

Family

Household Composition

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

The family and the household are the most fundamental socioeconomic institutions in human society. The principal social function of the family is to bring children into the world and to care for them until they can support themselves. In addition, it is primarily through the family that the ill and the elderly dependent are supported.

Children living in households with only one parent are much more likely to have families whose incomes fall below the poverty line. While two parents in a household may be biological, step, or adoptive, and their presence does not guarantee a child's success, it generally indicates a greater level of resources available to children and to their well-being (America's Children, 2002, p.7). In addition, marital status affects the resources available to both women with children and women alone at any age. (Source: The Status of Women: A Portrait of Women and Girls in Oneida & Herkimer Counties, December 2003 - Women's Fund)

WHERE WE STAND

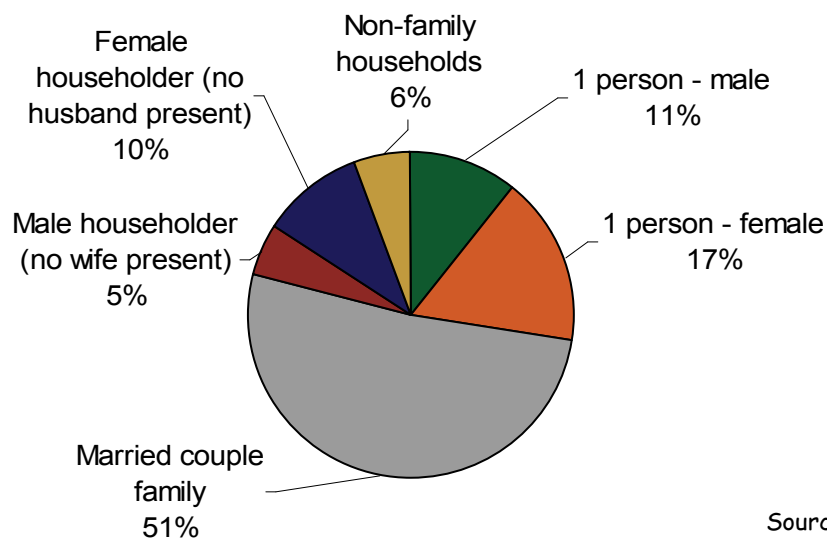
Family and Non-Family Household Units

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, there are 64,427 people, 25,734 households, and 17,101 families residing in Herkimer County.

Of the 25,734 households, 51.2% are married couples living together, 10.3% have a female householder with no husband present, and 5% have a male householder with no wife present. Twenty-seven percent of all households are made up of individuals living alone (male or female), and 6% are non-family households.

HOUSEHOLDS IN HERKIMER COUNTY 2000

Graph 114



Source: 2000 U.S. Census

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Thirty percent of all households have children under the age of 18 living with them, and 13.7% had someone living alone who is 65 years of age or older. The average household size is 2.46 persons and the average family size is 2.99 persons.

Family Structure

Herkimer County Two Parent and Female-Headed Families, 1960-2000

Table 60

	1960		1970		1980		1990		2000	
	# of families	% of families	#	% of families	#	% of families	#	% of families	#	% of families
2 Parent Families	15,169	88%	14,975	87%	14,864	85%	14,511	82%	13,183	77%
w/ children	9,331	62%	8,156	55%	7,518	51%	6,843	47%	5,509	42%
Female-Headed Families	1,365	8%	1,657	10%	2,071	12%	2,350	13%	2,648	16%
w/ children	466	34%	672	41%	999	48%	1,114	47%	1,600	60%
Total Families	17,310	100%	17,185	100%	17,565	100%	17,714	100%	17,101	100%

Source: US Census

There have been some changes in the structure of the County's families over the last 40 years as reflected in the table above. Fewer families have traditional two-parent nuclear structures. While families with a more traditional two-parent structure comprised 88% of all families in 1960, they have dropped to only 77% of families in 2000. In its place is an increase in single parent families, usually headed by females. Female-headed families with no male present have increased as a percent of all families. One in ten families (10%) were female-headed in 1970, by 2000, almost one in six (16%) were headed by "single moms".

Also, since 1960 fewer two-parent families and more female-headed families have children under age 18 at home. In 1960, 62% of all two-parent families had children. This percentage dropped every ten years so that 2000 only 42% of all two-parent families had children. During this same period, the percentage of female-headed families that have children increased from 34% in 1960 to 60% in 2000. Male-headed households (with no female present) appears to have climbed even faster, leaping from about 14% of all such families having children present in 1960, to almost 66% in 2000.

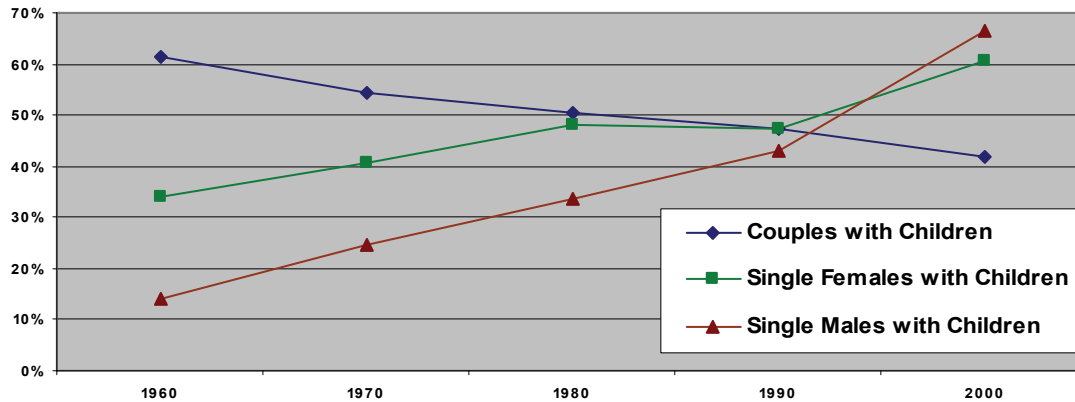
The family unit not typically included in the data is single male headed families. While recognizing these familial units within the census is only a recent phenomenon, it is possible, or at least reasonable, to make some assumptions about how they have grown. While single male headed families comprise a relatively small proportion of familial units (5% in 2000), they are one of the fastest growing. In 1990, there were 853 single dad families in Herkimer County. By 2000, that number had increased to 1,270.

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Graph 115

**Herkimer County Family Structure:
Percent of Families with Children Under 18
Present at Home**



Source: Herkimer Oneida Counties Comprehensive Planning Program

This change in family structure can also be seen from the results of the Herkimer County TAP Survey when students in 7th, 9th and 11th grade were asked about their family composition in 1997, 2001 and 2005 (See table below).

**Family Composition of Herkimer County TAP Survey Participants
1997, 2001 & 2005**

Question: *Who do you live with most of the time?*

Table 61

Response	1997	2001	2005
Two Parents (biological or adoptive)	63.7%	59.4%	57.0%
A Parent and a Step-parent	12.4%	15.4%	16.3%
Father most of the time	3.6%	3.7%	4.8%
Mother most of the time	14.4%	13.8%	14.4%
Mother part of the time, father part of the time	N/A	3.9%	3.9%
With relatives (aunt, uncle, grandparents, etc.)	2.0%	2.4%	2.6%
Group home or foster home	N/A	0.5%	.3%
Alone or with friends only	1.5%	0.9%	.7%

Source: Herkimer County TAP Survey

As seen in the table above, 57% of the TAP Survey participants in 2005 indicated that they lived with both of their natural or adoptive parents. This is lower than found either in the 1997

