Resident Interview Summary | Dane County | Summer 2018

DreamUp WI graduate students interviewed 168 Dane County residents at community centers, local businesses, libraries, schools, & public events.

What makes it difficult for families to get ahead financially?

- **Cost of Living**: Unaffordable housing, food, utilities, health insurance, & taxes.
- **Childcare**: Hard to find affordable service with flexible scheduling.
- **Education Costs**: Post-secondary education & training (e.g. for learning trades) costs are too high.
- **Job Market & Wages**: Difficult to find jobs; wages not increasing with the cost of living.
- **Racial Discrimination**: Systematically affects housing security, job access, healthcare, & education for people of color.
- **Social Benefits**: Strict income limits & requirements make it difficult to qualify for benefits.

Interviewee Annual Household Income:

- **48%**: $0-$40,000
- **28%**: $40,001-$80,000
- **23%**: $80,001+
- **01%**: No answer

What could help families decrease their expenses?

- **Affordable Housing**: Lower rent, housing subsidies, rent control, & constructing more affordable housing.
- **Higher Wages**: Increase minimum wage, better job opportunities, & paying higher wages.
- **Smarter Spending**: Limit spending to essential needs, learn to budget, & buy used items.
- **Lower Health Care Costs**: Universal health care, affordable insurance that covers all medical needs, reduced copays & fees.
- **Affordable Education**: Scholarships for low-income & returning students, free post-secondary education & training, & education about available resources.

What could help families increase their incomes?

- **Raise the Minimum Wage**: Increase wages & raise the mandatory minimum wage.
- **Increase Access to Education & Training**: Affordable & flexible education & training.
- **Budgeting Skills**: Increase financial literacy & budgeting skills.
- **More Employment Opportunities**: More advancement options for those not experiencing professional growth.
- **Don't Know**: People feel like they do everything they can to increase their income & reduce their expenses, & are looking for new ideas.

Institute for Research on Poverty
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN–MADISON
dreamup.wisc.edu
(608)265-1054
DreamUpAlliance@wisc.edu