describe having encountered waiting lists for services. Lack of health insurance and financial hardship add additional barriers to services.

STRATEGIES

Raise awareness of depression and suicide preventions through a community forum held at the school and open to the entire community to raise awareness of depression, signs of trouble and services available to help.

Raise awareness of existing support services, including crisis services hotlines serving Niagara County through the maintenance and dissemination of a comprehensive directory of human services. Additionally, there is a recently created mental health support group for youth meeting at Eastern Niagara Hospital in Lockport.

Engage key providers in Lockport and Buffalo in tracking demand for mental health services among Newfane's population, to demonstrate demand for provider services within Newfane itself.

Incorporate into already established youth programs proven ways of building resilience, mental well-being and social connectedness.

Explore opportunities to offer mental health services within the community, perhaps at the hospital via telemedicine.

Consider partnerships that may enable the faith community to offer free or very affordable short-term counseling to families in crisis. This may include partnering with a larger church in the region with counseling pastors and/or with an area university, to allow a church-based field placement of a MSW student as part of their practicum or work co-op.

Support pending New York State legislation legislature that would further develop telehealth/telemedicine in remote areas of the state and provide funding for its development.

WHO NEEDS TO ACT

Youth service providers, Newfane Central School, key providers of mental health services outside of Newfane (Monsignor Carr, Horizons, ECMC), Eastern Niagara Hospital, Niagara University, University at Buffalo School of Social Work, all residents and political representatives of Newfane.

MODELS TO CONSIDER

The Appal-Link Network of Virginia: Mental Health Services without Boundaries offers a model for mental health services in rural communities.

<http://www.cmcsb.com/appal.htm>

MODELS TO CONSIDER

Appal-Link Network: Mental Health Services without Boundaries

Established in 1995 with grant support from the federal Office of Rural Health Policy, APPAL-LINK provides clinical and mental health support services in Southwest Virginia, one of the most rural regions of the United States. These services are provided via telemedicine, which uses interactive state-of-the-art telecommunications systems to deliver, at a distance, medical services that otherwise would be unavailable, inaccessible or difficult to obtain. After six years, 2,873 clinically-related network hours involving

5,173 separate activities were reported. With a focus on family involvement as part of the daily treatment, services include medication review, case consultation, discharge planning, commitment hearings, family visits and staff training activities. The program emphasizes both continuity and connectivity, meaning not only that care is provided by an ongoing team of the same providers ensuring that the distant community services staff can provide input to the inpatient plan of care but also that previously uninvolved but essential contributors to the health care plan are now included.

<http://www.cmcsb.com/appal.htm>



Engage the community in drug use prevention

The ready availability of drugs in Newfane is a source of addiction and risk for residents, especially youth. Providers describe Newfane as a drug access hub. Indeed, several home-based drug labs in Newfane have been identified and raided by authorities in recent years. Meanwhile parents express pressing concern over the use of drugs and alcohol. While intervention and treatment is available through the drug court in Lockport, this and other supports are reactive rather than preventive, reaching those in need with help at the point they have reached rock bottom.

STRATEGIES

Develop a drug and alcohol prevention strategy that engages all stakeholders in the community, including parents, students, the school district, youth providers, health professionals, law enforcement and the larger population of residents.

Expand drug prevention programming for youth, incorporating into established programs proven methods of promoting resiliency. One successful model is PROMOTE (Promoting School-Community-University Partnerships to Enhance Resilience). Another is AGES, an intergenerational model that connects at-risk youth and parents with mentors from the community of seniors.

Raise awareness among adults on the dangers of substance abuse and resources to overcome addiction. Family-focused interventions should give parents the information they need to promote resiliency in their children and identify early warning signs of trouble.

Expand neighborhood watch programs to mobilize more residents and report drug-related activity or suspicion to the sheriff.

WHO NEEDS TO ACT

Providers of youth services (Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, YWCA, church youth groups), Newfane Central School District, Newfane Golden Agers, existing neighborhood watch groups and all residents.

MODELS TO CONSIDER

Across Ages is a model for increasing the resiliency of youth through an intergenerational approach that engages youth, parents and seniors in the community.

