



Briefing Paper

IWPR # R370

January 2013

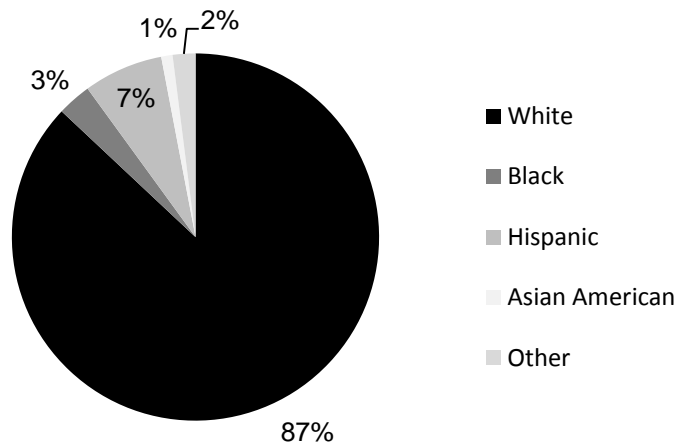
The Status of Women in Henderson and Transylvania Counties, North Carolina

Women in Henderson and Transylvania counties, as in North Carolina as a whole, have made much progress during the last few decades. The majority of women work—many in professional and managerial jobs—and women are a mainstay of the economic health of their communities. Yet, in some ways women’s status still lags behind men’s, and not all women are prospering equally. This briefing paper provides basic information about the status of women in Henderson and Transylvania counties, focusing on women’s earnings and workforce participation, level of education, poverty, access to child care, and health status. It also provides basic demographic information about women in this area.

Basic Facts About Women in Henderson-Transylvania

The female population in Henderson-Transylvania is less racially and ethnically diverse than in the state as a whole.¹ Only 13 percent of women and girls in these two counties combined are from a minority racial or ethnic group, compared with 35 percent in the state overall (Figure 1 and Table 1). Seven percent of women and girls in Henderson-Transylvania and in the state as a whole are foreign-born (Table 1).

Figure 1. Distribution of Women and Girls by Race and Ethnicity in Henderson-Transylvania, All Ages, 2008–2010



Notes: Data are not available for American Indians due to small sample size. Racial and ethnic categories are defined as exclusive: white, not Hispanic; black, not Hispanic; Asian American, not Hispanic; and Other, not Hispanic. Those whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race. “Other” includes those reporting multiple race identities and those whom the Census Bureau did not classify.

Source: IWPR analysis of 2008–2010 Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS) American Community Survey microdata (Ruggles et al. 2010).

The median age of all women and girls in Henderson-Transylvania is 47 years, nearly a decade older than the median age for women and girls in the state and the United States as a whole (38 years each). Twenty-five percent of women in Henderson-Transylvania are aged 65 and older, compared with 15 percent in North Carolina and the nation overall (Table 1).

Table 1. Basic Demographic Statistics for Women and Girls			
	Henderson-Transylvania	North Carolina	United States
Total Population	138,492	9,561,558	309,349,689
Number of Women and Girls, All Ages	71,237	4,905,216	157,294,247
Median Age of All Women and Girls	47	38	38
Proportion of Women Aged 65 and Older	25%	15%	15%
Distribution of Women and Girls by Race and Ethnicity, All Ages			
White, Not Hispanic	87%	65%	64%
Black, Not Hispanic	3%	22%	13%
Hispanic	7%	8%	16%
Asian American, Not Hispanic	1%	2%	5%
American Indian, Not Hispanic	N/A	1%	1%
Other, Not Hispanic	2%	2%	2%
Proportion of Women and Girls Who Are Foreign-Born, All Ages	7%	7%	13%
Proportion of Women Who Are Married, Aged 18 and Older	57%	50%	49%

Note: Data for Henderson-Transylvania are for 2008–2010. Data for North Carolina and the United States are for 2010 only. N/A indicates data are not available.

Those whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic may be of any race. Other includes those reporting multiple race identities and those whom the Census Bureau did not classify.

Totals may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.

Source: IWPR analysis of 2008–2010 and 2010 American Community Survey microdata (Ruggles et al. 2010).

Work and Earnings

The majority of women aged 16 and older in Henderson-Transylvania are in the workforce (52 percent). Women’s labor force participation rate in this area, however, is lower than in the state and nation as a whole (both 59 percent; Table 2), which likely reflects the higher share of older women in the population.