Family

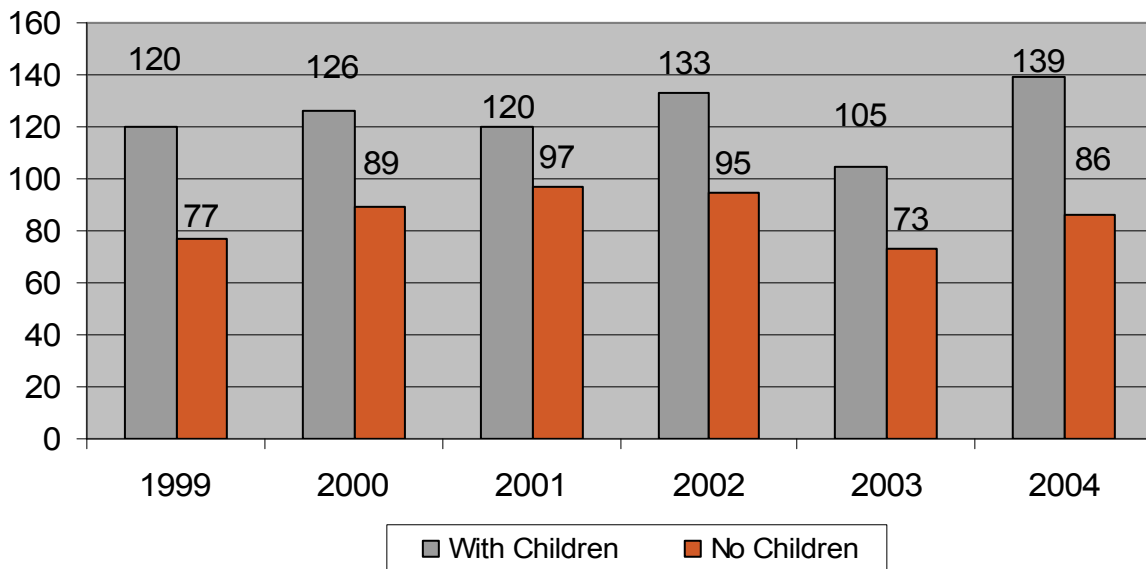
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(64%) or in the 2001 (59%) TAP Survey. Over the eight year period of the three TAP Surveys, there has been a slight, but steady, increase in the percent of those who lived in either a parent/step-parent household (1997 - 12%, 2001 - 15% and 2005 - 16%) or lived in a single-parent household (1997 - 18%, 2001 - 21% and 2005 - 23%). Less than 4% of youth indicated that they lived with other relatives, in a foster home or alone.

Nationwide there had been a steady decrease between 1970 and 1996 in the percentage of children under age 18 that are living with two married parents, from 85% to 68%; since 1996, the percentage has stabilized and remains at 68% in 2004. Based on the 2005 TAP Survey, 73% of the participants lived with two married parents, meaning either biological, adoptive or step parents.

Number of Divorces in Herkimer County 1999 - 2004

Graph 116



Source: NYS Department of Health, Vital Statistics

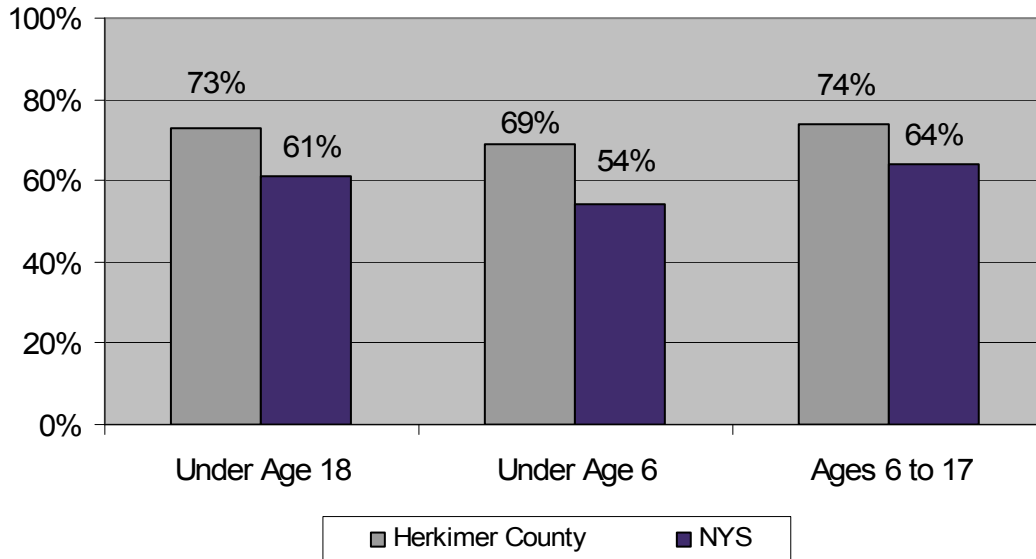
As seen in the graph above, the number of divorces both with and without children has remained relatively stable over the course of the six years 1999 to 2004, although in 2004 the number of divorces with children reached 139, the highest mark for those years. The divorce rate per 1000 persons in Herkimer County is about 3.3, which is just under the rate for New York State (3.4) and well below the rate for the U.S. (4.95). Looking specifically at divorces involving children, the number of such divorces in Herkimer County as a percentage of all married families stands at 2.0% in 2004, which is exactly the median percentage for all counties in New York State.

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CHILDREN HAVING ALL PARENTS IN THE LABOR FORCE 2000

Graph 117



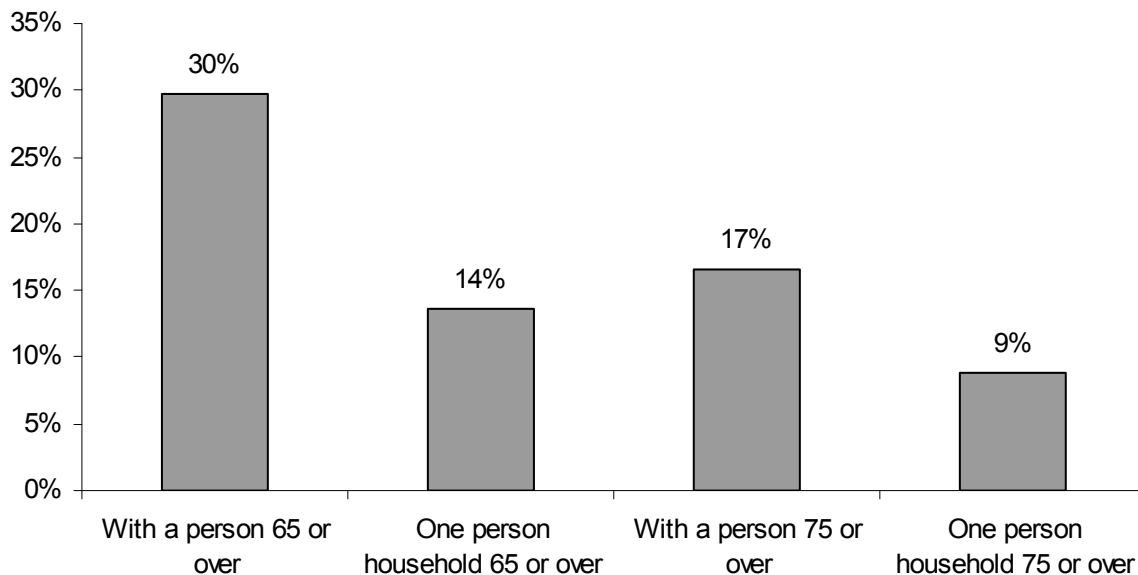
Source: Mohawk Valley Community Action Agency, Inc.

For families in which both parents are working, there is a concern that family time for leisure and recreation may get pushed aside by the demands of daily activities. (Maine Marks) And, as can be seen in the graph above, when compared to New York State, children in Herkimer County are more likely to have their parents working.

Graph 118

Seniors

HOUSEHOLDS WITH PERSONS AGE 65 AND OVER, 2000



Source: US Census

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Herkimer County has a growing population of older senior citizens - 75 plus - and they comprise an increasing proportion of the total population. This older population requires the most care, and often the care giving responsibilities fall upon family members.

It has been estimated that in the United States family members provide approximately 80 percent of the necessary care for the elderly. However, with the rapid increase in the oldest segment of the population, the pool of available family caregivers is shrinking. This invariably is causing issues for the elderly regarding the lack of appropriate care.