<http://acrossages.org/>

Bolster supports for food and housing

Poverty in Newfane is growing, and urgent concerns related to housing and food are the ones most commonly reported by residents. With many in need new to poverty, lack of awareness may create barriers to services. Lack of capacity is another barrier, as one of two key food pantries in town reports that its shelves are bare. With donations down, it has not had the capacity since December of 2012 to replenish its supply of food through a pick-up from the Food Bank of WNY. Moreover, lack of coordination between the food pantries in town hinders fundraising, capacity building and impact.

STRATEGIES

Raise awareness of and access to existing support programs such as SNAP, HEAP, and weatherization programs, including a program through NIACAP that can assist Newfane residents with home improvements and weatherization. A widely disseminated directory of programs and services will facilitate this.

Explore opportunities for greater collaboration between church-based food pantries. Joint fundraising for “food” rather than for an individual “food pantry” could be a first step, especially if approaching new potential donors such as the farming community. Collaboration will also be necessary to maximize reach and impact of the Food Bank of WNY’s Food Express Truck, if Newfane is selected as a site for 2013-14. Willingness to collaborate is, in fact, an eligibility criteria for this program.

Take advantage of varied funding programs aimed at increasing access to locally grown fresh food via community gardens and farm-to-community programs. The Rural Assistance Center compiles current grant opportunities. Use this report to substantiate need and advocate for grant funding.

Consider developing community gardens that could yield fresh produce for families in need during summer months, when need tends to be highest because kids are out of school. Imagine is a local nonprofit with church and other partners in Lockport to develop community gardens, and it’s looking to expand.

WHO NEEDS TO ACT

Food pantries and nutrition programs (First Baptist Church’s Migrant Food Pantry, St. Brendan’s Newfane Community Food Pantry and Olcott Fire Hall Nutrition Program), the Mobile Safety-Net Team, and established community hubs (Newfane Community Center, Newfane Central School District, and Newfane Free Library).

MODELS TO CONSIDER

The Potato and Produce Project connects food pantries with potatoes and other farm produce that is perfectly edible but would go unused due to imperfections.

http://endhunger.org/potato_project.htm

Expand transportation and aging-in-place supports for seniors and others at risk

Newfane is an aging community. The number of seniors has increased 15% since 2000, and the majority are aging in place in a home they own. Yet there are few resources in place to assist seniors, especially those with limited incomes, to remain in their homes once they become unable to drive or physically unable to keep up their homes and yards. Existing transportation options are few and primarily for medical appointments. Isolation is a concern, providers say.

STRATEGIES

Explore opportunities to formalize and expand already established informal transportation networks for seniors and other vulnerable residents using models such as Hearts and Hands Faith in Action which relies on volunteers from the community to assist those in need free of any charge.

Increase access to affordable services for aging in place through volunteer-based programs such as Youth Engaged in Services (YES), Hearts and Hands, and faith-based outreach programs such as Habitat for Humanity.

Raise awareness of existing support programs and services through the directory of programs and services created by the Mobile Safety-Net Team. Distribute through senior programs such as the Newfane Golden Agers and nutrition program at Olcott Fire Hall. Also make available at venues that are common destinations for seniors such as pharmacies and doctor's offices.

In hiring a new director for the Newfane Golden Agers, consider selecting someone who will be a strong advocate for seniors, with experience forging partnerships and mobilizing volunteers.

WHO NEEDS TO ACT

The community of churches, the Newfane Golden Agers, Olcott Fire Hall Nutrition Program, Niagara County Rural Niagara Transportation, Hearts and Hands, Mobile Safety-Net Team, area health providers and pharmacies.

MODELS TO CONSIDER

Hearts and Hands Faith in Action is a faith-based ministry offering transportation and aging-in-place supports to seniors in several rural communities in Erie County.

<http://hnhcares.org/>

Strengthen supports for families, especially single parents in poverty and victims of domestic violence

Over half of families in poverty are single parents. Local job opportunities in Newfane, especially jobs paying a living wage and offering benefits, are not there, according to parents. Travel to distant job centers within the region is necessary for better-paying work, but this raises issues related to child care and the flexibility needed for families.

STRATEGIES

Promote the ABCD Program to new parents especially lower-income single parents. Clarifying eligibility criteria in a directory of services and featuring the program in the town newsletter could be an initial step toward this.