In Henderson-Transylvania, as in North Carolina overall, the labor force participation rate is considerably higher for women with dependent children than for all women. Seventy-five percent of women with children under 18 in the two counties combined are either employed or actively looking for work (Table 2). Mothers in this area, however, are much less likely than fathers to be in the labor force: 95 percent of men with children under 18 in Henderson-Transylvania are in the workforce (Table 2). This suggests that women are more likely than men to cut back on employment when they become parents.

In Henderson-Transylvania, the majority of employed women and men work full-time, but women are more than twice as likely as men to work part-time (35 percent of employed women compared with 17 percent of employed men). The reasons for women’s higher rates of part-time work vary. Women are more likely than men to say that they work part-time because they cannot find child care or for other

Table 2. Overview of Women's and Men's Economic Status			
	Henderson-Transylvania	North Carolina	United States
Labor Force Participation Rate, Aged 16 and Older			
Women	52%	59%	59%
Men	61%	70%	70%
Mothers With Children Under 18 Years of Age	75%	74%	73%
Fathers With Children Under 18 Years of Age	95%	94%	94%
Percent of Employed Women and Men Who Work Full-Time, Aged 16 and Older			
Women	65%	72%	71%
Men	83%	84%	84%
Percent of Employed Women and Men in Professional or Managerial Occupations, Aged 16 and Older			
Women	42%	40%	39%
Men	30%	30%	33%
Median Annual Earnings, Full-Time, Year-Round Workers, Aged 16 and Older			
Women	\$32,000	\$33,000	\$36,000
Men	\$38,000	\$40,000	\$45,500
Earnings Ratio, Aged 16 and Older			
Earnings Ratio by Educational Attainment, Aged 25 and Older			
Less Than High School Diploma	N/A	76%	74%
High School Diploma or Equivalent	97%	75%	74%
Some College or Associate's Degree	79%	76%	76%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	66%	70%	71%
Proportion of Women and Men with a Bachelor's Degree or Higher, Aged 25 and Older			
Women	27%	27%	28%
Men	28%	26%	29%
Proportion of Women and Men with a High School Diploma or Less, Aged 25 or Older			
Women	38%	40%	42%
Men	42%	46%	44%
Percent of Women and Men Living At or Below Poverty, Aged 18 and Older			
Women	13%	17%	15%
Men	10%	13%	12%
Percent of All Households Receiving Food Stamps			
Percent of Women and Men without Health Insurance Coverage, 2008–2010¹			
Women	20%	21%	19%
Men	30%	26%	25%

Note: Data for Henderson-Transylvania are for 2008–2010. Median annual earnings in 2010 inflation-adjusted dollars. Data for North Carolina and the United States are for 2010 only. Source: IWPR analysis of 2008–2010 and 2010 IPUMS American Community Survey microdata (Ruggles et al. 2010).

family care related reasons. In the state overall (data are not available separately for the two counties), 20 percent of women, compared with only 3 percent of men, gave these reasons for working part-time.ⁱⁱ In addition, although the Great Recession has led both men and women to see an increase in part-time work for economic reasons during the last few years, women are more likely to work in the sectors and occupations where jobs are only available on a part-time basis (Shaefer 2009). Part-time workers are much less likely than full-time workers to have access to paid leave, health care, and employer supported pensions (Society for Human Resource Management 2011).

In addition to these differences in hours worked, employed women and men in Henderson-Transylvania, as in the nation as a whole, tend to work in different occupations. More than four in ten employed women (42 percent) in Henderson-Transylvania work in professional and managerial jobs, which is a considerably higher proportion than employed men in these two counties combined (30 percent; Table 2).

Women in the workforce in the Henderson-Transylvania area are also more likely than men to work in office and administrative support occupations (18 percent compared with 5 percent), sales and related occupations (13 percent compared with 8 percent), and education, training, and library occupations (11 percent compared with 3 percent).ⁱⁱⁱ In addition, women in Henderson-Transylvania are more likely than men to work in health care practitioner and technical occupations (12 percent compared with 4 percent), while men are much more likely than women to work in construction or installation, maintenance and repair occupations.^{iv} They are also considerably more likely than women to work in production occupations (13 percent of employed men compared with 3 percent of employed women).^v

Despite their relatively high representation in professional and managerial jobs, women in Henderson-Transylvania have lower median annual earnings than men. In 2008–2010, the median annual earnings for women in the area who were employed full-time, year-round were \$32,000, compared with \$38,000 for men. This means that women in Henderson-Transylvania earned 84 cents for every dollar earned by men, resulting in a gender wage gap of 16 percent compared with 17 percent in North Carolina and 21 percent in the nation as a whole.^{vi} The reason for the smaller wage gap in Henderson-Transylvania compared with the nation lies largely in the comparatively low earnings of men in this area. Although both women and men in Henderson-Transylvania earn less than their counterparts in the nation as a whole, the difference is greater for men, resulting in a smaller gender wage gap for these two counties than the United States overall (Table 2).

