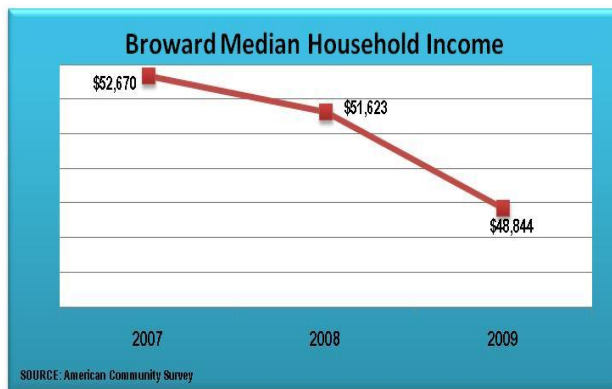


## Executive Summary

As chair of the Children's Services Council (CSC), Children's Strategic Plan Prosperity Committee, it gives me great honor to lead the production of the **first edition of Self Sufficiency Tool Kit in Broward County**. This tool kit is a collaboration of public sector agencies that are dedicated to ensuring that in difficult economic times, Broward County residents can sustain themselves.

In 2011, the Prosperity Committee implemented a CSC lead Results Based Accountability (RBA) Model. It requires that we search for data to determine how to address community needs. Upon our research, we discovered that 88% to 96% of low-income renting households were spending 30% or more on housing costs countywide in 2009. We also learned that nearly half of all renting Broward households are low-income spending 30% or more on housing costs. These figures were alarming!



We knew at that time that we wanted to impact these statistics, but were faced with the gloomy reality that the unemployment rate is high and the lack of affordable housing was not improving. We decided instead that it was more important to inform our community about accessing unknown resources and how to utilize their natural-born skills to address their financial needs. As a result, this tool kit was birthed.

The toolkit is not a resource manual. It is a combination of a how-to-guide with hands-on tools and information about how to make improvements to your financial health. You will not find phone numbers to local agencies, as the committee has committed to using 211 as the sole vehicle to access agencies. You will find some websites that may offer greater information on specific topic areas.

The tool kit is designed for you to use individually or with the assistance of a case manager or coach. It may serve as a unique opportunity for families to connect on important issues that they never discussed before.

We are proud to offer this toolkit as a gift to the community and hope that it will have a substantial impact on the lives of Broward County residents.





**Don't know where to call? Knowing where to go is the first step to getting the help you need.**

**2-1-1 Broward serves as the community's central point of entry into the health and human services system.**

- ◆ Dial an easy three digit number: 2-1-1 or (954) 537-0211
- ◆ Accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- ◆ Free, confidential, anonymous
- ◆ Available in any language
- ◆ Get connected to health and human services

**Services available to every Broward resident when you dial 2-1-1:**

- |                           |                             |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ◆ Empathetic listening    | ◆ Crisis Intervention       |
| ◆ Emotional Support       | ◆ Suicide Intervention      |
| ◆ Needs assessment        | ◆ Suicide Prevention        |
| ◆ Specialized information | ◆ Disaster-related services |
| ◆ Resources and referrals |                             |

***Want somebody who will listen? You don't have to handle it alone!***

### **THE EASY WAY TO FIND HELP, RECEIVE HELP AND HELP YOURSELF**

- **Be prepared.** Have all your information and documentation ready to answer specific questions (i.e. Child social security numbers, the date you lost your employment, when you started receiving unemployment benefits, etc).
- **Be Ready.** If you have an appointment or visiting an office, make sure you have all the appropriate information and documentation (i.e. photo identification, paystubs, etc). Be ready to ask and write down what you should bring to your appointment.
- **Take Action.** Know your rights. If you feel mistreated or you are not receiving appropriate services, request to speak with a supervisor.
- **Have Contact Information.** It is important that you have reliable contact information. Consider having alternate contact information, such as your dependable relative or friend.
- **Understand Targeted Services.** There are programs that target specific populations. Programs that help those with HIV/AIDS, veterans, individuals with disabilities, ex-offenders, unemployed, women, men, Hispanics, Haitians, transgender... and many more. It may help you to search for programs that target your population. Do not be afraid to identify yourself as one of these target populations. Always remember you have the right to be treated equally and no one has the right to discriminate against you.
- **Appreciate how to ask for help.** When asking for help be prepared to be respectful, clear, and honest. Do not call when you are angry, unclear about what you need or provide information that you feel will help you but that is not verifiable.
- **Be clear.** If you do not understand, ask for clarification. Do not assume you are right and know the answer.
- **Follow through.** Arrive to your appointments on time. Make sure to turn in all documentation in a timely manner. Return the organizations calls as soon as possible.
- **Speak in your preferred language.** Try to access services using your preferred language. Request the program provide you an interpreter. Ask when someone that speaks your preferred language is available. Have a good reliable translator available, i.e. a good friend.