Herkimer County has a high percentage of senior citizens (60+). Since 1960, the total County population has decreased by 1,943, while the senior population has increased by 2,193. The percentage of seniors, as a portion of the total County population, increased from 17% in 1960 to 21% in 2000. Within Herkimer County, the City of Little Falls has the highest percentage of seniors with 28% and the Town of Norway with the lowest with 12%. Also, during this 40 year period, the number of those aged 85 and older has more than doubled.

Herkimer County Senior Population - 60+ & 85+, 1960-2000

Table 62

	1960		1970		1980		1990		2000	
	# Persons	% of Total	# Persons	% of Total	# Persons	% of Total	# Persons	% of Total	# Persons	% of Total
Total Population	66,370		67,633		66,714		65,797		64,427	
Population age 60 +	11,588	17%	11,545	17%	13,164	20%	14,243	22%	13,781	21%
		% of 60+		% of 60+		% of 60+		% of 60+		% of 60+
Population age 85 +	547	4.7%	740	6.4%	910	6.9%	1,157	8.1%	1,443	10.5%

Source: U.S. Census

Herkimer County has a high percentage of "older" senior citizens. Out of the 62 counties in NYS, Herkimer County ranks eighth in its 85+ population with 2.24% of the total county population in that age group. For this aged 85 and older population, Montgomery County ranks first in New York State with 2.97% and Putnam County ranks lowest with only 1.1%. With a United States comparison, Herkimer County ranks 824 out of the 3,141 counties; just shy of falling within the top 25%. Our Herkimer County aged 85 and older population has seen a significant increase over just 40 years; more than a 160% increase.

Especially with the growing age 85+ population, these seniors are much more likely to be in need of services in order to keep them at home and out of nursing homes. Care for the elderly, and assistance with access to services, very often falls to their adult children, who may also have

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the responsibility for providing care for their own children and/or grandchildren. This phenomenon is often referred to as the "sandwich generation".

One way to assess the pressure the sandwich generation may experience in caring for elderly parents is the parent support ratio, which is the number of oldest old (age 80 plus) per 100 people age 50-64. The higher the ratio, the fewer people age 50-64 are available to help care for those aged 80 plus. For the United States this ratio, based on Census figures, increased from 21 in 1990 to 22 in 2000. For Herkimer County the ratio has been steadily increasing as follows: 1970 - 16; 1980 - 18; 1990 - 26; 2000 - 31. When compared to the other New York State counties, just two counties (Montgomery (39) and Schenectady (32) have a higher parent support ratio in 2000 than Herkimer County (31).

Grandparents as Care Givers

The 2000 Census asked for the first time questions about grandparents living with their grandchildren and grandparents responsible for the care of their grandchildren. This means it is possible to compare Herkimer County to other regions, but there is no trend data. Below are the percentages of persons over age 30 who live with their grandchildren and the percentage of those that co-reside with grandchildren that are responsible for the care of their grandchildren for Herkimer County, New York State and the U.S.

Table 63

	HC	NYS	US
% of persons >30 that are grandparents co-residing w/ grandchildren	2.3%	3.8%	3.6%
% grandparents Co-residing w/ grandchildren Responsible for their care	42.8%	34.7%	42%

In Herkimer County, 2.3% of all persons over age 30 are grandparents co-residing with their grandchildren. This is below the percentage for both New York State (3.8%) and for the U.S. (3.6%). However, when compared to all the counties in New York State, Herkimer County, at 2.3%, is just below the median of 2.4%. What this shows is that Herkimer County is similar to other upstate counties in that fewer grandparents are living with their grandchildren than is evident in the larger counties in the state and the counties around New York City. Of those grandparents that live with their grandchildren, in Herkimer County 42.8% care for their grandchildren; this is comparable to the US average (42%) and above the NYS percentage (34.7%). Though a higher percentage of grandparents in Herkimer County are caring for their grandchildren than is true for New York State as a whole, again, Herkimer County is near the median for all counties in the state. In other words, Herkimer County, for the most part, is similar to other upstate rural counties.

There is no data available that would indicate how many grandparents, not residing with their grandchildren, provide care for their grandchildren for a significant period of time each day.

DATA SOURCES

Herkimer-Oneida Counties Comprehensive Planning Program

Herkimer County Retrospective: 1950-2000.

Herkimer County Teen Assessment Project (TAP) Survey

The Status of Women: A Portrait of Women and Girls in Oneida & Herkimer Counties, December 2003 - Women's Fund

2000 US Census

<http://www.census.gov/population/cen2000/phc-t13/tab12.xls>

New York State Department of Health, Bureau of Vital Statistics

Maine Marks

Mohawk Valley Community Action Agency, Inc. - 2005 Community Assessment

Herkimer County Office for the Aging

<http://www.aging.state.ny.us/explore/population/Census2000/mcd/043/0840.txt>

<http://www.aging.state.ny.us/explore/population/Census2000/mcd/043/0850.txt>

Family

Family Management

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Poor family management practices include a lack of clear expectations for behavior, failure of parents to monitor their children (knowing where they are and whom they are with), and excessively severe and inconsistent punishment. Poor family management, as a risk factor, has been shown to increase the risk of drug use, delinquency, violence, teen pregnancy and school dropout.

Studies have shown that the strength and warmth in the parent-child relationship is related to positive outcomes for children including higher self-esteem, better parent-child communication, and fewer psychological and behavior problems. Conversely, receiving insufficient levels of parental support can foster feelings of alienation, expressions of hostility and aggression, diminished self-esteem, and antisocial and risk behaviors.

WHERE WE STAND

Table 64

Number of Foster Care Admissions by Source, by Gender and by Age (1998-2005)

	2001		2002		2003		2004		2005	
	N	% of Total	N	% of Total	N	% of Total	N	% of Total	N	% of Total
Total Admissions	85	100	116	100	68	100	48	100	66	100
Admissions by Source:										
Voluntary	2	2.4	2	1.7	1	1.4	3	6.3	0	0
C.P.S.	36	42.4	59	50.9	26	37.7	17	35.4	35	53.0
JD:	13	15.3	12	10.3	10	14.5	9	18.8	13	19.7
PINS	34	40.0	43	37.1	32	46.4	19	39.6	18	27.3
Admissions by Gender:										
Male	49	57.6	64	55.2	42	61.8	30	62.5	39	59.1
Female	36	42.4	52	44.8	26	38.2	18	37.5	27	40.9
Admissions by Age:										
Age:										
0-5	23	27.1	25	21.6	9	13.2	8	16.7	16	24.2
6-11	11	12.9	22	19.0	14	20.6	10	20.8	13	19.7
12 & up	51	60.0	69	59.5	45	66.2	30	62.5	38	57.6
# in Care as of Last Day of Year	97		130		122		86		98	

Source: Herkimer County Department of Social Services

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Family Management

Based on Herkimer County Department of Social Services records, over the five-year period 2001-2005 the total admissions into foster care have fluctuated. Admissions peaked in 2002 at 116, decreased in 2003 and 2004 (68 and 48 respectively), and increased in 2005 to 66. The biggest drop in admissions since 2002 can be attributed to a reduction in Persons In Need of Supervision (PINS) placements. With the implementation of the Family Support/ PINS Diversion Unit, the number of admissions from the PINS population decreased from a high of 43 in 2002 to a low of 18 in 2005. Child Protective Services admissions also dropped in 2003 and 2004, but increased again in 2005. Juvenile Delinquent admissions have remained relatively constant. More boys than girls have consistently been admitted into foster care. When broken down by age categories, over half (58%) are generally over the age of 12; about one in five (20%) are ages 6-11; and about a quarter (24%) are age 0-5. This has fluctuated some, in 2003 and 2004 there were more admissions of children age 6-11.

Herkimer County, when compared to comparable counties, has generally had a high rate of placements per 1000 children in the county. The rate based on the number in care as of December 31, 2004 was 5.4 per 1000 for Herkimer County and for the comparable counties it was 3.7 per 1000. This same disparity has been evident since 2000.