Explore opportunities for vocational training for adults in the community to prepare them for nearby jobs with career paths, such as nursing and technician jobs at Eastern Niagara Health System. Partnerships with Orleans Niagara BOCES and Niagara County Community College could help make this possible. The school district as well as the community center and Wright's Corner Presbyterian Church offer potential sites within the community for this training.

If a model such as Hearts and Hands can be established in Newfane, expand it to cover job and job-training supports for parents in poverty or at risk such as free child care and transportation to NCCC or other sites.

Create incentive programs for larger employers in and near Newfane to provide ongoing training, especially for low-wage employees, so they have the opportunity to advance and expand skill sets.

Train human resource professionals from larger employers in and near Newfane, such as the school district and the nursing home, to connect lower-wage employees with food, housing, and other supports they may be eligible for and need such as domestic violence intervention. Strengthening workplace connection points could help reduce the stigma associated with human services.

Increase access for victims of domestic violence to supports for safety, shelter and economic security through increased awareness of what local help is available and greater opportunities for intervention.

WHO NEEDS TO ACT

Town of Newfane, ABCD Program, Niagara County Community College, Orleans Niagara BOCES, larger employers in Newfane and Lockport and Hearts and Hands.

MODELS TO CONSIDER

Bridging the Gap is an initiative that engages employers in connecting lower-wage workers with human services, thereby reducing the stigma associated with support programs.

<http://nationalassembly.org/fspc/BridgingTheGap/>

Appendices

Appendix A - Data Sources and Notes

1.1 Cover Map

Service providers: The human service providers that are mapped are listed on pages 25 of the report. The cover map does not represent these providers by their employment size or organizational status as the inside map (see page 24) does.

Population in poverty: The map draws upon 2006-10 American Community Survey data at the block group level, with all municipal boundaries for the map from U.S. Census Bureau's 2011 and 2012 Tiger Line Shape files. Those in or near poverty are individuals whose income is under 200% of the federal poverty level.

Transportation: Niagara County's Rural Niagara Transportation system has a route that runs through Newfane three times a day. Except in areas where the bus isn't allowed, the bus will stop anywhere along the route for a ride who wants to get on. The route will also deviate up to three-quarters of a mile with advance notice. Off-route fares are higher. Rural Niagara Transportation is the only provider of public transportation in Newfane. Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority does not offer any service within the town.

Schools: The location of elementary and secondary schools in Newfane is from the 2011 NYS School Report Card database available from the NYS Education Department. Total enrollment reflects total students enrolled at these schools during 2010-11.

Major Employers: Selected large employers in Newfane are shown on the map. Employment size was determined using Reference USA's 2012 Business Database and the NYS Education Department's 2011 NYS School Report Card database for school district employment.

Map Layers: Boundary files for Newfane, including census tracts, block groups, parks, roads, water bodies and more, were mapped using data from the NYS GIS Clearinghouse and the U.S. Census Bureau 2011 and 2012 Tiger Line Shape files.

1.2 Executive Summary

Population in poverty: The 2007-11 American Community Survey are the sources of data on individuals living in or near poverty and total. Those in poverty are individuals with incomes under the federal poverty level. Those near poverty are defined as those with incomes between 100% and 200% of the federal poverty level. Newfane's total population of 9,666 is from the 2010 Census.

Indicators and trends: Population, poverty and demographic trends since 2000 are from the 2000 Census and the 2007-11

American Community Survey.

The 2007-11 American Community Survey also provides data on poverty by family type and the percentage of households by income level that pay more than 30% of household income on housing.

The U.S. Census Bureau's OnTheMap was the source of workforce indicators, including the percentage of Newfane residents that leave the community for work.

The percentage of residents without health insurance is from a survey of at-risk residents in Newfane described in Data Sources and Notes Section 1.3. See the subsection on "Newfane's Most Vulnerable." The findings from this survey also revealed utility shut-offs as an urgent concern among at-risk residents.

Other indicators and trends come from conversations with human services providers and residents as well as a search of news articles about Newfane.

1.3 Context for Action

People in Need

Individuals and Families: Population and household counts are from the 2007-11 American Community Survey. Population data from the 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census were used to calculate changes from these dates for both the total population and trends by age group.

As defined by the Census, families are housing units where two or more persons related by birth, marriage or adoption reside. Non-family households include persons living alone or with another person not related by birth, marriage or adoption.

