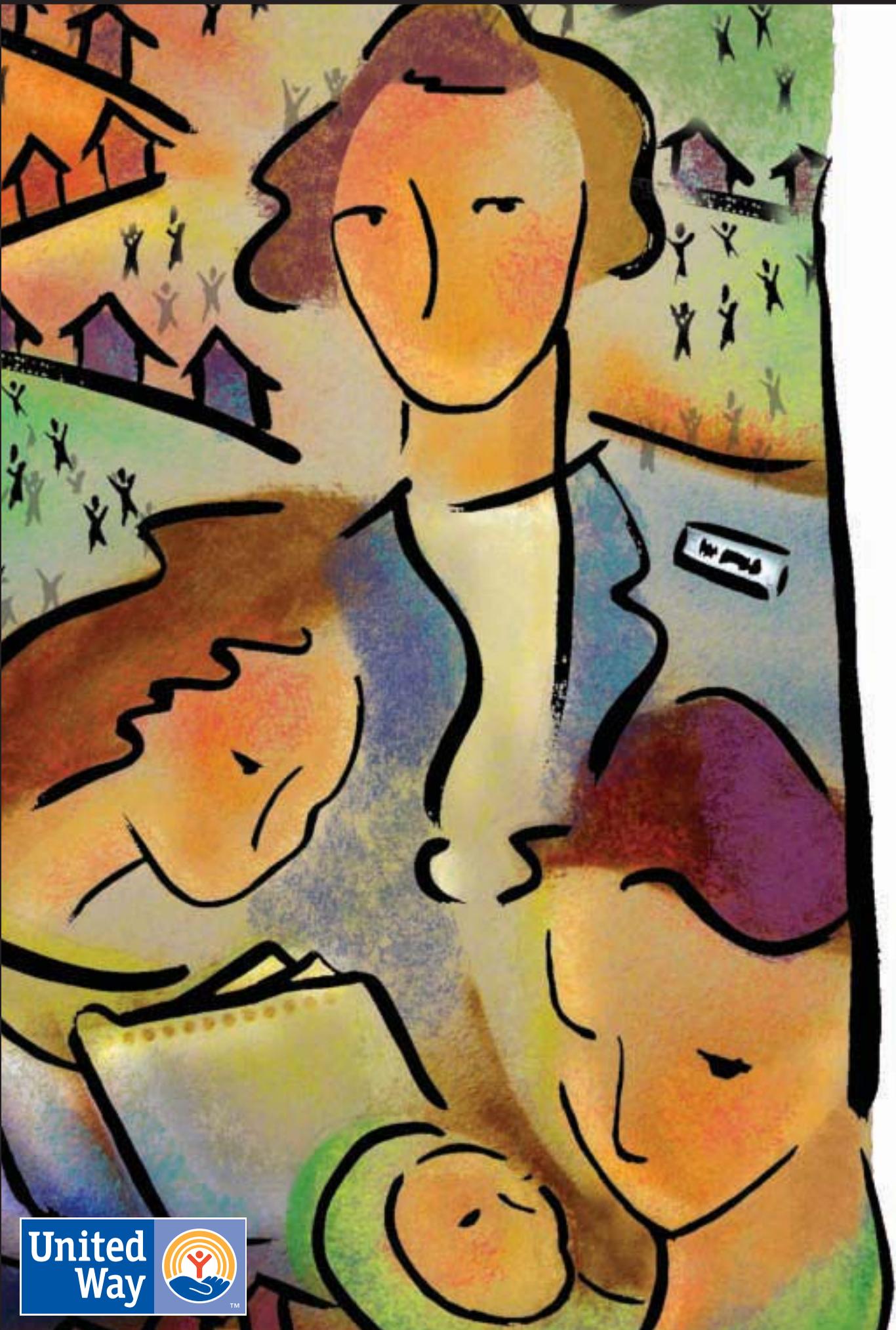