Runaway & Homeless Youth

The Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) Program helps young people who have runaway or have left their home and need a temporary place to stay. Their program data serves as an indicator of family management problems; young people often seek assistance from the RHY Program when there are family issues that require resolution.

Runaway & Homeless Youth Program Statistics, 1998 - 2005

Table 65

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Calls Received	99	85	91	86	82	93	110	101
Intakes:								
Males	6	11	8	7	19	31	38	26
Females	24	22	12	16	26	35	40	39
Total Intakes:	47	33	20	23	45	66	78	65
Major Problems Faced:								
Parental Conflict	30	33	20	22	41	79	81	75
Police Involvement	4	1	0	4	10	14	17	15
School	9	7	5	15	26	34	41	39
Status at Discharge:								
With Parent	15	19	11	11	20	32	42	37
Independent Living	0	3	4	2	4	15	15	14
W/ Friend / Relative	6	6	1	3	10	8	5	4

Note: Youth can indicate more than one problem.

Note: Only the top three discharges indicated (numbers will not add up to totals)

Source: Runaway and Homeless Youth Annual Reports (1998 - 2005)

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Family Management

As seen in the tables on the previous page, the number of calls received has remained relatively stable, but total intakes increased dramatically in 2002 then again in 2003 and 2004. Intakes dropped off in 2005. Some of the increase in intakes since 2002 is attributed to the increase that year in the age covered by the Persons In Need of Supervision (PINS) Law from 16 to 18. This meant parents and police could seek court action to try to force young adults (16-17) back home.

In looking at the demographics of the RHY Program participants, the numbers have remained relatively consistent over this eight-year period (1998-2005). More females than males have accessed their services. In 2005, approximately 60% were between the ages of 16 and 20. Parental conflict has been the major problem cited, and most end up returning to their parents.

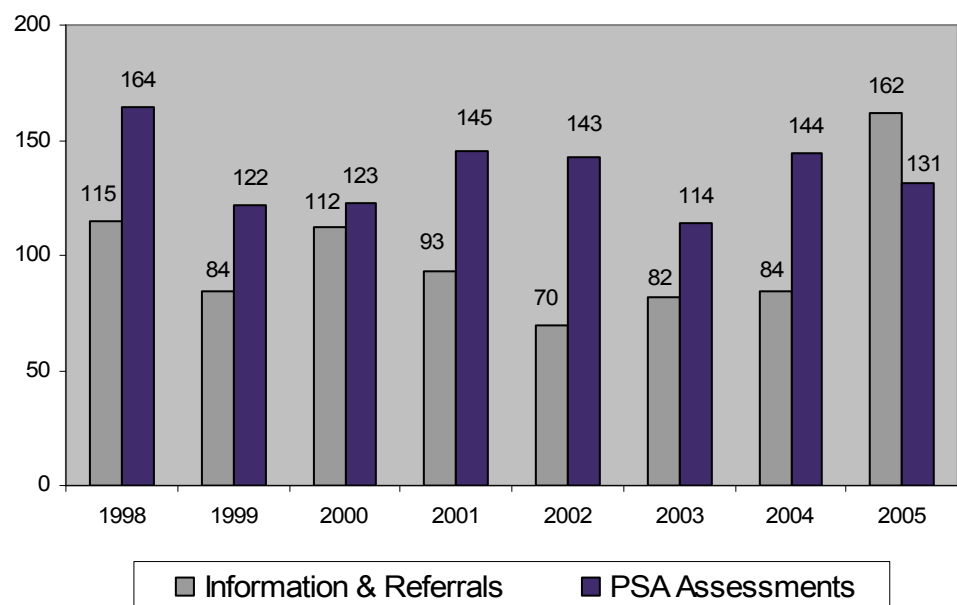
The Director of the RHY Program noted that many of the youth age 18 or older appear to lack the skills necessary to obtain employment or to maintain a household independently. Many of these youth are moving from one friend's house to another without any stable residence or employment. The major issue that the Director identified is the lack of transitional housing for this population of older youth. There are six volunteer host homes, but there is no safe house or runaway shelter available in Herkimer County. Some move into either the YMCA or Winston Arms, both single room occupancy (SRO) housing that is more affordable. Some will access the transitional housing options available in Oneida County, but they sometimes have waiting lists and local youth are often reluctant to leave the area.

Protective Services for Adults (PSA)

Graph 119

Protective Services for Adults helps adults, 18 years or older, who may need protection either because they can no longer care for themselves and thus endangered or because they are being abused or threatened by others. The graph below shows the number of cases PSA staff handled annually from 1998 to 2005. Some cases require a PSA assessment to assess risk; others require just information and referral services. This graph shows the count of both. Based

Number of Protective Services for Adults Cases in Herkimer County 1998–2005



Source: Herkimer County Department of Social Services

Family

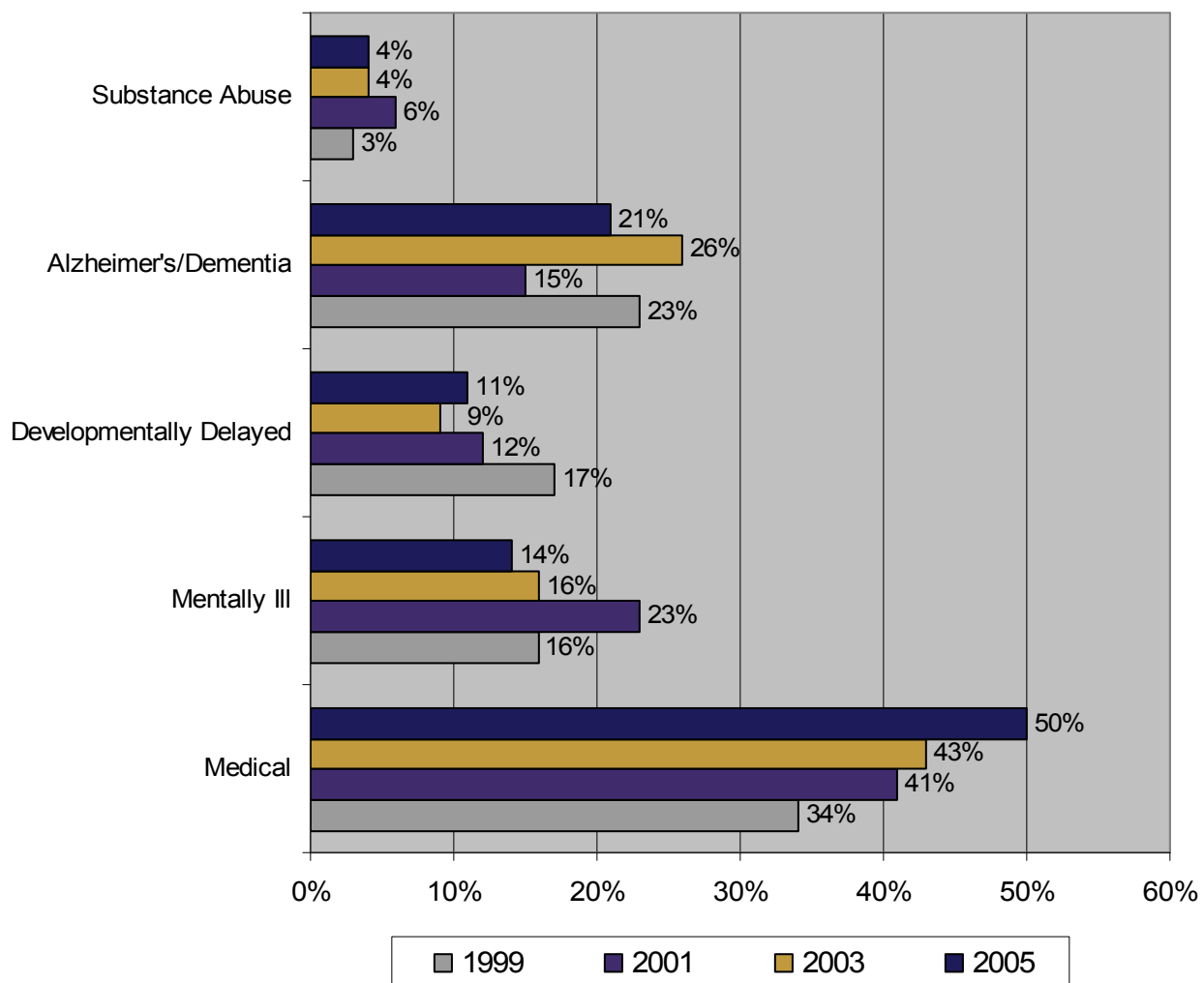
Family Management

on these numbers, there is no discernable trend regarding increased need or demand for protective services for adults.