Educational Attainment

Many women in Henderson-Transylvania are well-educated. More than one-fourth of all women and men aged 25 and older in the area have a bachelor's degree or higher (27 percent of women and 28 percent of men). Women in these two counties combined are about as equally likely as women in the state or the nation to have at least a bachelor's degree (27 percent for the state and 28 percent for the nation; Table 2).

Yet, approximately 20,000 women aged 25 and older in Henderson-Transylvania (38 percent) have only a high school diploma or less.^{vii} Proportionately more men than women hold this low educational attainment (42 percent compared with 38 percent; Table 2), but women with this level of education are less likely than men to have jobs with wages sufficient to sustain a family. Median annual earnings for women in Henderson-Transylvania who work full-time, year-round and have only a high school diploma are approximately \$29,500, which is slightly less than the \$30,500 made by similarly-educated men.^{viii} The differences in earnings between women and men with some college education or an associate's degree is far greater: women with this level of educational attainment earn only \$30,500 compared with

\$38,600 for men.^{ix} Such earnings for women are far less than the amount needed for a family of one adult and two children to meet basic living expenses in Henderson and Transylvania (Table 3).

In Henderson-Transylvania, as in the nation as a whole, having a college education raises the level of earnings for both women and men, but does not reduce the gender gap in earnings. In this area, the median annual earnings for women aged 25 and older with a bachelor's degree or higher are \$42,000, compared with \$64,000 for comparable men.^x This results in a gender earnings ratio that is smaller than the earnings ratio for all women and men in the area: college-educated women in Henderson-Transylvania make only 66 cents for every dollar earned by a college-educated man (Table 2).

Poverty

Many women in Henderson-Transylvania live in families with incomes below or near the federal poverty line. Approximately 7,500 women aged 18 and older live in poverty, and another 10,900 are *near* poverty (living with incomes between 100 and 200 percent of the federal poverty line).^{xi} In Henderson-Transylvania, the poverty rates for both women and men are lower than in the state and the nation as a whole. Thirteen percent of women and ten percent of men in the two counties combined are poor, compared with 17 percent of women and 13 percent of men in the state, and 15 percent of women and 12 percent of men in the nation (Table 2).

Poverty is a particularly severe problem for families headed by single women. In Henderson County (data are not available for Transylvania County), families headed by single women with children are 21 percent of all families with children under 18, but they are close to half (46 percent) of all families in poverty with children under 18 (Table 3). In North Carolina as a whole, slightly more than one in ten women with young children under five (12 percent) and incomes below the qualifying poverty threshold receives welfare cash assistance.^{xii}

Table 3. The Status of Children: Family Income, Poverty, and Child Care

	Henderson	Transylvania	North Carolina
Annual Living Income Standard¹			
Annual Income a Family of One Adult and Two Children Needs to Afford Essential Living Expenses, 2010	\$41,415	\$42,087	\$41,920
Median Annual Income of Married-Couple Families with Children Under 18 Years, 2008–2010 ²	\$63,696	\$59,020	\$70,124
Median Annual Income of Single Men with Children Under 18 Years, 2008–2010 ²	\$25,223	N/A	\$29,874
Median Annual Income of Single Women with Children Under 18 Years, 2008–2010 ²	\$20,351	\$14,060	\$20,393
Poverty Among Families with Children Under 18²			
Number of Families in Poverty with Children Under 18, 2008–2010	2,306	N/A	254,650
Share of Families in Poverty with Children that are Headed by Women, 2008–2010	46%	N/A	61%
Share of All Families with Children that are Headed by Women, 2008–2010	21%	N/A	29%
Child Care			
Children Eligible for Child Care Subsidy, SFY 2010–2011 ³	4,029	857	391,549
Budget Available to Serve Eligible Children, SFY 2010–2011 ³	\$3,721,445	\$966,451	N/A
Percent of Eligible Children Receiving Subsidized Child Care Services, SFY 2010–2011 ³	19%	19%	N/A
Budget per Child Eligible for Child Care Subsidy, SFY 2010–2011	\$924	\$1,128	N/A
Total Number of Children Age 0 to 5 Enrolled in Child Care, 2011 ⁴	1,293	547	207,953

Note: N/A indicates data are not available or the sample size is insufficient to reliably report estimates.