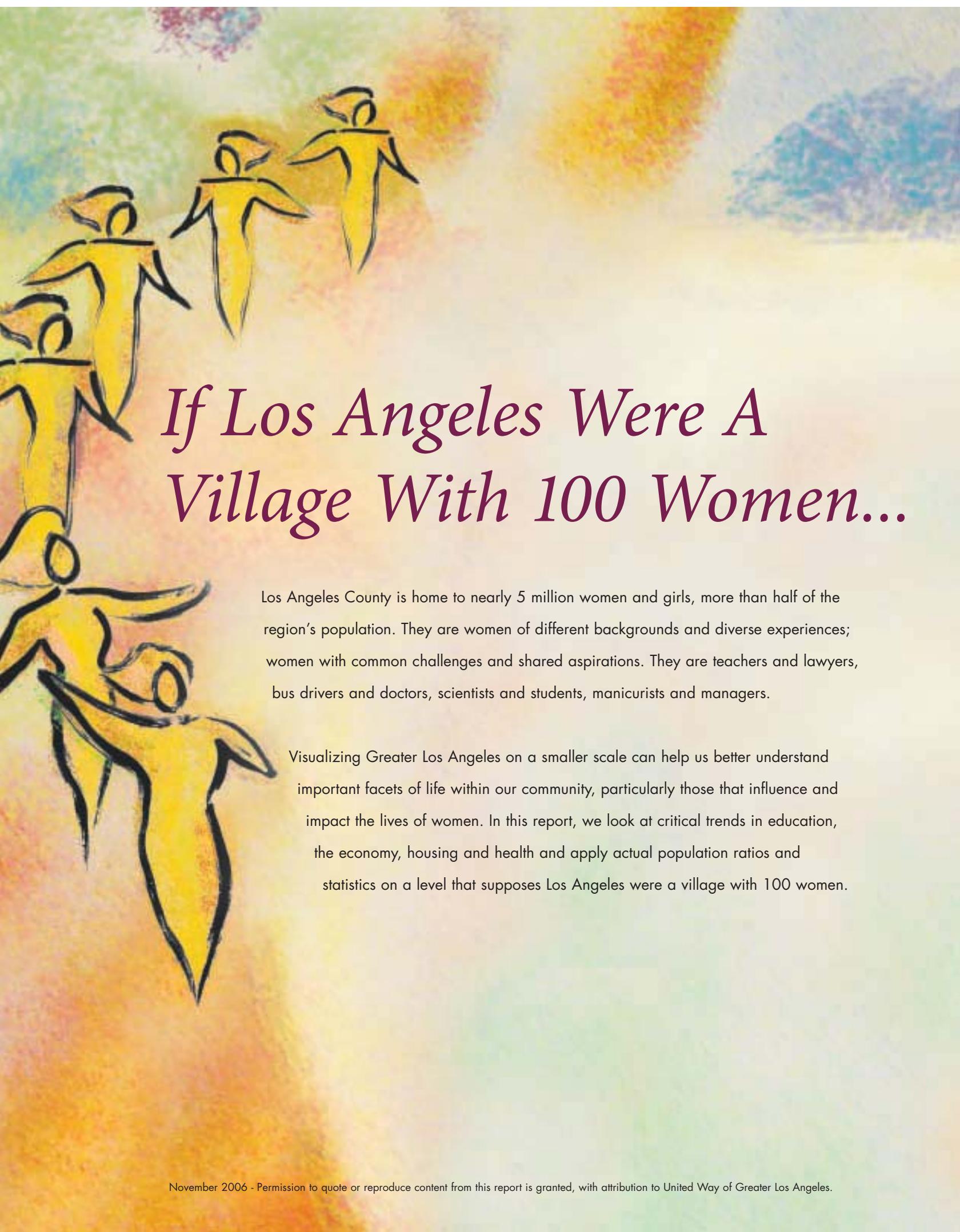