The following two graphs provide a breakdown of the total population of open Protective Services for Adults (PSA) cases. The first graph looks at the percent with certain impairments, and second shows the percent with certain risks or unmet needs.

Protective Services for Adults by Impairment, Herkimer County

Graph 120



Source: Herkimer County Department of Social Services

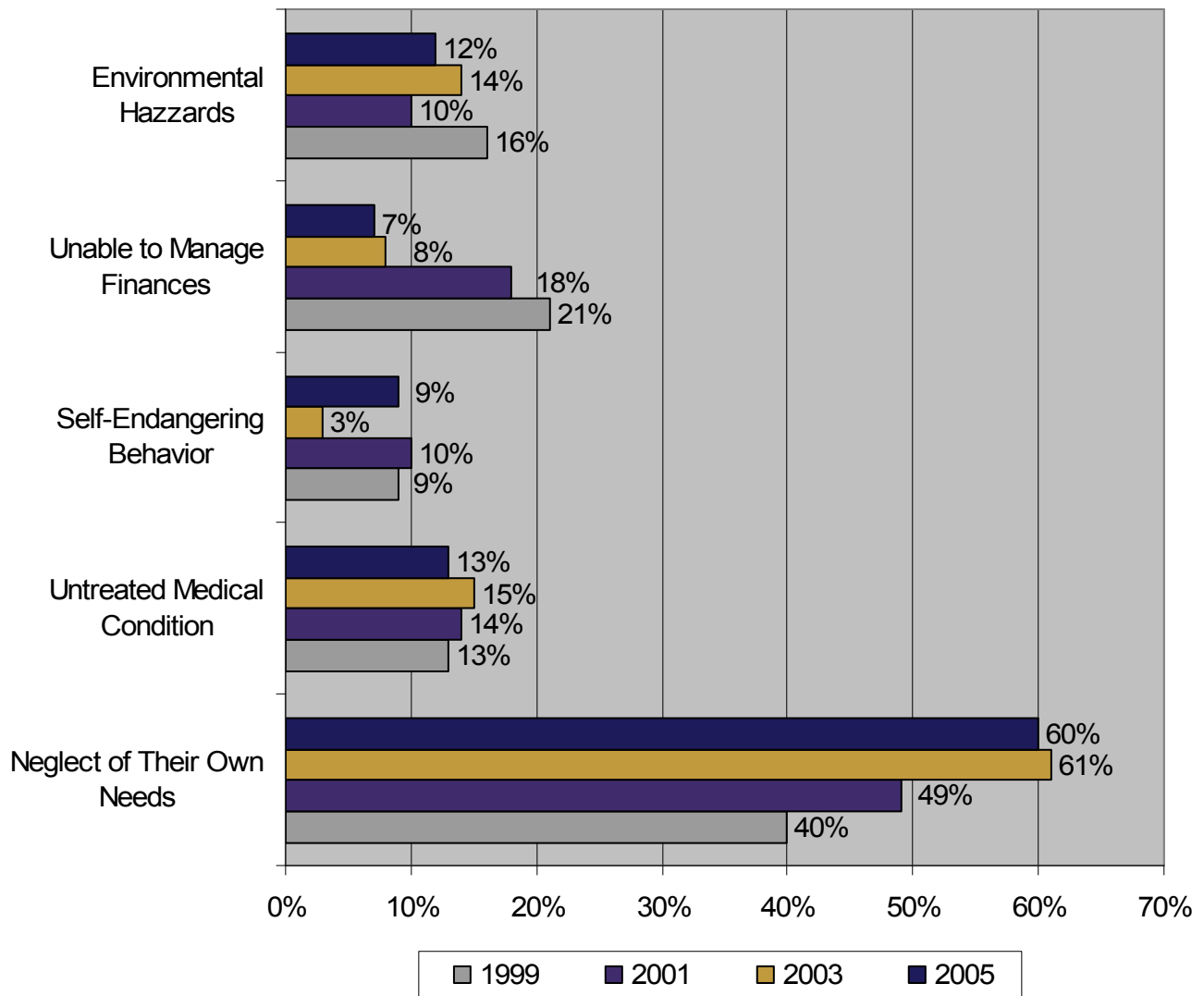
The graph over the period 1999-2005, indicates the prevailing (and increasing) impairment of this population has been medical in nature. In 2005, half of the impairments were medical. One in five (21%) of the impairments were Alzheimer's/ Dementia, and one in six (14%) involved mental illness.

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Family Management

Graph 121

Protective Services for Adults by Type of Risk of Harm/Unmet Need, Herkimer County



Source: Herkimer County Department of Social Services

The graph above shows that in 2005, 60 percent of the open PSA cases had neglected their own needs; 13 percent had an untreated medical condition; and 12 percent were living in unsafe accommodations (environmental hazards).

DATA SOURCES

Herkimer-Oneida Counties Comprehensive Planning Program

2005 Herkimer County Teen Assessment Project Survey

Child Trends Databank

Communities That Care, Developmental Research and Programs, Inc.

Herkimer County Department of Social Services

Family

Family Conflict

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Persistent and serious conflict between primary caregivers or between caregivers and children increases risks for children. Conflict between family members appears to be more important than family structure. Whether two biological parents, a single parent, or some other primary caregiver heads the family, children raised in families high in conflict appear to be at risk.

Child abuse is linked to an increased risk of substance abuse, eating disorders, obesity, depression, suicide, and sexual promiscuity later in life. Child abuse or neglect is often associated with physical injuries, delayed physical growth, and even neurological damage. Child maltreatment is also associated with psychological and emotional problems such as aggression, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder. Women who were victims of physical assault as children are twice as likely to be victims of physical assault as adults. Victims of child maltreatment are more likely than others to abuse children themselves in adulthood. (SOURCE: Child Trends Databank)

WHERE WE STAND

One indicator of family conflict is child abuse and neglect reports. The State Central Registry (SCR) is the New York State central hotline for people to report suspicions of child abuse or neglect. Once a call is made to the SCR, the case is transferred to the county of origin for an investigation. Over the five-year period 2001-2005, the total number SCR Reports to Herkimer County has fluctuated. This fluctuation is also evident for the type of reports, i.e. neglect/maltreatment, physical abuse and sexual abuse. In 2001, the Herkimer County Department of Social Services received for the first time over 800 reports. This was repeated in 2002 when there was a record number of reports of sexual abuse (98). In 2003 and 2004, the total number of SCR reports dropped down, but then in 2005 the number reached a new high (839).

Table 66

Number of State Central Registry (SCR) Reports Received By Allegations (2001-2005)

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Neglect/ Maltreatment	756	697	673	727	761
Physical Abuse	2	10	6	4	1
Sexual Abuse	45	98	66	69	77
Total SCR Reports	803	805	745	754	839
Number of Children in Reports	1,640	1,520	1,369	1,337	1,519

Source: Herkimer County Department of Social Services

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Family Conflict

The table below shows numbers generated by the New York State Management Information System. The total number of reports shown here is not consistent with the numbers from Herkimer County DSS exhibited in the previous table primarily because New York State does not count secondary reports, which are reports Herkimer County DSS investigated but then transferred to another county. The annual rate of SCR Reports per 1000 children ages 0-18 in Herkimer County has consistently been below the rate found in comparable counties, which are counties similar in size and composition to Herkimer County. In 2004, for example, the annual rate of reports in Herkimer County was 41.6 per 1000 children and for comparable counties it was 50.8. Indicated reports are those that upon investigation there was credible evidence that a child experienced abuse or maltreatment. The percentage of indicated reports per total reports in Herkimer County has been similar to the rate for comparable counties.

