

*Pathways Past Poverty*

# 2008 American Community Survey

Fort Collins



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# 2008 Larimer County Poverty Report

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# 2008 overview

- Good news and bad news
- Indications that poverty growth slowed or reversed slightly
- Poverty rates still significantly above 2000
- Income levels still significantly below 2000
- Data collected before things got really bad

# About the Data

- American Community Survey from U.S. Census Bureau
- Data collected since 2005
- Data now available only for communities of more than 60,000
- Data on Loveland available in late October
- About 1,700 county households surveyed in 2008

# Data Limitations

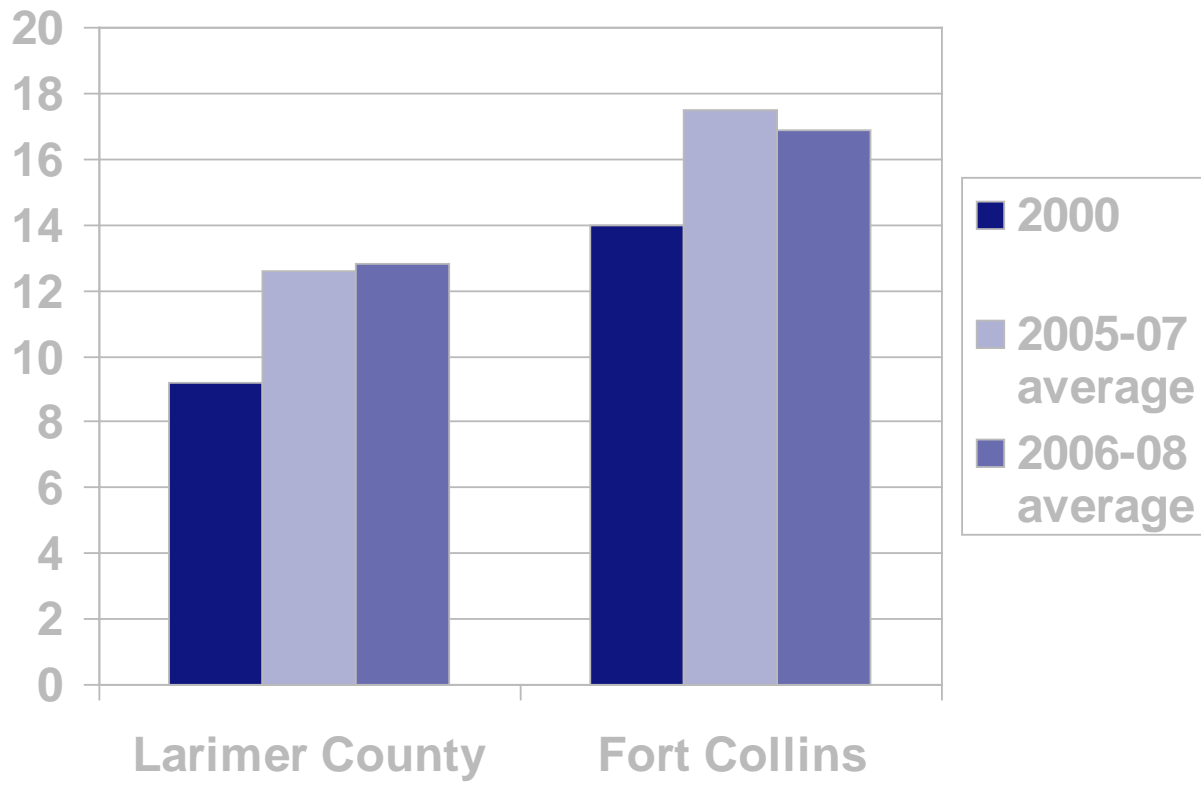
- All survey data is subject to error
- 2007 ACS found no Fort Collins boys age 5-15 in poverty, but more than 800 girls
- 3-year averages help flatten out the errors

# Poverty definition

- Based on income level and family size
- In 2008, a family of four was considered in poverty if household income was below \$21,200
- Colorado self-sufficiency estimates say 2 adults with 2 preschoolers needed \$57,131 in Larimer County to live without government assistance

