

Stronger Women Better Austin



WOMEN'S FUND OF CENTRAL TEXAS

A program of Austin Community Foundation

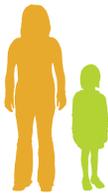
What is life in Austin **really like** for women and children today?

POVERTY THRESHOLDS:

Austin families need **twice** these incomes to make ends meet.



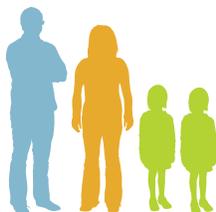
One person
\$11,888



Two people
(1 adult, 1 related child)
\$16,057



Three people
(2 adults, 1 related child)
\$18,751



Four people
(2 adults, 2 related children)
\$23,623

INTRODUCTION

Ten years ago a group of Austin women founded the Women's Fund of Central Texas in response to the reality that the needs of women and children in our community outpace available resources. Since then, the Women's Fund has awarded over \$1 million in grants to 56 nonprofits devoted to meeting the needs of women and children. With this exciting milestone under our belts, it is time to take stock and pose the question: *What is life in Austin really like for women and children today?*

This report explores that question. In an effort to illustrate the status and well-being of women and children in Travis County in broad strokes, the report focuses on six indicator areas: **Basic Needs, Economic Security, Education, Health, Safety, and Leadership.**

METHODOLOGY

This report was developed in collaboration with a committee of Women's Fund members and community leaders. Travis County Health and Human Services & Veterans Service, Research & Planning Division played a key role in the formulation and development of the final report. Community partners, recognized leaders in their areas of expertise, were identified for each indicator in an effort to ensure accurate data and proper analysis. With the guidance of these partners, the committee accessed publicly available data through the American Community Survey, governmental databases, and trusted research institutes. Unless otherwise noted, the geographic area covered in the report is Travis County. A full list of references can be found at: www.austincf.org.

WHAT IS POVERTY?

Poverty statistics are often used as a proxy measure to describe the number of people or share of the population that, because of income level, may face challenges meeting their basic needs. Poverty thresholds are updated annually by the U.S. Census Bureau and used for calculating all official poverty statistics. Households with annual incomes below the thresholds are counted as living in poverty, while households with annual incomes at or above are not considered to be in poverty.

See infographic to the left: Annual Income Poverty Threshold, 2013.

At times, a household's income will be expressed as a percentage of the poverty threshold. For example, a family with income equal to the poverty threshold can be described as living "at 100% of poverty," and a family with income equal to double the poverty threshold can be described as living "at 200% of poverty."

Developed fifty years ago, the methodology for establishing Poverty Thresholds has not kept pace with shifting household costs or regional differences and is arguably an inadequate measure, resulting in extremely low poverty thresholds that have little relation to actual household expenses.

In Travis County in 2013, about 22% of children and 14% of adults had household incomes under 100% of the poverty level. However, when widening the lens to also include those at risk of poverty, 41% of children and 30% of adults had household incomes less than 200% of the poverty level.¹

It is estimated that households in the Austin area need incomes of **at least double** the poverty threshold simply to make ends meet.²

DEMOGRAPHICS

Developed in partnership with Travis County Health and Human Services & Veterans Service, Research & Planning Division.

Age & Gender

- Women make up 49.6% of the Travis County population.³
- Children compose 23.3% of the population.⁴
- The median age for Travis County women is 33.3 (compared with 32.4 for men).⁵

Race/Hispanic Origin

- Half of the population of Travis County identifies as a race or ethnicity other than white.⁶

Place of Birth

- About 83% of Travis County women and girls are native-born.⁷
- 17% of Travis County women and girls (over 96,000) are foreign-born and of those, one in three are naturalized citizens.⁸

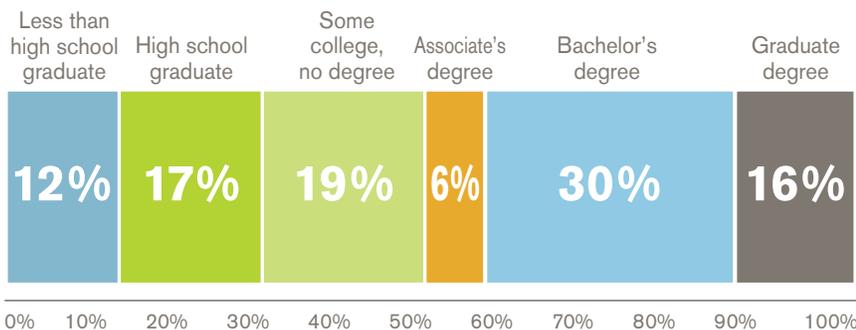
Household Type

- About 3-in-10 Travis County households includes children.⁹
- The majority of households with children are headed by married-couple families (67%).¹⁰
- 1 in 4 households with children is headed by a single woman.¹¹