Number & Rate of SCR Reports & Indicated Reports in Herkimer County and Comparable Counties Table 67

Year	Reports	Annual Rate	Comp Rate	Indicated Reports	% Indicated	Comp Rate
2000	695	44.4	45.7	179	25.8	29.3
2001	691	45.1	50.7	183	26.5	27.7
2002	703	46.6	52.8	193	27.5	27.9
2003	659	44.4	51.7	183	27.8	28.8
2004	608	41.6	50.8	178	29.3	28.8

SOURCE: NYS Office of Children and Family Services, 2004 Monitoring and Analysis Profiles With Selected Trend Data : 2000-2004 (MAPS)

N: Number of reports received during the calendar year.

Rate: Number of reports received during the calendar year for every 1000 children in the district.

Domestic Violence Program Annual Statistics (1999 - 2005) Table 68

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Calls to domestic violence twenty-four hour hotline	238	248	221	188	334	342	460
Adult Victims of domestic violence receiving services	305	364	374	374	399	459	508
Child victims/witnesses of domestic violence receiving services	118	119	76	86	50	86	87
Children sheltered in Safe House	39	35	27	57	14	27	26
Assistance with emergency orders of protection and/or custody	55	54	68	88	21	33	34
Reports made by Domestic Violence Program staff to NYS Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline	20	22	19	14	12	17	13

Source: Herkimer County Domestic Violence Program

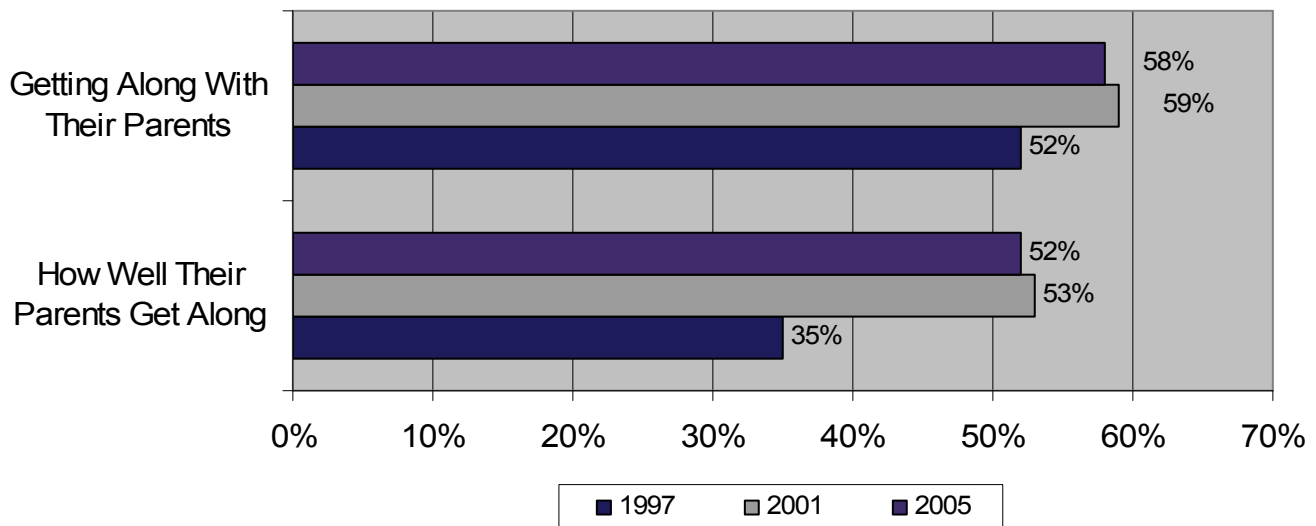
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The table on the previous page includes the annual statistics from the Herkimer County Domestic Violence Program at Catholic Charities for the years 1999-2005. Over this period there has been a continual increase in the number of both calls to the Domestic Violence Hotline and adult victims of domestic violence receiving services. These numbers have increased dramatically since 2002. The Director of the Program attributes some of this increase to the growing awareness about their services. It is interesting to note that there has not been a similar increase in the number of children involved. The Director identified two issues facing their families: first, offenders need to be held more accountable for their actions; and second, families leaving the Safe House have difficulty accessing safe and affordable housing.

The Herkimer County Teen Assessment Project (TAP) Survey includes several questions that broach the issue of possible conflict in the home environment. The responses to two of the questions are illustrated in the graph below. When asked how much they worry about getting along with their parents, almost six in ten (58%) indicated that they worry about this either 'a lot' or a 'fair amount.' When asked how much they worry about how well their parents get along with each other, over half (52%) of the youth said that they worry about this either 'a lot' or a 'fair amount.'

Percent of Teens That Said They Worry a Fair Amount or a Lot About...



Source: Herkimer County Teen Assessment Project (TAP) Survey

Graph 122

In another question, youth were asked if an adult in their home had made a serious threat in the past year to another family member, including themselves. In 2005, 18% indicated yes. A related question asked youth if they had been physically hurt by an adult at home in the past year, and, as the graph on the next page shows, the percentage of teens that indicated they

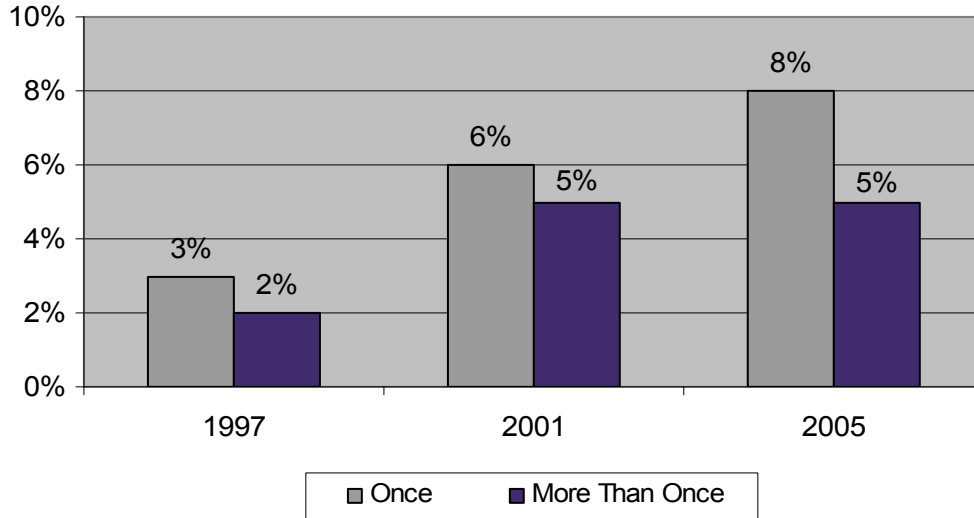
Family

Family Conflict

had been hurt has increased over time from a total of 5% in 1997 to 13% in 2005.

Percent of Teens That Said They Have Been Physically Hurt by an Adult at Home in the Past Year

Graph 123



Source: Herkimer County Teen Assessment Project (TAP) Survey

The TAP Survey also asks a question about how safe youth feel in their home.

I feel safe in my home.