Population by Age: The 2007-2011 American Community Survey is the source of population counts by age group. Percentages are calculated by dividing the number of individuals in various age groups by the total population for Newfane and Erie and Niagara Counties, respectively.

Potentially At-Risk Populations: These are individuals and households that have experienced higher than average rates of poverty as a result of barriers to education and/or work, either themselves or by those they are dependent on, as in the case for young children. Counts are from and/or calculated using data from the 2007-11 American Community Survey. The listing is not intended to be inclusive of all possible groups that may be economically vulnerable but rather some of those that are significant to Niagara Falls or Erie and Niagara Counties.

Work and Income: The number of jobs in Newfane is from the U.S.

Census Bureau's Local Employment Dynamics data for 2010, the available through the OnTheMap tool. The analysis is based on 2010 data, the most current year available, and reflects primary jobs. A primary jobs is the individual's highest paying job (private sector or public) for the year, and a count of primary jobs is the same as the count of all workers, so there isn't a double counting of jobs or workers. This was also the source of data on where Newfane residents go to work, as well as the change in the total number of jobs since between 2002 and 2010.

Niagara Falls top employers is primarily from Reference USA's Business 2012 Database. One exception was for the school district where total employment was calculated using NYS Education Department's 2011 NYS School Report Card database. Employment for the Town of Newfane was calculated by aggregating employment across employment at different locations, as made available through Reference USA's Business Database. Employment for Budwey's, which was not listed in Reference USA's Business 2012 Database came from a telephone conversation with a personnel representative at the store.

Households by income level come were calculated using data from the 2007-11 American Community Survey. This was also the data source on the median income in Newfane and Niagara County, respectively.

Poverty: The 2006-11 American Community Survey is the source of data on individuals and families living in or near poverty. Income relative to poverty level is provided for individuals by age group and for families by family type. Poverty rates are calculated by dividing total individuals or families with incomes under the federal poverty threshold by the total number of individuals or families, respectively. The map shows poverty rates by census block group.

The daily amount a family of three lives on at the federal poverty level is calculated by dividing the 2013 annual poverty threshold for this family size by the number of family members and the number of days in a year. The cost of the a round trip by bus for a family of three was calculated using Niagara County's Rural Niagara Transportation's standard one-way fare of \$2. Route deviations cost \$4.

Edmunds was used to calculate the cost of car ownership. The estimate is based on the purchase of a used 2008 Chevrolet Cobalt. In addition to the cost of the car itself (about \$6,800), the cost reflects, taxes and fees, financing, fuel, insurance, maintenance and repairs. \$20.00 is the average daily cost over five years of ownership.

Poverty levels were examined by census tract within Newfane using 2006-11 American Community Survey data. These included Census Tracts 242.01 and 242.02.

Education: Student enrollment figures are from the 2011 School Report Card database, available from the NYS Education Department. The percentage of children qualifying for free and reduced priced lunch are from Newfane Central School District

and reflect 2012/13 data from their SED BEDS reporting system. Children qualify for free or reduced priced lunch if their family income is under 185% of the federal poverty level. The percentage of students qualifying for free and reduced priced lunch at Newfane Intermediate was assumed to be the same as that at Newfane Middle, as a separate figure for this school was not provided by the district.

Ranking data is from Business First's 2012 Upstate School District Rankings. The upstate area includes all 430 public school districts in the 48 counties of upstate New York (excluding New York City).

Academic performance and graduation data are from the NYS Education Department's 2011 School Report Card data set.

Additional data about the school district comes from a conversation the district superintendent and other representatives in November 2012.

Educational attainment levels are from the 2007-11 American Community Survey.

Newfane's Most Vulnerable

156 adults residing in Newfane Zip Codes 14008, 14028, 14094 and 14108 completed a one-page questionnaire providing demographic and socioeconomic data as well as information on human services needs, concerns, benefits, and access barriers.

The survey was prepared by the Mobile Safety-Net Team with input from the University at Buffalo Regional Institute. It was administered by the Mobile Safety-Net Team during 2012 and 2013 at several different venues across the town, including Newfane Central School District, the Newfane Community Food Pantry, the Senior Lunch Program at Olcott Fire Hall, and at a Community Resource Event sponsored by the Mobile Safety-Net Team.

