

News Release

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2008 MACC Report on Communities reveals natural integration of social issues facing the Greater Twin Cities Metropolitan Area

(ST. PAUL) —The **2008 MACC Report on Communities**, a first of its kind survey of employees of MACC Alliance of Connected Communities' (MACC) 20 Twin Cities community-based human service organizations, dramatically reveals the natural integration of social issues facing residents of the Greater Twin Cities Metropolitan Area. The MACC sponsored survey uniquely gathers data from front line workers, as well as agency administrators, offering a snapshot of the multiple, intertwined issues that are barriers to success for thousands of Twin Cities residents and their families, as well as the neighborhoods in which they live. The information was released at a meeting with legislators at the state Capitol today.

Among the findings:

- ▶ The top five reasons individuals and families are referred to MACC agencies are:
 - Education
 - Employment
 - Housing
 - Violence/Safety
 - Health-Physical or Mental

- ▶ The majority of MACC's front line agency workers who interview newly referred clients discover a set of integrated issues, rather than a single issue, serving as barriers to independence.
 - Over one in three of the individuals and families who seek assistance with Education also reveal a need for services in the areas of Employment, Transportation, and Health—physical or mental
 - Over one in three individuals and families who seek assistance with Employment also reveal a need for services in the areas of Nutrition/Hunger, Transportation, Housing, Education, Child Care, Language/Cultural Barriers and Health Care
 - Over one in three individuals and families who seek assistance with Housing also reveal a need for services in the areas of Employment, Transportation, Health Care, Nutrition/Hunger/Food, Childcare, Education, Health—Physical and Mental, Violence/Safety, and Family Structure.

(See Pages Five through Seven of the full report for more examples and details.)

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- ▶ Some issues which do not rank highly as a primary reason why individuals and families are referred to an agency often rise in importance when you look at the additional issues that emerge when MACC's front line employees interview new clients. Of particular note is the Transportation issue.
- Although Transportation issues are not as frequently described as the initial presenting issue when compared to the other issues studied, transportation is a substantial additional barrier for all other presenting issues studied. The research reveals that 30 percent to 63 percent of participants have transportation as an additional barrier when being assisted for their primary issue. The Transportation issue is particularly significant among individuals who initially report Loss of Benefits, Employment, Housing, and Criminal History. *(See Page Seven of the full report for more examples and details.)*

“This research makes it clear that a single issue approach to serving clients will not move us toward our goal of building stronger communities. In addition, it gives us a huge amount of data that can be sliced and diced in various ways to demonstrate the complexities that exist in the lives of the individuals and families our agencies serve. We believe this will help us obtain critical support from legislators and funders to invest in holistic programs that work,” said MACC President Jan Berry.

MACC: Alliance for Connected Communities is a model for the development of new thinking and mutually productive initiatives within the Twin Cities' nonprofit sector. Its member network includes more than 20 powerful, community-based human service organizations serving 350,000 low income and immigrant residents at more than 80 sites throughout the Twin Cities. More information, including the 2008 MACC Report on Communities, can be found at www.maccalliance.org

Research for the 2008 MACC Report on Communities was conducted by Arundel Street Consulting, Inc. in Saint Paul, www.arundelstreet.com