Educational Attainment

- Over half of Travis County women have an Associate's degree or higher.¹²

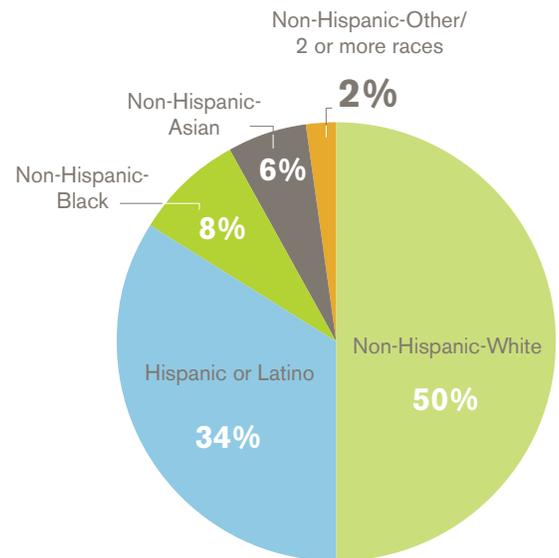
Female Population 25 years and Older



Source data: 2012 American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimates, B15002. Created by Travis County HHS/VS Research & Planning Division, 2014, for the Austin Community Foundation.

1 in 4
households with children is headed by a single woman.

Population by Race



Source data: 2012 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, B03002. Created by Travis County HHS/VS Research & Planning Division for the Austin Community Foundation.

Women and children in Central Texas are disproportionately living in poverty.

1 in 4 female-headed households are below poverty level.



BASIC NEEDS

Developed in partnership with Travis County Health and Human Services & Veterans Service.

Women and children in Central Texas are disproportionately living in poverty. Far too many struggle to meet their basic needs for food and housing. Without these foundational pieces in place, success in school, career, and civic engagement is beyond reach.

BY THE NUMBERS

- The majority of adults (54%) in poverty are women.
- One in five children in Travis County live in poverty.¹³
- One in four female-headed households are below the poverty level.¹⁴
- One in four children do not have enough food to eat.¹⁵
- One in four children rely on public assistance to meet their basic needs.¹⁶
- One in four homeless Austinites are children.¹⁷

Jane Austin's Budget

Jane Austin, a single mother with one child, lives at 200% of poverty. Her annual income is \$32,000 or about \$2,600/month. How does she manage to make ends meet?

	Expense	Balance
Monthly Income		\$2600
Rent & Utilities (2-bedroom)	\$963	\$1637
Child care	\$542	\$1095
Groceries	\$359	\$736
Transportation	\$359	\$377
Medical expenses	\$211	\$166
Other necessities	\$222	-\$56
Taxes	\$187	-\$243
Savings	\$0	-\$243
Debt	\$0	-\$243

The answer: She doesn't.¹⁸

ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

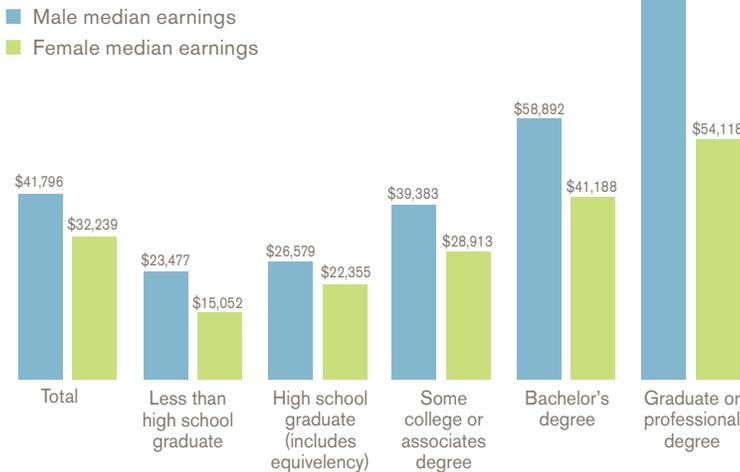
Developed in partnership with Travis County Health and Human Services & Veterans Service, Research & Planning Division.

Economic sustainability for a woman and her family is essential for securing both present and future success. Currently, women in Central Texas face difficult barriers to economic security when considering a significant earnings gap, the cost of childcare, a lack of affordable housing, and access to health care.

BY THE NUMBERS

- Men’s median earnings are 30% higher than women’s. This gender gap holds true across all levels of the educational spectrum.¹⁹
- When comparing average monthly earnings across job sectors²⁰ and educational attainment,²¹ men consistently earn more than women.