Survey sites were selected to capture a representative sample of residents in poverty or at risk of poverty as well as a cross section of neighborhoods from within the town. Because the survey captured only those residents who are able to physically get to these sites, the survey findings may under-represent those who are unable to leave their homes due to disability or lack of transportation.

Where residents needed assistance completing the survey and the survey was conducted in the presence of Mobile Safety-Net Team members, assistance was provided by reading the survey questions to residents and helping them complete the survey instrument. Otherwise, clients completed surveys on their own.

Survey data were coded by the Mobile Safety-Net Team and analyzed by the University at Buffalo Regional Institute. The 156 surveys represent a sample of Newfane's vulnerable population that is statistically significant with a confidence level of 95% and with a confidence interval of 7. Surveys completed by household representatives who reported a Zip Codes corresponding to an area entirely outside the Town of Newfane were not included in the analysis.

Not all survey respondents answered every survey questions. Part of the reason for this is that the survey was expanded a bit over time. Thus, not all survey takers were asked all questions reported on in this reports. Secondly, while survey takers were encouraged to answer all questions, partially completed surveys were accepted from those who declined to answer particular questions. The question soliciting information on household had the lowest level of responses, with 102 answering this question. This number of responses still represents a sample size of 92 or better, needed to obtain a statistically significant sample size for Lockport's at-risk population within a 95% confidence interval +/- 10%.

The 75% of survey respondents who are said to receive some form of human support services or live in a household with someone who does reflect those survey takers saying they receive food stamps, Medicaid, cash benefits, unemployment, disability income, HEAP, SSI/SSD, WIC, and/or rental assistance. This information is captured by multiple questions on the survey and the findings from these questions are aggregated to calculate an overall percentage of those receiving some kind of assistance.

The chart presents selected findings from the questionnaire. The variables shown are in many cases an aggregation of two or more response categories. Where percentages across subcategories add up to over 100, it is because survey takers were allowed to select more than one category as their response to the question, as is the case of the question soliciting information on respondent household's sources of income and types of human benefits they receive.

Percentage shown are calculated based on the number of respondents answering the particularly survey question, which may be less than the full sample.

Because the survey asked about benefits households are currently receiving or have applied for, responses associated with seasonal benefits such as HEAP may be sensitive to the time of year when the survey was conducted.

Places in Need

Housing: Housing costs as a percentage of income for renters and owners are from the 2007-11 American Community Survey. Costs include mortgages, second mortgages, rent, utilities (electricity, gas, water, sewer), homeowners insurance and property taxes. This was also the source of information on median housing values, median rents and the proportion of residents who own and rent.

According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, households paying more than 30% of income on housing are considered cost burdened, as this standard is generally accepted as the cut-off for affordable housing. Those paying more than 50% are considered severely burdened. Low-income households lacking affordable housing are at particular risk of not being able to afford other necessities such as food, clothing, medical care and transportation. The U.S. Census Bureau tracks

household data for both the 30% and 50% standard.

Transportation: Vehicle access data for households in Newfane are from the 2006-11 American Community Survey. This is also the source of data on how workers in Newfane travel to their jobs.

Information about transportation option for those without access to a vehicle come from a variety of sources including a telephone conversation with a representative from the Niagara County Office for the Aging; taxi cab rates provided by Liberty Yellow Cab which offers service throughout the region; Niagara County Department of Social Services; and information contained in the Coordination Human Services Transportation Plan for Erie and Niagara Counties, prepared by Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council and Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority.

Crime: Levels of violent and property crime in Newfane are from the NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services' Index Crimes Reported To Police: 2008-2012. Violent crime includes murder, forcible rape, robbery and aggravated assault. Property crime includes burglary, larceny and motor vehicle theft. Levels reflect incidences reported to the Niagara County Sheriff, which covers rural parts of Niagara County not otherwise covered by a city, town or village police department. The following municipalities have their own police department and are not covered within the numbers reported by the Niagara County Sheriff: Niagara Falls, Lewiston, Lockport, Middleport, North Tonawanda, Town of Niagara and Youngstown.

Information on drug-related activity is from a focus group with the Coalition of Churches and a search of news articles.

The Niagara County Sheriff's Domestic Violence Unit provided data on incidences of domestic violence, which include aggravated assaults, simple assaults, sex offenses and violations of protection orders between family members.