2007 STATE of WOMEN

IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY

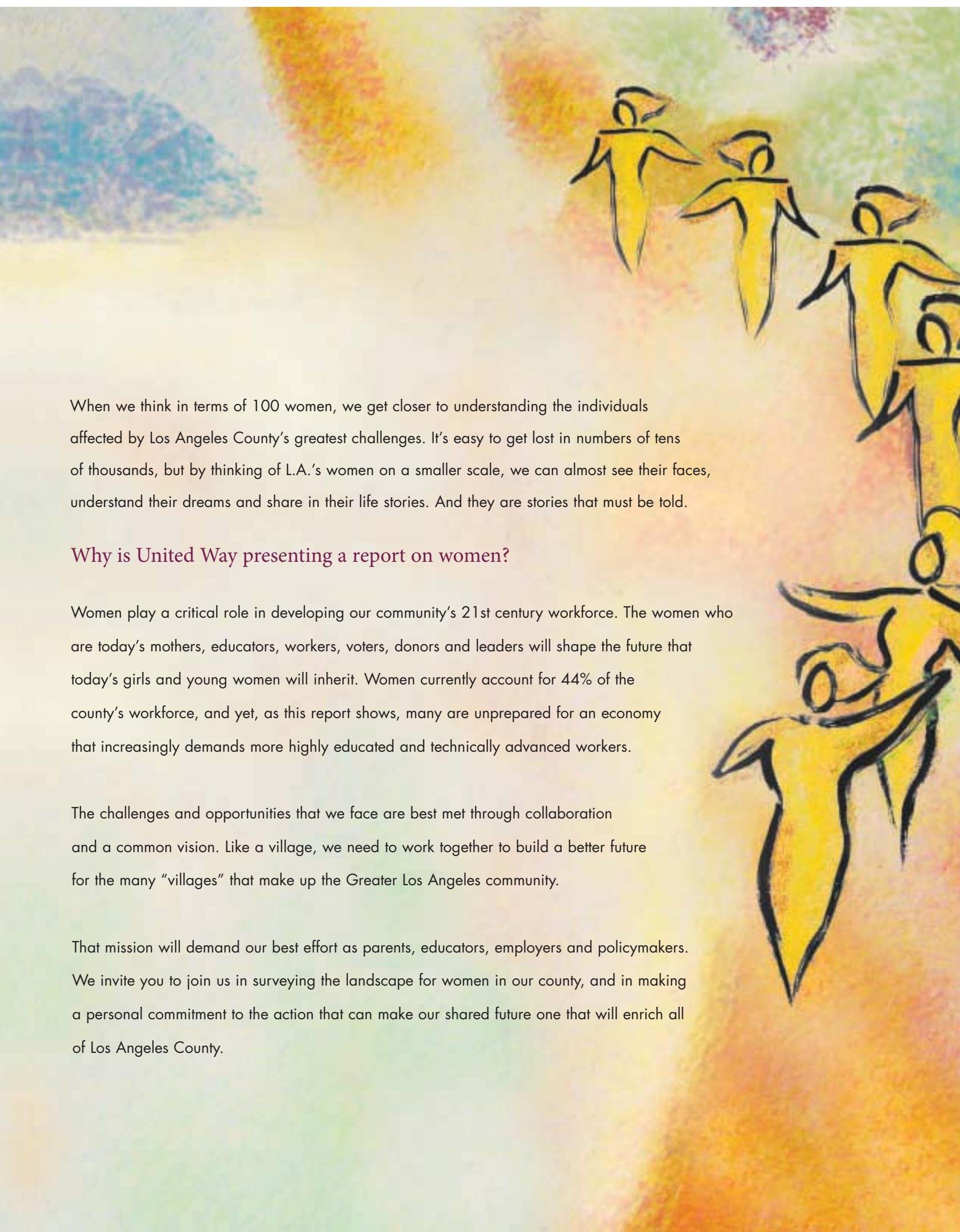


The background features a soft, painterly style with warm colors like yellow, orange, and green. On the left side, there are several stylized, yellow, human-like figures with black outlines, arranged in a line that curves upwards. The figures are simple, with rounded heads and open arms, suggesting a sense of community or movement. The overall mood is bright and positive.

If Los Angeles Were A Village With 100 Women...

Los Angeles County is home to nearly 5 million women and girls, more than half of the region's population. They are women of different backgrounds and diverse experiences; women with common challenges and shared aspirations. They are teachers and lawyers, bus drivers and doctors, scientists and students, manicurists and managers.