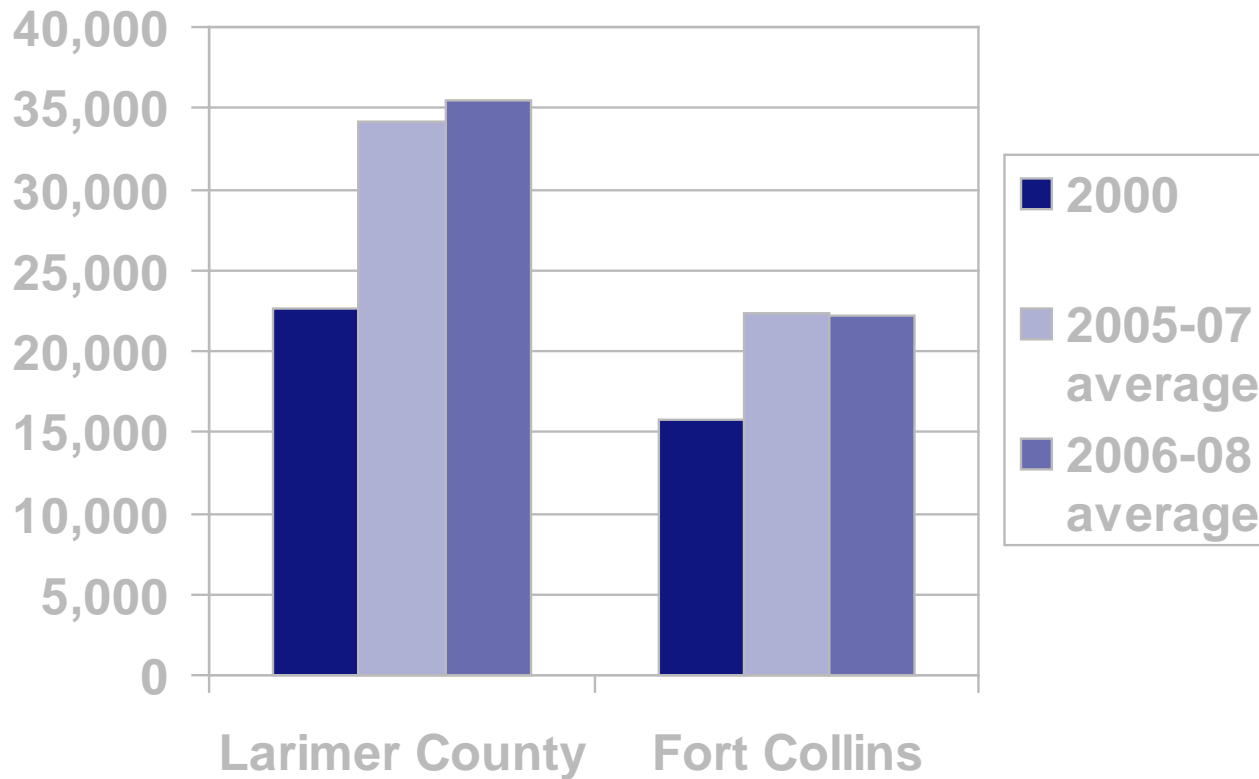
# Poverty rate comparisons

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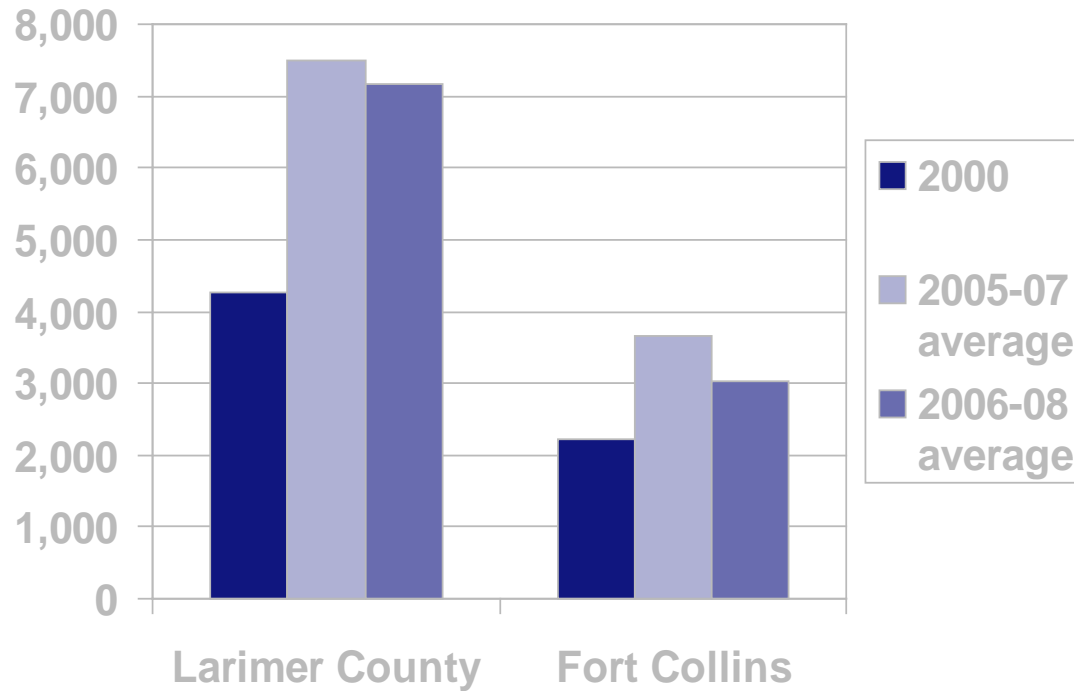