Table 69

	Totals			2005				
	1997	2001	2005	Male	Female	7th	9th	11th
Strongly Agree	58.9%	61.3%	64.2%	67.2%	61.3%	65.0%	60.3%	67.5%
Agree	34.3%	33.8%	29.8%	27.1%	32.3%	28.3%	32.9%	28.5%
Disagree	3.0%	2.7%	3.8%	3.1%	4.6%	5.1%	3.3%	2.9%
Strongly Disagree	3.7%	2.2%	2.2%	2.6%	1.8%	1.6%	3.5%	1.1%
N =	2275	2151	2174	1076	1097	769	736	631

Source: Herkimer County Teen Assessment Project (TAP) Survey

Seventh and ninth graders appear to be more concerned about home safety than eleventh graders (6.6%, 6.8% versus 4.0%). Teens who claim to have a disability or "Special Need" were twice as likely to feel unsafe at home than were teens without "special need" (11.7% of "special needs" teens felt unsafe versus 4.8% of non-special needs teens). Teens who lived with just a single parent were more likely to feel unsafe at home (10.8% of teens in single parent household versus 4.1% of teens in two parent households, natural or step parents).

Family

Family Conflict

In an analysis of the 2005 Herkimer County TAP Survey results, those teens that felt unsafe at home versus those that felt safe at home:

53% versus 18% have had someone at home threatened by an adult in the home in the past year;

49% versus 13% have personally been physically hurt by an adult in the home in the past year;

59% versus 23% felt unsafe at school;

35% versus 12% missed school in the past year because they felt unsafe;

41% versus 22% have changed schools in the past 5 years;

58% versus 19% felt unsafe in their communities;

53% versus 31% have been sexually harassed in past year

It was also found for those students who indicated that they felt unsafe at home that they were more likely to be involved in risky behaviors than the rest of the survey respondents. For instance, for those teens that felt unsafe at home versus those that felt safe at home:

53% versus 30% have ever smoked cigarettes;

60% versus 49% have ever used alcohol;

32% versus 19% had gone binge drinking in the past month;

40% versus 21% had ever used marijuana;

18% versus 5% had tried cocaine;

26% versus 9% have tried someone else's prescriptions;

37% versus 15% have misused over the counter drugs;

36% versus 16% reported attending school high during the past 12 months;

29% versus 10% reported having been suspended from school during past year;

50% versus 19% had seriously considered suicide in the past year;

34% versus 10% had attempted suicide in the past year;

39% versus 17% were more likely to have used physical force to get their own way in the past year; and

33% versus 11% were more likely to have carried a weapon with the intent to harm someone else or to protect themselves in the past year.

DATA SOURCES

Herkimer-Oneida Counties Comprehensive Planning Program

Child Trends Databank

Communities That Care, Developmental Research and Programs, Inc.

Herkimer County Department of Social Services

NYS Office of Children and Family Services, 2004 Monitoring and Analysis Profiles

Catholic Charities Domestic Violence Program Annual Statistics (1999 - 2005)

Herkimer County Teen Assessment Project (TAP) Survey

Family

Parental Attitudes & Family Norms

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Parental attitudes and behaviors influence the attitudes and behavior of children. Children of parents who approve or excuse the children for breaking the law are more likely to develop problems. Children whose parents engage in violent behavior inside or outside the home are at greater risk for exhibiting violent behaviors. Parental approval of a child's moderate drinking, even under parental supervision, increases the risk of the use of alcohol and other drugs.

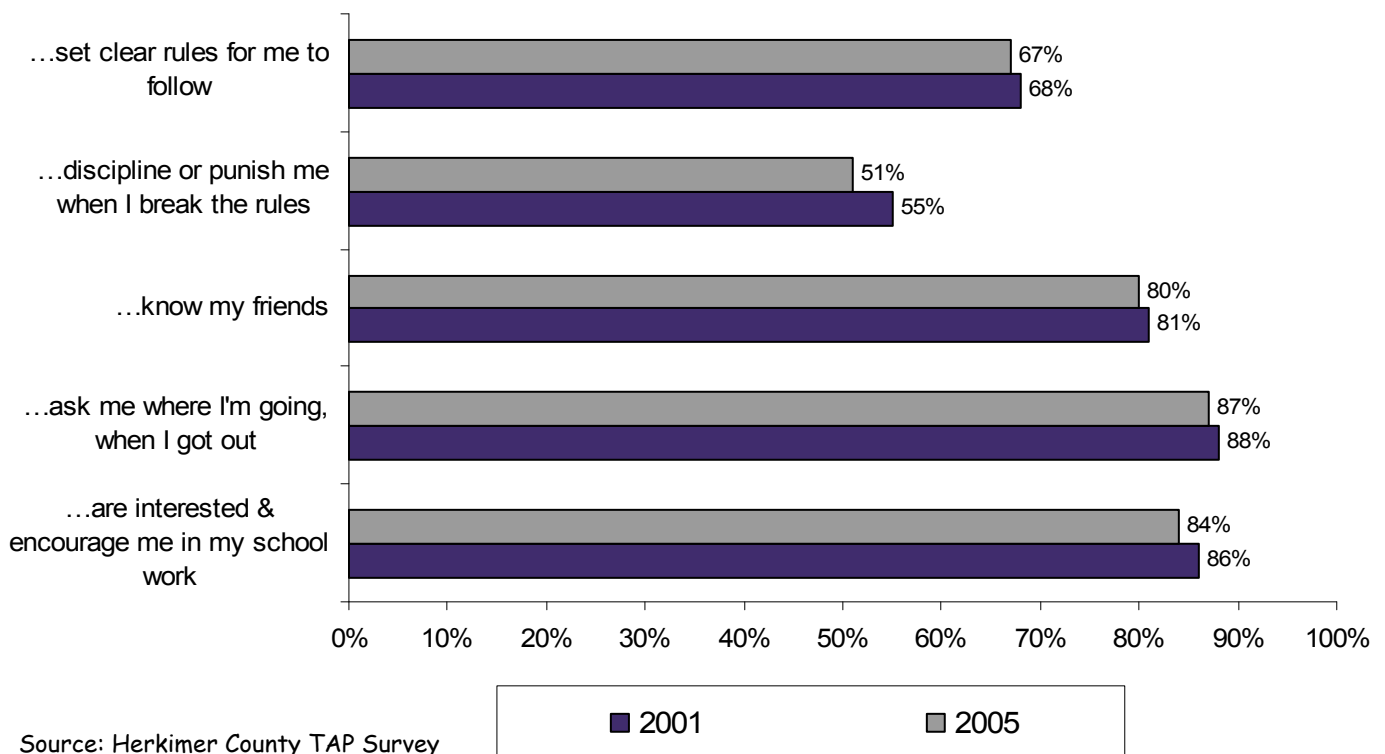
Parents that monitor their children's behavior, hold them accountable for their actions, and are generally engaged in their children's lives help to protect them against involvement in problem behaviors.

WHERE WE STAND

There are several questions from the Herkimer County Teen Assessment Project Survey that examine the relationship that teens feel they have with their parents. By looking at their responses from the last two TAP Surveys in 2001 and 2005, it appears that most youth have a good relationship with their parents.

Percent of Teens That Said Their Parents Either Often or Always...