Median Earnings by Sex



Created by: Travis County HHS/VS, Research & Planning Division, 2014.
Source data: 2013 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, B20004

Women face difficult barriers to economic security due to a **significant earnings gap.**

Median earnings for **MEN** in Travis County are **HIGHER** than those for **WOMEN**



Five Most Common Job Sectors for Austin Metro Men and Women

	5 Most Common Job Sectors for Austin Metro Women	Average Monthly Earnings	5 Most Common Job Sectors for Austin Metro Men	Average Monthly Earnings
1	Educational Services	\$3,376	Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	\$7,898
2	Food Services and Drinking Places	\$1,298	Educational Services	\$4,124
3	Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	\$4,677	Food Services and Drinking Places	\$1,169
4	Ambulatory Health Care Services	\$3,395	Administrative and Support Services	\$3,137
5	Administrative and Support Services	\$2,566	Merchant Wholesalers, Durable Goods	\$7,252

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Workforce indicators for 2013 Q2.

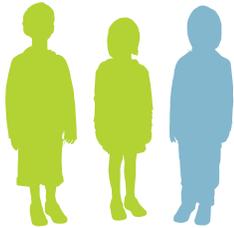
Today, nearly

TWO

out of

THREE

kids in AISD qualify for free or reduced lunch.



EDUCATION

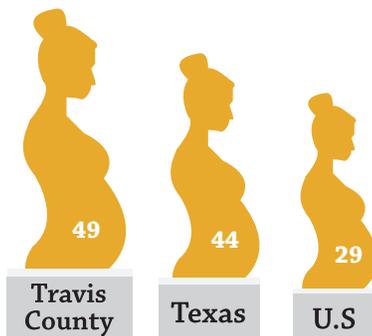
Developed in partnership with E3 Alliance.

Low income students in Central Texas struggle throughout the educational spectrum. Lack of access to early childhood education begins their difficult path through the public education system. A child who attends Pre-K is more than 4 times as likely to be ready for kindergarten, yet of 4-year olds eligible to attend free public school pre-K in Central Texas, more than a quarter do not attend.²² Low income students are unprepared to start school and miss more days of instruction due to absences²³ and disciplinary action.²⁴

BY THE NUMBERS

- 48% of Central Texas children are not school ready to enter kindergarten across a range of competencies.²⁵
- 49% of students in Central Texas are classified as low income. **Over the last decade, our low-income student population has grown at 2.5 times the rate of the overall student population.**²⁶
- Two out of three students in AISD are on free or reduced lunch.²⁷
- One in five low-income students do not graduate from high school.²⁸
- Approximately 58% of high school graduates in Central Texas enroll in institutions of higher education. Female high school graduates (61%) are enrolling in college at higher rates than males (54%).²⁹
- 46% of low-income students who graduate from high school enroll in college, while 67% of their non-low income peers enroll. Of both groups who enroll:
 - 25% of low income students complete college within six years
 - 50% of non-low income students complete college within six years³⁰

TEEN BIRTH RATES:



HEALTH

Developed in partnership with Central Health.

The health of mothers and their children is a significant barometer for the health of future generations and has critical predictive value in public health planning.³¹ A lack of insurance coverage means that unforeseen medical emergencies—and even routine care—can cause financial ruin to a woman and her family. **Young women who have children in their teenage years are less likely to finish high school, much less likely to attend college, and often find themselves raising their children in poverty.**³²

BY THE NUMBERS

- 1 in 5 women are uninsured.³³
- 1 in 10 children are uninsured.³⁴
- 1 in 3 women do not receive prenatal care until after the first trimester, if at all.³⁵

Rates of teen births

(rate is per 1,000 females in the 15-19 age group)

- US: 29³⁶
- Texas: 44³⁷
- Austin: 49³⁸

Percentage of births to teens who were already mothers:³⁹

- US: 17%
- Texas: 20%
- Austin: 24%²⁹

Over 50% of women are classified as overweight or obese based on BMI.⁴⁰

- 42% of students in AISD that tested BMI are categorized as “some risk” or at “high risk” of health issues based on their BMI scores.⁴¹
- 22.6% of women have been diagnosed with a depressive disorder, compared to 11.5% of men.⁴²
- 1 in 4 women has been diagnosed with high blood pressure.⁴³

SAFETY

Developed in partnership with Travis County Criminal Justice Planning.

For far too many women and children in Travis County, home is not a place of safety and security. A confluence of conditions—underreporting of domestic violence and sexual assault,⁴⁴ low income or under-employment, poor educational attainment, untreated mental health or addiction or a family history of abuse and violence—contribute to family instability and vulnerability.