# People in poverty

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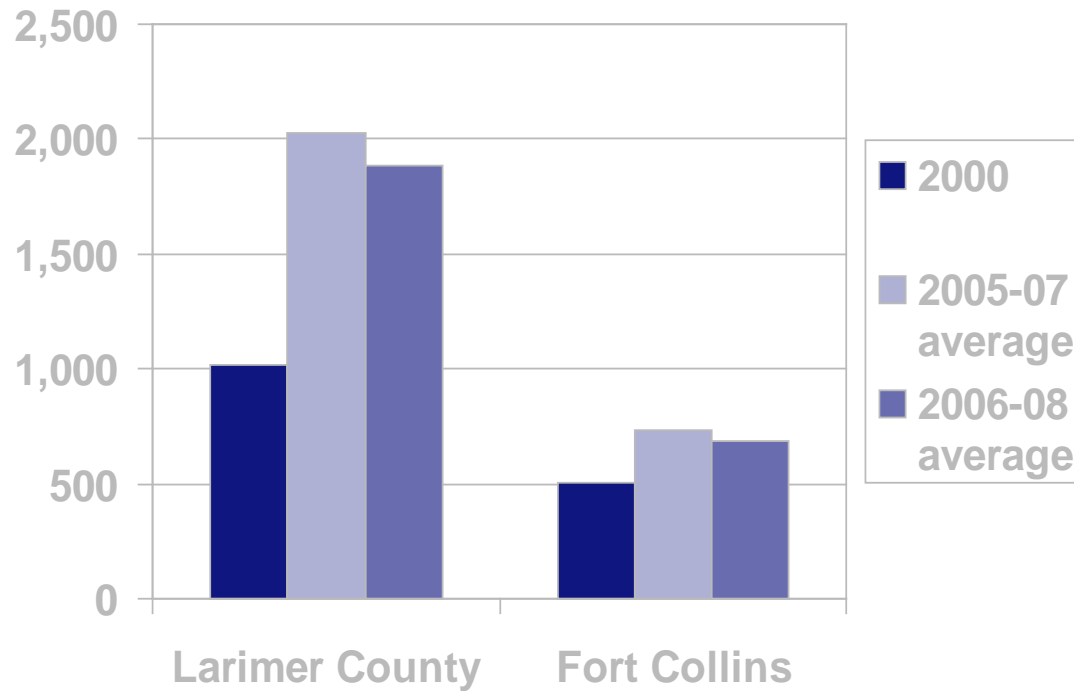
# Children in poverty