Graph 124



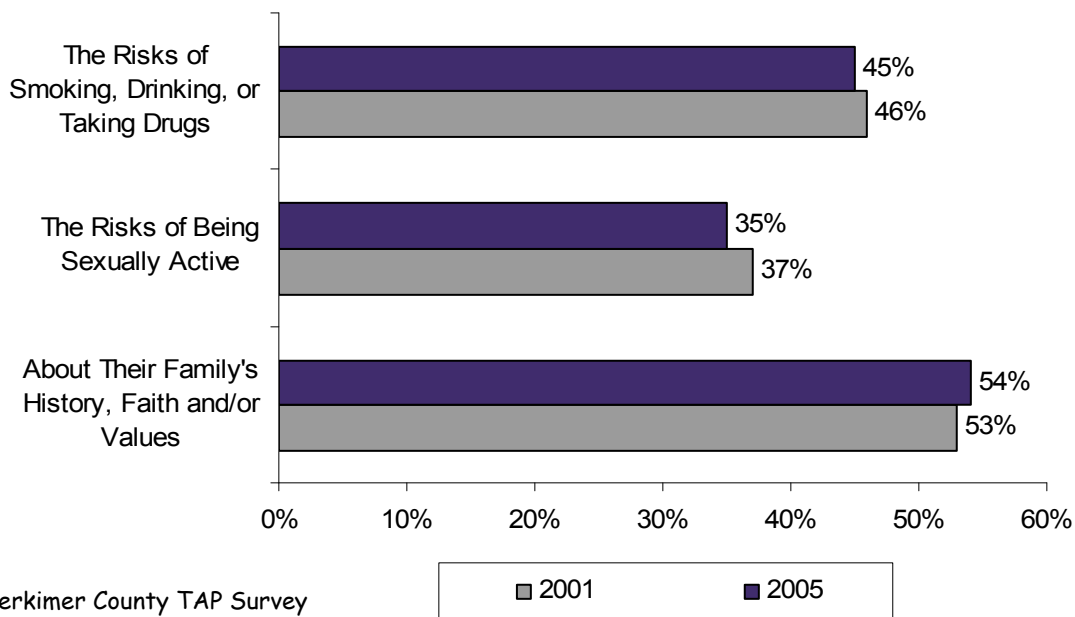
Family

Parental Attitudes & Family Norms

Parents, for the most part, seem to be monitoring their children's behavior, holding them accountable and generally engaged in their children's lives. For example, when asked if their parents set clear rules for them to follow, the percent of teens that said that they did often or always, versus never or occasionally, was 68% in 2001 and 67% in 2005. And, the percent that said their parents often or always disciplined or punished them when they broke the rules was 55% in 2001 and 51% in 2005 - a slight drop.

There are several other questions that explore whether parents are engaged in their children's lives, and based on their children's response to these question, it appears that the great majority of parents are engaged. Eight out of ten teens indicated that their parents often or always know their friends; 87% often or always ask them where they are going when going out; and, 84% often or always encourage them in their schoolwork.

Percent of Teens That Said Their Parents at Least Sometimes Talk to Them About... Graph 125



According to how teens responded in both the 2001 and 2005 TAP Survey, fewer than half (45%) of parents talked at least sometimes to their children about the dangers of drinking, smoking, using drugs and just over a third (35%) talked at least sometimes to them about being sexually active.

The degree to which teens appear to be concerned about getting along with their parents has increased since 1997, but seems fairly level since 2001. In 1997 about 72% of all teens worried at least a little about how they got along with their parents. By 2001, this percentage had increased to as much as 79% of all teens. In the 2005 TAP Survey, 78% of all teens said they there were at least a little concerned about how well they were relating to their parents.

Family

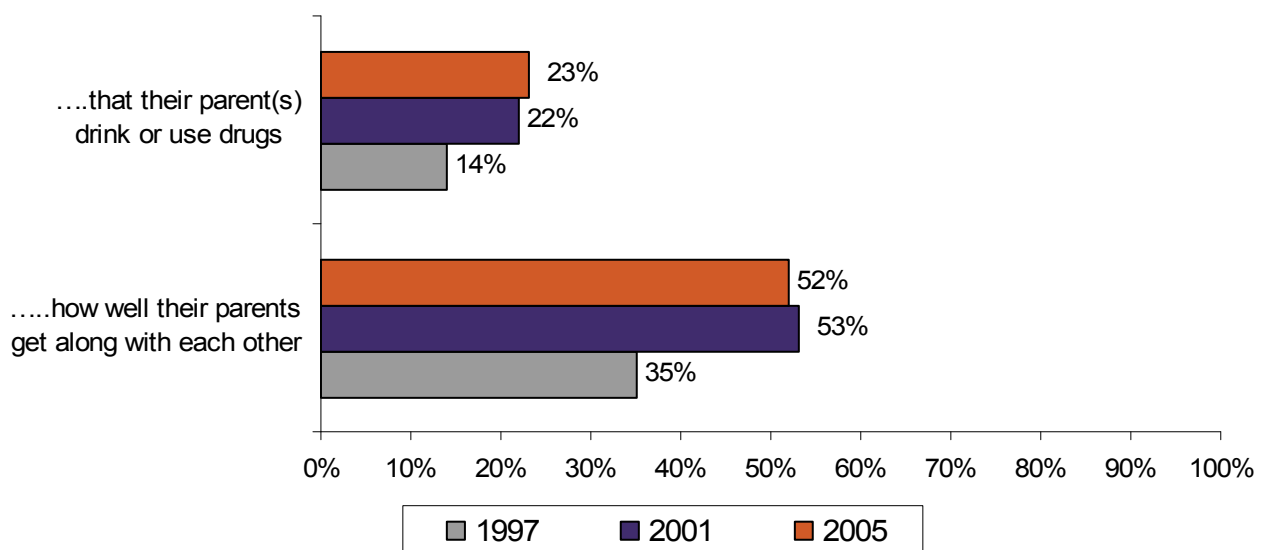
Parental Attitudes & Family Norms

Almost 80% of all teens in 2005 said they could turn to their parents with a serious problem. This percentage remains just under 80% regardless of gender or age. What is interesting to note, however, is that when asked who they generally talk to when they have a problem, most said a friend, though the percentage relying on friends has decreased (1997 - 53%, 2001 - 49%, 2005 - 47%), and fewer said their parent, though that percentage has increased (1997 - 21%, 2001 - 22%, 2005 - 24%). Another indication that more teens are talking to their parents when faced with a serious problem is found in their response to the question about what they usually did when they had thoughts of committing suicide; an increasing percentage reported that they talked to their parent or another caring adult (1997 - 2%, 2001 - 1%, 2005 - 7%) while a decreasing percentage said they talked with a friend (1997 - 7%, 2001 - 5%, 2005 - 3%).

Youth appear to be increasingly worried about how well their parents got along with each other. Thirty five percent (35%) of all teens worried about their parents' relationship to one another in 1997, but slightly more than half (53% and 52% respectively) worried about this in 2001 and 2005. Youth also appear to be concerned about whether their parents are using drugs or alcohol. About one in four teens (23%) said they were worried a fair amount or a lot about parental use of drugs or alcohol in 2005, up from 14% that were concerned in 1997.

Graph 126

Percent of Teens That Said They Worry a Fair Amount or A Lot (Vs. Not at All or A Little) about...



Source: Herkimer County TAP Survey

Family

Parental Attitudes & Family Norms

Finally, more youth seem to feel safe at home. The percent that indicated that they strongly agreed with the statement that they feel safe in their home has steadily increased (1997 - 59%, 2001 - 61%, 2005 - 64%). While overall the number of teens who felt safe at home had not changed significantly (93% in 1997 versus 94% in 2005), the strength of their sense of being safe HAS in fact significantly increased. When asked in 1997 if they agreed with the statement that they felt safe at home, about 59% stated that they strongly agreed with that statement. In 2005, the number of students that strongly agreed with that statement was 64%. This represents a significantly stronger sense of home safety in the 2005 TAP Survey for teens than in previous surveys.

Family Meals

According to the Child Trends Data Bank, research has shown a positive relationship between frequent family dinners and positive teen behavioral outcomes. Teens who regularly have meals with their family not only get better nutrition and develop healthier eating habits, they also are less likely to get into fights, think about suicide, smoke, drink, use drugs, and are more likely to have later initiation of sexual activity, and better academic performance than teens who do not. Even after controlling for family connectedness, more frequent family meals have been found to be associated with less substance use, fewer depressive symptoms, and less suicide involvement, and with better grades.

Based on the Herkimer County TAP Survey, the percentage of teens in 7th, 9th and 11th grades that said they sit down to dinner with their family at least five times a week decreased from 47% in 2001 to 43% in 2005. According to a national survey by the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University, the percentage of 12- to 17-year-olds that said they ate dinner with their families at least five times weekly increased from 47% in 1998 to 58% in 2005. So, over these last several years whereas nationally the percentage of adolescents that eat dinner together with their families at least five times per week increased, in Herkimer County it has decreased.

DATA SOURCES

Herkimer-Oneida Counties Comprehensive Planning Program

Herkimer County Teen Assessment Project (TAP) Surveys, 1997, 2001 and 2005

Communities That Care, Developmental Research and Programs, Inc.