Visualizing Greater Los Angeles on a smaller scale can help us better understand important facets of life within our community, particularly those that influence and impact the lives of women. In this report, we look at critical trends in education, the economy, housing and health and apply actual population ratios and statistics on a level that supposes Los Angeles were a village with 100 women.



When we think in terms of 100 women, we get closer to understanding the individuals affected by Los Angeles County's greatest challenges. It's easy to get lost in numbers of tens of thousands, but by thinking of L.A.'s women on a smaller scale, we can almost see their faces, understand their dreams and share in their life stories. And they are stories that must be told.

Why is United Way presenting a report on women?

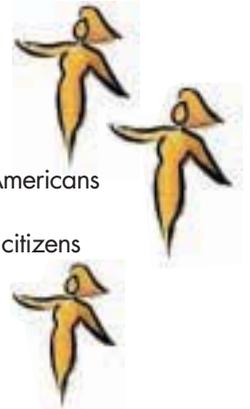
Women play a critical role in developing our community's 21st century workforce. The women who are today's mothers, educators, workers, voters, donors and leaders will shape the future that today's girls and young women will inherit. Women currently account for 44% of the county's workforce, and yet, as this report shows, many are unprepared for an economy that increasingly demands more highly educated and technically advanced workers.

The challenges and opportunities that we face are best met through collaboration and a common vision. Like a village, we need to work together to build a better future for the many "villages" that make up the Greater Los Angeles community.

That mission will demand our best effort as parents, educators, employers and policymakers. We invite you to join us in surveying the landscape for women in our county, and in making a personal commitment to the action that can make our shared future one that will enrich all of Los Angeles County.

If Los Angeles Were A Village With 100 Women...

- **46** of the women are Latina, **29** are White, **13** are Asian and **10** are African-Americans
- **27** are children and teens, **9** are college age, **53** are adults, and **11** are senior citizens
- **36** are immigrants and **64** are American-born



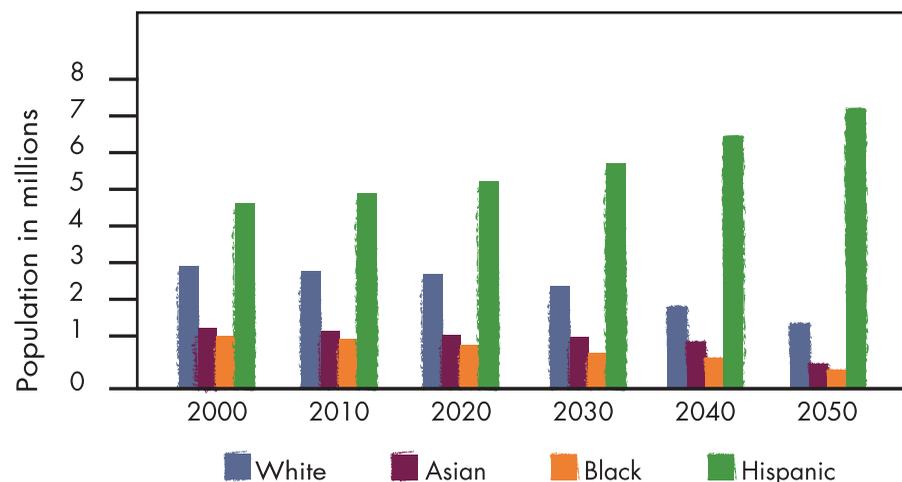
Population

- In this report, "Los Angeles" includes the entire county, with its 88 incorporated cities, dozens of unincorporated communities and ten million residents.
- 4.9 million women and girls live in Los Angeles County, just over half (50.6%) of its residents.

Ethnicity

- Waves of ethnic change have transformed Los Angeles for centuries, as the population shifted from Native American to Mexican to White and today, to a multicultural world city.
- By 2020, Latinos will be the majority at 52%, followed by Whites at 26%, Asians 11%, Blacks 9% and Multiracial at 2%.
- Births have long been the largest component of population growth in the county, rather than immigration. However, since most immigrants are younger adults in their family formation years, their children become a large proportion of births.