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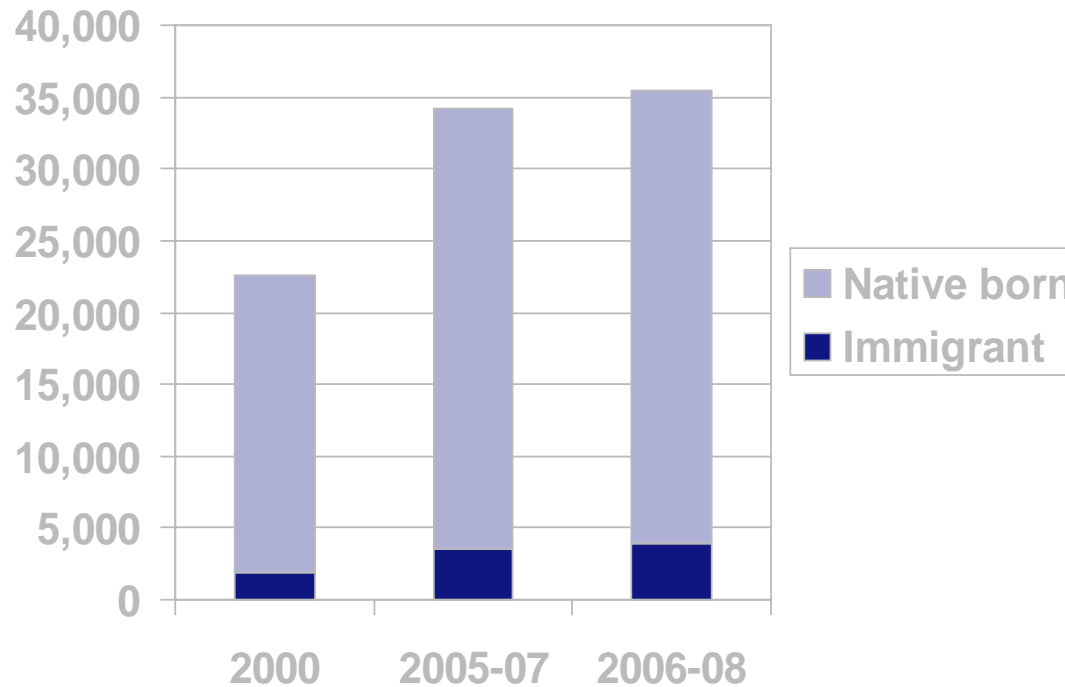
# Seniors in poverty

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# Poverty by nativity

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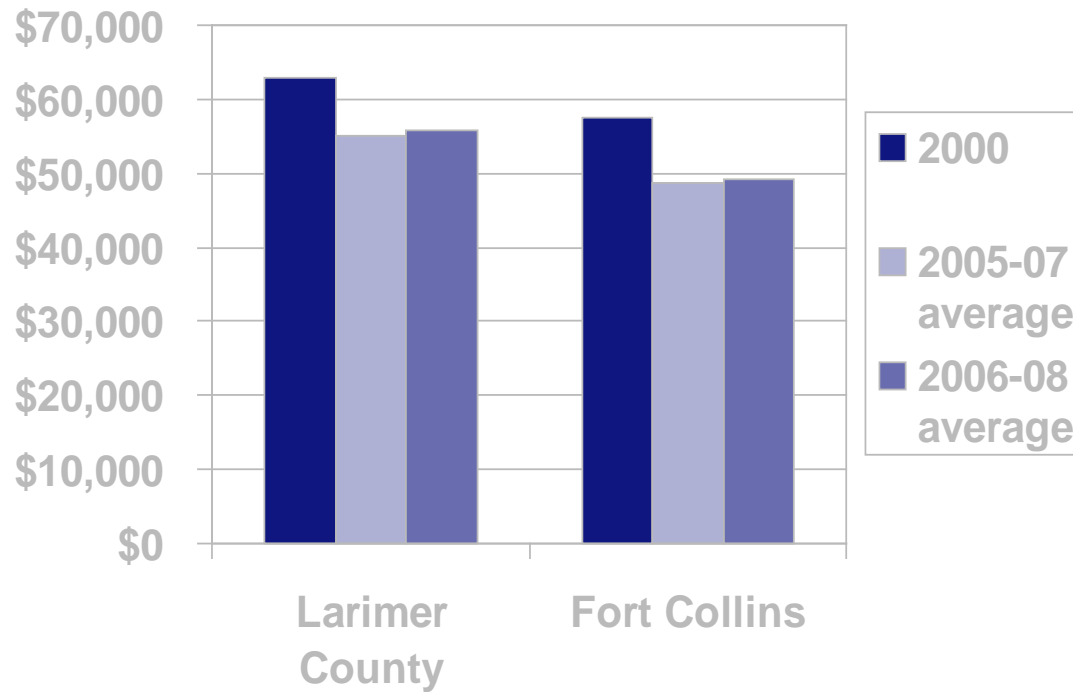