1.4 Landscape of Human Services

Human services organizations typically provide food to the hungry, jobs training to unemployed adults, shelter to the homeless, youth development to children at risk, recovery to those affected by disaster, and assistance to victims of crime. The listing shown includes human services organizations as well as those that may not be officially classified as human services organizations but have been identified as providing critical services to vulnerable populations.

The analysis draws upon organizational data compiled by the Mobile Safety-Net Team and supplemented by information from Reference USA's 2012 Business Database. Both nonprofits and governmental agencies are included.

Only organizations with operational sites within Newfane are included in this listing for the purpose of analyzing what supports

residents have physical access to within the community. Organizations with sites outside the town are not included on this list, even if they offer services to many residents. Neighborhood Legal Service, with an office and satellite location in Niagara Falls and Lockport, respectively, is an example.

Organizations providing services to target populations such as veterans, teen parents, seniors and the homeless are those whose organizational mission it is to connect with these particular populations (such as the services for seniors offered by Newfane Golden Agers). Alternatively, they may have significant programming for these populations (such as the aging-in-place services offered to seniors through Newfane United Methodist Church).

Service categories are defined as follows:

Food – includes food pantries as well as organizations providing on-site meals to residents such as at school or through a senior lunch program.

Clothing – includes clothes closets and sites where free or low-cost clothing is available.

Education/Training – includes places of formal education and early childhood education as well as sites for job training, GED, literacy skills, community/continuing education, and parenting training. Includes organizations offering support services such as homework help and job assistance provided at Newfane Free Library.

Sites for workforce development and vocational education are included, even if these are one of other programs offered by an agency. Education and training programs for selected population are included as well, such as those offered for individuals with disabilities.

Affordable Housing – subsidized housing and other non-market rate homes and rental units available to lower-income populations. Also included are sites providing access to supports such as rental assistance, utility assistance, weatherization, emergency housing repair, HEAP, and tax credits, such as those available to seniors through the Town of Newfane's STAR program.

Transportation – includes organizations that offer transportation via buses, vans and shuttles, as part of the suite of services they regularly provide (such as the school district and the ABCD Program). Also includes agencies that regularly offer transportation supports such as bus tokens and deliveries of food (such as at the First Baptist Church of Newfane's Food Pantry).

Mental Health/Addictions - includes sites providing mental health treatment including counseling and addictions support groups. Covers out-patient and residential programs. Does not include organizations that only serve as a source of information for mental health services.

Health/Wellness – includes sites and organizations offering health services, preventive medical exams and/or screening, particularly for lower-income or vulnerable populations, such as the Newfane Lions Club which offers vision screening and a medical closet with free or low-cost medical equipment for those in need. Also includes organizations such as the Rainbow of Help which assists those in need with medical expenses. Does not include organizations that

only serve as a source of medical/health insurance information. Nor does this category include programs providing primarily fitness or recreational benefits.

Legal - includes legal assistance for low-income populations, especially assistance in obtaining benefits. Includes such assistance for limited populations only such as seniors or the disabled.

Youth Programs - includes providers of after-school programs and activities for school-age youth. Also included are mentoring programs. This category does not include programming provided as part of a residential treatment program for youth. Nor does it include programs providing only information about youth programs.

Financial literacy - includes financial literacy training and budget counseling services. Includes programs for limited vulnerable populations.

Crime/Juvenile – includes crime prevention programs, juvenile justice, and victim assistance programs. Does not include safety classes or crime prevention awareness such as that offered by the Newfane Golden Agers.

Information/Referral - includes agencies, programs and positions providing information and referral to a wide variety of human support services for individuals and families.

Providers are classified as governmental if they are an arm of a local, state or federal level agency or department.

Most employment figures used to map human services organizations by employment size come from Reference USA's 2012 Business Database providing the number of employees an organization or agency has working at a particular site.

Appendix B - Resident Questionnaire

MOBILE SAFETY-NET TEAM COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Thank you for participating in this survey. Your answers will assist us in better understanding the needs in the community and help us build a stronger safety net that more readily connects residents to the human services they need. Please select one response unless indicated otherwise. **Your answers will remain completely confidential.**

Age _____ Gender (M/F) _____ Zip Code _____ Location _____

Including yourself, how many people are in your household?

- Adults (18 and older) _____
- Children (under 18) _____

Has anyone in your household ever served in the armed forces?