Latinos Will Drive L.A. County's Population Growth

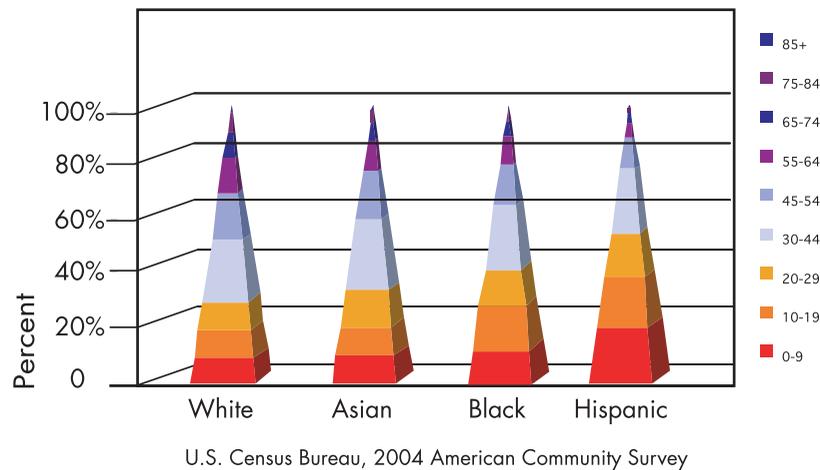


California Department of Finance, Demographic Research Unit

Age

- The median age for women is 34.4 years, two years older than the median for males because of women's longer life expectancy.
- Latinas are the youngest group with a median age of 28, compared to 43 years for Whites, 35 years for African-Americans and 39 years for Asian women.

Majority of Latinas in L.A. County Under Age 30



Immigration and Citizenship

- 36% of women in L.A. County are immigrants. By ethnic group, the rate of foreign-born women ranges from a high of 71% for Asians to 45% of Latinas, 18% of Whites and a low of 8% for Blacks.
- In Los Angeles County, 44% of all foreign-born women have become U.S. citizens. U.S. citizenship rates run from 32% for Latinas to 47% of Blacks, 60% of Asians and 62% of White immigrants.
- 2.1 million Los Angeles women speak English at home and 1.6 million women speak Spanish. Tagalog is a distant third at 112,000, followed by Chinese, Korean, Armenian, Persian, Vietnamese and Japanese.
- As immigrants become settled in California, over a period of decades their incomes rise, and poverty falls to the same level as American-born residents. They also gain in English fluency and education, purchase homes, and obtain health insurance.

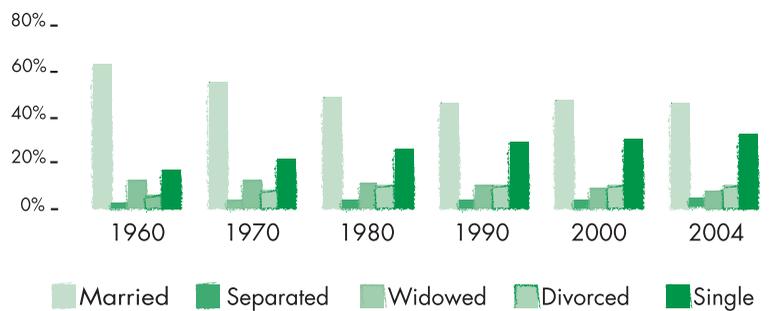


Families and Singles

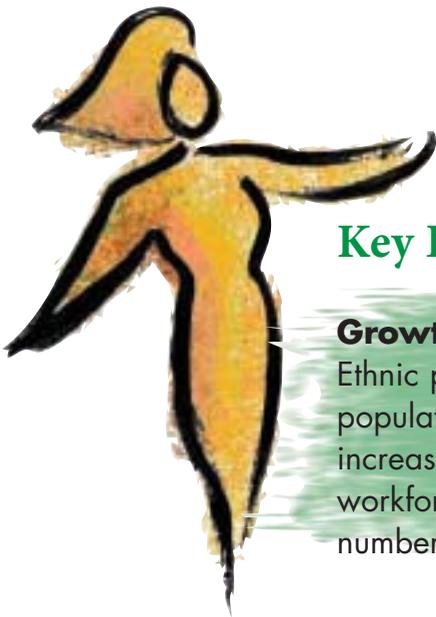
- Marriage rates for Los Angeles County females have fallen from 63% in 1960 to 47% in 2004, leveling off after 1990. Over this period the percentage of never-married women doubled, from 16% to 32% of women.
- Women who are divorced rose from 6% in 1960 to 10% in 2004. Widows decreased from 13% to 8% and the married but separated rate grew from 2% to 4%.
- Today, married couples account for 69% of families with children under 18. 24% are female-headed with no husband, and 7% are male-headed with no wife.