# Causes of poverty increase

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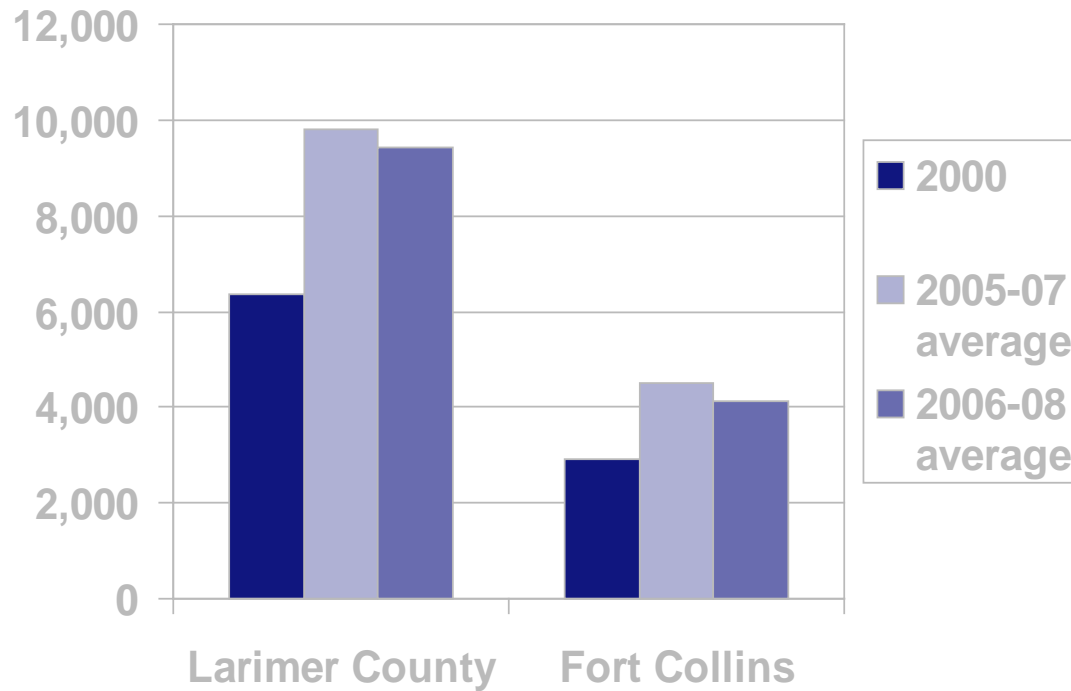
- Poverty causes are complex
- Declining incomes have played a significant role
- Earlier census data showed a rise in single-parent households
- Immigration also plays a role, but that appears to be minor