- Yes¹
- No²

Are there any urgent concerns or special needs that you or someone in your household might have?

- Utility shut-off notice¹
- Foreclosure / eviction²
- Homelessness³
- No money for food⁴
- Domestic violence⁵
- No urgent concerns⁶
- Other: _____⁷

Has anyone in your household ever encountered any difficulty in getting necessary services they need (such as assistance with food, housing, utilities, medical care, etc.)?

- Yes¹
- No²

If you marked "yes", please describe what barriers were faced:

- Traveling to get services is difficult¹
- I don't speak / read English well²
- I can't get there during the hours the agency is open³
- I've been turned away because of income limits⁴
- It can be physically difficult for me to leave my home⁵
- It's too much of a hassle because the process is confusing⁶
- Other: _____⁷

What is your current employment status? (select all that apply)

- Employed full-time¹
- Employed part-time²
- Unemployed, looking³
- Unemployed, not looking⁴
- Student⁵
- Retired⁶
- Disabled⁷
- Other: _____⁸

What is the current employment status of other adults in your household? (select all that apply)

- Employed full-time¹
- Employed part-time²
- Unemployed, looking³
- Unemployed, not looking⁴
- Student⁵
- Retired⁶
- Disabled⁷
- Not Applicable / No other adults in household⁸
- Other: _____⁹

What is your current living situation?

- Own¹
- Rent, with assistance²
- Rent, without assistance³
- Staying with friend / family⁴
- Homeless⁵
- Other: _____⁶

How long have you lived at your current address?

- Less than 3 mos.¹
- 3 mos. – 1 year²
- 1-5 years³
- 6 - 10 years⁴
- More than 10 years⁵

What is the highest level of education/training you've completed?

- High School / GED¹
- Some College²
- College Degree (2-yr or 4-yr)³
- Post-graduate degree⁴
- Military⁵
- Trade School⁶
- Did not finish high school⁷

What are your household's sources of income? (Select all that apply)

- Employment¹
- Unemployment insurance²
- Public assistance³
- Social Security⁴
- Pension⁵
- Disability⁶
- Worker's compensation⁷
- Child Support⁸
- No Income⁹
- Other: _____¹⁰

How much money is currently received from these sources to support your household each month (net income)?

What is your primary form of transportation?

- Bicycle¹
- Family / Friends²
- Own vehicle³
- Taxi⁴
- Public Transportation⁵
- Walk⁶
- Car Share Service⁷
- Other: _____⁸

If you don't own a vehicle and are not a regular public transit user, why don't you use public transit more often?

- Too expensive¹
- Takes too long to get places²
- No service to where I need to go³
- No evening or weekend service⁴
- Buses don't run often enough⁵
- It's too long to walk to bus stop⁶
- Service isn't reliable⁷
- I don't feel safe⁸
- Schedule is too confusing⁹
- Other (please specify): _____¹⁰

Does anyone in your household lack health insurance? (select all that apply)

- Yes, one or more adults do not have health insurance¹
- Yes, one or more children do not have health insurance²
- No, we all have health insurance³

If insured, select the type of health insurance currently used by members of your household (please select all that apply):

- Private insurance¹
- Managed care (HMO, PPO)²
- Medicare (65+, disabled)³
- Medicaid⁴
- Government (VA, Child Health Plus, Family Health Plus)⁵
- Health Savings Account⁶
- Other: _____⁷
- Do not know/Unsure⁸
- Do not have health insurance⁹

Are you, or is anyone in your household currently receiving any of the following forms of public assistance?

- Food stamps¹
- Medicaid²
- Cash benefits³
- HEAP⁴
- SSI / SSD⁵
- WIC⁶
- Other _____⁷
- None⁸

Does anyone in your household have a pending application for any of the following?

- Food stamps¹
- Medicaid²
- Cash benefits³
- HEAP⁴
- SSI / SSD⁵
- WIC⁶
- Other _____⁷
- None⁸

If you have an immediate need and would like someone to call you for assistance, please write your name and phone number on the back of this survey and a member of our team can contact you. Thank you!

Appendix C - Senior Focus Group Tool



What are the most critical human support needs facing you and your family?