- 74,000 grandparents are raising their grandchildren, and two-thirds of these custodial grandparents are women.

Marriage Rate in L.A. County Falling; Singles Increasing



U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census 1960-2000, 2004 American Community Survey



Key Demographic Issues

Growth of the county's ethnic populations has profound implications. Ethnic patterns in age, education and family size will determine the county's future population structure. Now nearly half of county residents, the Latino population increasingly drives key elements of social and economic life. Education, the available workforce, transportation, health care and voting patterns are strongly affected by the number of youth and elderly.

Demographic Futures for L.A. Women

Pathways to Peril

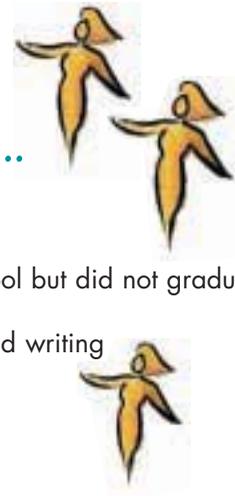
Conflict increases between public service needs of older and younger population groups, as older voters reject propositions that would raise their taxes. Ethnic tensions escalate, based on economic disparities among groups.

Pathways to Success

Citizenship, voting and civic participation rise among immigrants; appreciation of diversity grows. Older voters recognize service needs of children and families to generate incomes that provide tax base for services needed by elderly.

If Los Angeles Were A Village With 100 Women...

- **33** women have a college degree
- **15** women completed less than 9th grade, and **12** attended high school but did not graduate
- **37** of **100** high school girls meet proficiency standards in reading and writing

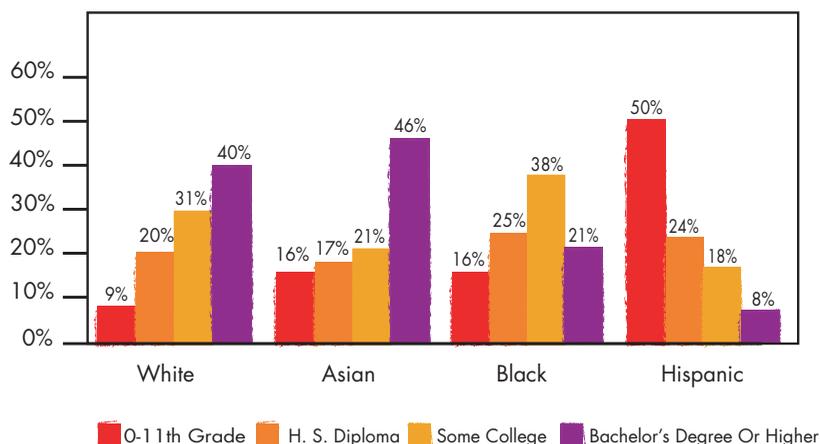


Educational Attainment of Adults

- 33% of all women in L.A. County have an associate's degree or higher. 27% have less than high school education, 21% are high school graduates, and 19% have some college but no degree.
- Women with a bachelor's degree or higher include 46% of Asians, 40% of Whites, 21% of African-Americans and 8% of Latinas. A majority of African-Americans, Asians and Whites have attended some college or earned a college degree.
- 53% of the county's working-age population is estimated to have low literacy skills (in English) according to the 2004 Workforce Literacy Project. This is a red flag issue for women that affects their earning ability as well as their children's education.