¹Source: Sirota and McLenaghan 2010.

²IWPR analysis based on 2008–2010 American Community Survey data accessed through American Fact Finder.

³North Carolina Division of Child Development and Early Education 2012.

⁴The Annie E. Casey Foundation Data Center Kids Count 2012.

Child Care

Early care and education programs provide an important workforce support for mothers and fathers. Affordable, quality child care makes it possible for parents to do their jobs while knowing their children are receiving adequate support and a good education. In the absence of quality, affordable child care, women may decide to interrupt their tenure in the labor market, reducing their ability to provide for their families, put aside resources for retirement, or save for emergencies. Alternatively, they may have to put their children in low quality and unreliable care.

In North Carolina, the average fees for year-round, full-time child care range from \$6,227 (for a four-year old in a family child care home) to \$9,185 (for an infant in a child care center; Child Care Aware of America 2012). By comparison, the average annual tuition and fees for a public four-year college in North Carolina are \$5,685 (Child Care Aware of America 2012). In Henderson-Transylvania, a total of

4,886 children are eligible for child care subsidies because their parents earn too little to afford the fees. Yet, less than one in five eligible children receives child care subsidies (Table 3).

Health

Health is an important component of women's and girls' overall well-being that contributes to their economic stability, educational attainment, and employment opportunities. Although many women in Henderson-Transylvania experience good health, others face poor health outcomes, suggesting that women's health care needs remain an important part of their status that must be examined and addressed.

Having basic health coverage is critical to women's access to health care. In Henderson-Transylvania, however, one in five women aged 18–64 (20 percent) do not have health insurance coverage. The proportion of uninsured men is even higher (30 percent; Table 2). Lack of health insurance leaves women without coverage for basic wellness and check up visits, as well as for medical care for severe or chronic medical problems.

In Henderson and Transylvania counties, the breast cancer rate for women between 2005 and 2009 was lower (20.8 per 100,000 and 18.4 per 100,000, respectively) than for women in the state as a whole (23.5 per 100,000). The rate for ovarian cancer during this same time period was slightly higher for women in Henderson than in the state and nation (data not available for Transylvania; Table 4).

When using an age-adjusted mortality rate, which accounts for distributional age differences across population groups, women in Henderson and Transylvania have a considerably lower mortality rate from heart disease, stroke and other cerebrovascular diseases, and diabetes than women in the state as a whole (Table 4).^{xiii} The mortality rate for women in these two counties from heart disease and diabetes is also substantially lower than the rates for women nationwide (Table 4).

Although teen pregnancy rates in the state and nation have fallen in recent years, teenage pregnancy remains a problem in many jurisdictions. Henderson County has a pregnancy rate for teens aged 15–19 that is above the state rate (52.0 per 100,000 compared with 49.7 per 100,000), while Transylvania's rate (47.7 per 100,000) is slightly lower than North Carolina's overall average (Table 4).

Table 4. Overview of Women's Health Status

	Henderson	Transylvania	North Carolina	United States
Total Number of Teen Pregnancies (15–19 Years), 2010¹	138	44	15,957	N/A
Pregnancy Rate Among Teens Aged 15–19 (per 1,000), 2010¹	52.0	47.7	49.7	N/A
Average Annual Mortality Rates Among Women (per 100,000)²				
Breast Cancer, 2005–2009	20.8	18.4	23.5	23.0
Cervical Cancer, 2005–2009	N/A	N/A	2.3	2.4
Uterine Cancer, 2005–2009	N/A	N/A	4.0	4.2
Ovarian Cancer, 2005–2009	9.0	N/A	7.9	8.2
Heart Disease Mortality Rate per 100,000, All Ages, 2005–2009³	138.7	106.6	153.6	161.0
Mortality Rate from Stroke and Other Cerebrovascular Diseases, per 100,000, All Ages, 2005–2009³	44.5	40.6	50.4	42.7
Diabetes, Mortality Rate per 100,000, All Ages, 2005–2009³	12.3	13.4	20.8	19.8

Notes: N/A indicates data are not available.

All mortality rates are per 100,000 and age-adjusted to the total U.S. population in 2000.