Most Critical Need

2nd Biggest Need

3rd Biggest Need

- _____ Counseling and Treatment
- _____ Financial/Budgeting/Taxes
- _____ Food/Nutrition
- _____ Health Care
- _____ Health Insurance Coverage
- _____ Legal
- _____ Mortgage/Rent or Housing
- _____ Referrals/Information
- _____ Senior Activities
- _____ Safety/Crime Prevention
- _____ Transportation
- _____ Weatherization

Tell Us About Yourself

How old are you? _____

What is your gender? Male Female

How many people, including yourself, do you live with? _____

What is your Zip Code _____

Appendix C - Parent and Younger Adult Focus Group Tool



Newfane Parent Conversations
February 2013
Questions

What do you like best about living in Newfane and raising a family here? What about the town makes it a great place to live, especially for parents and families?

Is there anything about Newfane that makes it difficult place to prosper for families? How has this changed over time?

Are you aware of the human support services that are in place in Newfane to support families and children? Which ones have you heard about or taken advantage of?

How do you generally learn about programs or events in the community? School? Word of Mouth? Newspaper? Flyers?

We have heard that the faith community in Newfane is a big provider of human services. Are you connected with a congregation? Would you and your family feel comfortable taking advantage of services at a church you generally don't go to, such as for a youth program, parent support group or a food pantry?

How affordable is housing in Newfane? Do you find it difficult to maintain your house appropriately because of cost?

Do your children attend after-school programs? Summer programs? Have they ever been not able to get involved in after-school activities because these programs are too costly? As a parent do you believe there are adequate, high-quality, affordable after-school programs and places for child care? If not, how does this impact your children and your family?

Household Information
How long have you lived in Newfane? _____
How many children do you have? _____
What are their ages? _____
Are you a single parent? _____
Do you work outside the home? _____

Appendix C - Parent and Younger Adult Focus Group Tool (Continued)

If you are a parent of a teen, are there adequate opportunities for children to work and develop job skills?

Does your family have a medical home, or a place where you regularly go for medical care? If not, why? Insurance? Lack of providers?

As a parent, is the rising use of drugs concern? Are there adequate prevention programs in place at the school or elsewhere?

How easy or difficult is it to get a job in Newfane that pays a living wage and offers opportunities for advancement? Is there a place in Newfane where adults can turn for training and skills development, or to get help finding a better job (e.g. resume/interviewing help)?

Does your family have a computer?

How often do you travel outside of Newfane for services, such as programs for your children, medical care, or jobs training? How far would you go? Lockport? Niagara Falls? Buffalo?

Does your family have a car? Is this shared by more than one driver?

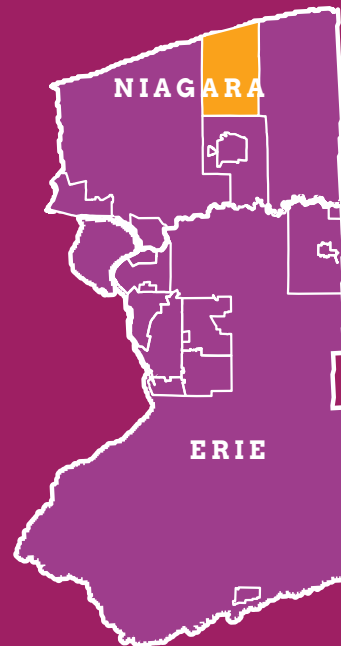
If your family had an urgent need, where would you turn for help or information?

How well do you know your neighbors? Could you rely on them to watch your child for a few hours or turn to them for help or information?

Do your parents live in Newfane? Are there adequate supports here for seniors?

All of the information you have shared has been so helpful and will be greatly valuable to the research we are doing in the community. Is there anything we haven't already talked about that you would like to share on how Newfane could be a stronger community for families?

A COMMUNITY REPORT
Town of **Newfane**



This is a collaborative effort of the **University at Buffalo Regional Institute** and the **Mobile Safety-Net Team** established by **The John R. Oishei Foundation**. Commissioned by The John R. Oishei Foundation this assessment presents a detailed analysis of Newfane's human services needs, key resources, barriers, and opportunities for strengthening the system, and in turn, residents. The insights and recommendations provided are intended to assist the foundation community, Newfane human services providers and other stakeholders in closing gaps and developing comprehensive, efficient and cost-effective strategies for connecting with a greater number of economically vulnerable individuals and families.



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