# Income trends



# Single-parent households

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# Now for the bad news

The data is based on surveys collected in 2008

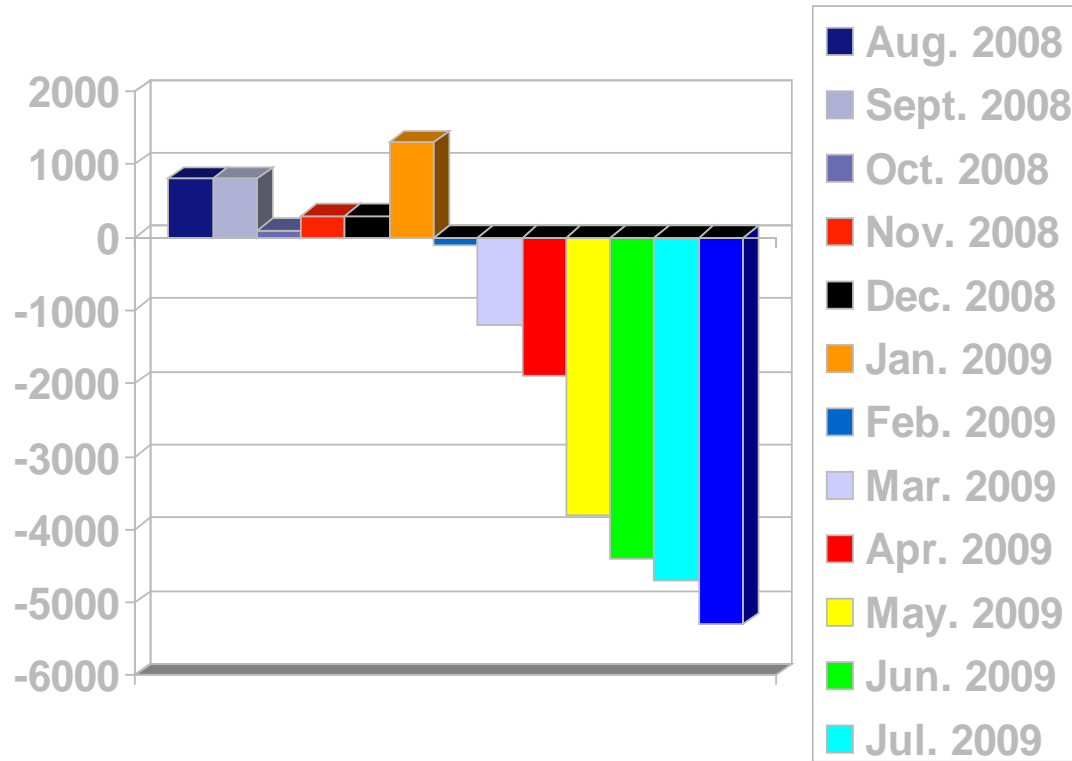
The national recession began in December 2007, but Larimer County entered late

Surveys were collected at a time of job growth in Larimer County

The job situation has changed dramatically

# Job growth trends

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# The future

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- The 2009 ACS data won't be released until September 2010, but almost certainly will show a significant poverty increase in Larimer County.
- Income levels will decline even further.
- Larimer County entered the recession late and most likely will exit late – perhaps late 2010 but maybe not until 2011.

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## The Response: Pathways Past Poverty

Mary Atchison and Marija Weeden-Osborn



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## What does this look like locally?

June 2008 to June 2009 saw:

- **25% increase** in clients accessing the Food Bank monthly
- **54% increase** in food stamp applications
- **83% increase** in families applying for TANF Cash Assistance
- **18.7% increase** in unique Medicaid clients

# The Pathways Process

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- Engaged in a process with the community which developed the 12 goals
- Martin Shields study “What explains recent increases in poverty in Larimer County and Fort Collins” was released
- Strategy Development Teams formed of volunteers around the 12 different goals
- Throughout we have partnered with and continue to look to partner with other community organizations
- Currently, strategy development teams are working on strategies specific to each goal

# Strategy Example

## Financial Literacy

- Goal: to increase the financial literacy level of all in Larimer County
- Actions:
  - Financial Literacy Summit – December 2008
  - Train the trainer – teach people working with clients to teach financial literacy skills
  - Speaker’s Bureau – work with local businesses to bring in speakers for their employees on financial literacy issues
  - Financial Literacy Summit
  - Work with local banks to bank the un-banked

# What can I do?

**Know your resources: dial 2-1-1**

## **Volunteer:**

- Join a Strategy Development Team
- Participate in Make a Difference Day
- Volunteer with agencies

## **Advocate:**

- Find out more: [www.pathwayspastpoverty.org](http://www.pathwayspastpoverty.org)
- Share this information!

## **Give:**

- Lots of area agencies need lots of help!

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# Questions?



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