BY THE NUMBERS

- Of the female deaths by homicide in 2012, half were the result of family violence.⁴⁵
- Of the 257 reported rape offenses in Travis County in 2013, 12 arrests were made.⁴⁶
- There are 1,014 Travis County children in the child welfare system.⁴⁷
- There were 2,645 confirmed child abuse/neglect victims in Travis County in 2012-13.⁴⁸ **There were 6 child abuse/neglect related fatalities.**⁴⁹
- In a 2009 survey, 10.4% of girls attempted suicide in the preceding 12 months compared to 4.3% of boys.⁵⁰

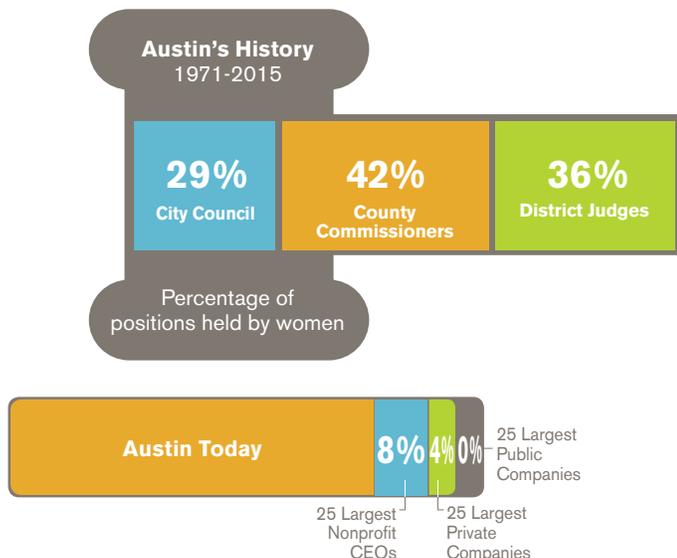
LEADERSHIP

Developed in partnership with the City of Austin – Commission on Women.

Women have been historically underrepresented in Austin’s elected and appointed positions.⁵¹⁻⁵⁵ **In the last local election cycle, female candidates found great success and will, for the first time ever, constitute the majority of the Austin City Council and the County Commissioners Court.** Women hardly appear at all as CEOs of Austin’s largest nonprofit organizations and private companies. They hold **none** of the CEO positions at the top publicly traded companies in our community.⁵⁶⁻⁵⁹

In Austin’s history, only **one woman** has served as:

- Mayor
- County Judge
- Sheriff



One half of female homicides are due to family violence.



For the first time EVER, women constitute the majority of Austin City Council and the County Commissioners Court.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Status Report Committee

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Diane Land
Julia Cuba Lewis
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Community Partners

Central Health, Christie Garbe & Megan Cermak
City of Austin, Commission for Women, Rosie Truelove
E3 Alliance, Susan Dawson & Shawn Thomas
Travis County Criminal Justice Planning, Carsten Andresen
Travis County Health and Human Services & Veterans Service, Jane Prince-Maclean & Laura Sovine

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Special thanks to Dallas Women's Foundation for permission to use its trademarked tagline – Strong Women. Better World. – and for the use of their established methodology for analyzing the status of women in the region. We also appreciate the publication of *Economic Issues for Women in Texas*, and the Austin sub-study, produced by Texas Women's Foundation, the research and advocacy arm of Dallas Women's Foundation. For more information, visit www.dallaswomensfdn.org.

Austin Community Foundation provides personalized and effective giving tools for donors, impactful grants for nonprofits, and collaborative leadership around local community issues.



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Learn more at austincf.org

ABOUT THE WOMEN'S FUND OF CENTRAL TEXAS

The Women's Fund of Central Texas, a program of the Austin Community Foundation, engages women of all ages in improving the lives of women and children in our community. Funded with membership contributions, members vote annually to award grants to Central Texas nonprofits. Grants are presented at the Fund's annual "Power of the Purse" luncheon. To date more than \$1 million has been granted by the Women's Fund to organizations assisting women and children in Central Texas. Additionally, membership contributions fund the Women's Fund Endowment to provide for future needs.

Women's Fund Leadership

Jolynn Free, *Chair*
Karen Kahan, *Communications*
Jessica Balladares-Bennett & Kirsten Voinis, *Grants*
Mary Tipps & Helen Watkins, *Membership*
Mollie Butler & Jessica Weaver, *Power of the Purse Luncheon*
Amber Carden, *Programs*
Julia Spann, *Status Report*

#StrongerWomenBetterAustin