¹North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services 2012.

²IWPR compilation of data from the National Cancer Institute State Cancer Profiles 2012.

³IWPR compilation of data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2012.

Conclusion

Many women in Henderson-Transylvania are thriving, yet there are still many areas for improvement, including the wage gap, the dearth of affordable childcare, and the lack of basic health insurance. Policy recommendations to address these challenges include

- promoting quality flexible working practices to make it easier for parents to combine paid work with care giving;
- ensuring that employers are aware of their obligations under the federal anti-discrimination statutes and provide training to employers on best practices for recruiting and retaining women workers, particularly in sectors where they are now under-represented;
- increasing career counseling and financial supports, including child care, for women with low levels of education;
- monitoring workforce development to ensure that women and men have equal access to training in high-growth, well-paid careers;
- supporting more targeted teen pregnancy prevention programs and increased support for teens who are already pregnant and parenting; and
- ensuring that all families who need it receive “Work First” assistance, North Carolina’s Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program.

Methodological Notes

This briefing paper presents data for Henderson and Transylvania counties combined. Demographic and economic data are based on IWPR analysis of the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series version of the American Community Survey (Ruggles et al. 2010) and on American Community Survey data accessed through American Fact Finder. To ensure sufficient sample sizes that allow for reliable reporting, IWPR used estimates that combine several years of data (2008–2010) for Henderson-Transylvania. Data for the state and nation as a whole are based on one-year (2010) data. Data on child care come from the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Child Care Aware of America, and the North Carolina Division of Child Development and Early Education. Data on women’s health status are from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Cancer Institute, and the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services; for some indicators, data are not be available for all counties because the number of sample cases is too small. To define the Henderson-Transylvania area, IWPR aggregated Public Use Microdata Area variables (PUMAS), which are the smallest geographical unit available in the American Community Survey data.

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Notes

ⁱ Due to small sample size, it is not possible to analyze data with the IPUMS American Community Survey microdata (Ruggles et al 2010) for Henderson and Transylvania separately.

ⁱⁱ IWPR calculation based on U.S. Department of Labor. 2011. "Table 23: States:Persons at Work 1 to 34 Hours by Sex, Age, Race, Hispanic or Latino Ethnicity, and Hours of Work, 2010 Annual Averages."

ⁱⁱⁱ IWPR analysis of 2008–2010 IPUMS American Community Survey microdata (Ruggles et al. 2010).

^{iv} Thirteen percent of employed men in Henderson-Transylvania work in these occupations; the sample size for women is too small to report an estimate.

^v IWPR analysis of 2008–2010 IPUMS American Community Survey microdata (Ruggles et al. 2010).

^{vi} IWPR analysis of 2008–2010 IPUMS American Community Survey microdata (Ruggles et al. 2010). Because these estimates are based on the American Community Survey, they are not strictly comparable to IWPR's standard calculation of the gender wage gap for the United States, which is based on the Current Population Survey (CPS). In 2010, the national earnings gap based on the CPS was 23 percent (Hegewisch and Williams 2011).

^{vii} IWPR analysis of 2008–2010 IPUMS American Community Survey microdata (Ruggles et al. 2010).

^{viii} IWPR analysis of 2008–2010 IPUMS American Community Survey microdata (Ruggles et al. 2010).

^{ix} IWPR analysis of 2008–2010 IPUMS American Community Survey microdata (Ruggles et al. 2010).

^x IWPR analysis of 2008–2010 IPUMS American Community Survey microdata (Ruggles et al. 2010).

^{xi} IWPR analysis of 2008–2010 IPUMS American Community Survey microdata (Ruggles et al. 2010).

^{xii} IWPR analysis of 2010 American Community Survey microdata (Ruggles et al. 2010).

^{xiii} Heart disease includes acute and chronic rheumatic fever and heart disease, hypertensive heart and renal disease, ischaemic heart disease, pulmonary heart disease and diseases of pulmonary circulation, and other forms of heart disease. Cerebrovascular disease includes cerebral haemorrhages, cerebral infraction, stroke, and other cerebrovascular disease. Diabetes includes diabetes mellitus.

This briefing paper was prepared by Cynthia Hess, Ph.D., and Youngmin Yi with support from the N.C. Council for Women, Wells Fargo, Women for Women of the Community Foundation of Western North Carolina, the Mountain Area Health Education Center Department of OB-GYN, and the North Carolina Women's Fund at the North Carolina Community Foundation.

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