Women's Education in L.A. County Differs Widely for Ethnic Groups



U.S. Census Bureau, 2004 American Community Survey

Academic Achievement

- A majority of youth in the county's schools does not meet proficiency standards in most subjects, as revealed in 2005 school testing results.
- Girls consistently score higher than boys in language arts, but lower in math and most science subjects. Math shows the best results overall, with 62% of boys and 49% of girls in high school scoring proficient or advanced. (School testing results are reported using five performance levels: advanced, proficient, basic, below basic and far below basic. The state's target is to have all students score at the proficient level or above.)

School Achievement Test Results L.A. County, 2005

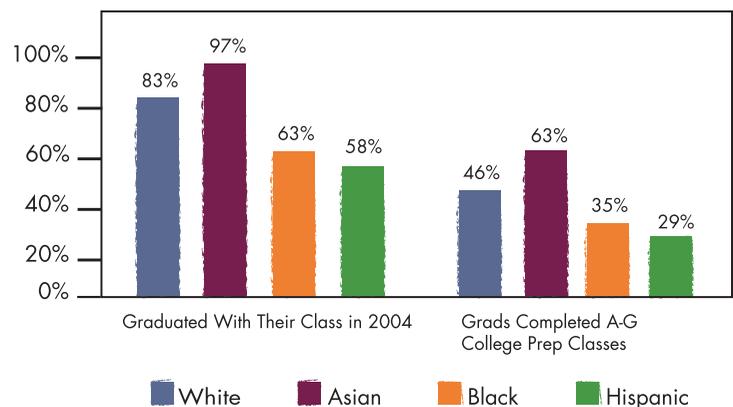
Grade	Subject	Proficient or Advanced	
		Boys	Girls
2-5	Language Arts	33%	42%
	Mathematics	50%	50%
6-7-8	Language Arts	29%	37%
	Mathematics	33%	33%
9-11	Language Arts	28%	37%
	Mathematics	62%	49%
	Biology	28%	28%
	Chemistry	27%	24%
	Earth Science	23%	16%
	Physics	35%	19%

California Department of Education

High School Graduates and Dropouts

- More girls than boys graduate from high school in four years in Los Angeles County. 68% of girls who entered 9th grade in 2000 graduated with their class in 2004, compared to 57% of boys.
- Asian girls had the highest high school graduation rate at 97%, followed by Whites at 83%. Rates were lower for African-Americans at 63% and Latinas with 58% graduating with their class.
- 39% of female high school graduates in 2004 completed courses needed for UC/CSU entrance requirements, compared to 32% of males.

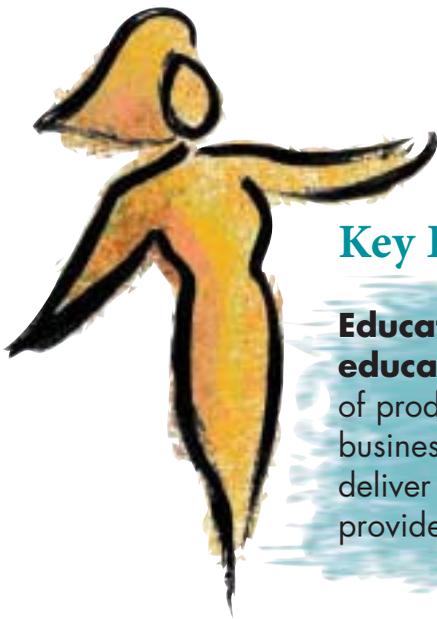
Class of 2004 Four-Year Graduation Rate and College Prep Rate for Females in L.A. County



California Department of Education

College and Postsecondary Education

- Nearly half of the county's high school graduates in 2003 entered California colleges, with about 2 in 3 enrolled in community colleges.
- 307,000 women were enrolled in colleges and universities in the county in 2005, accounting for 57% of students.
- Women in California outnumber men of all ethnic groups in college enrollment and degrees granted, a gap that has expanded since 1987.
- 38,000 women received 61% of the college degrees or certificates granted by community colleges, state colleges and universities in Los Angeles County in 2005. Just 39% of degree recipients were men.



Key Education Issues

Education must meet the growing demand for college educated workers.

California's education infrastructure faces the challenge of producing the college-educated workforce needed by growth industries in business, professional and health services. Not only must the public schools deliver graduates who are qualified for college work, but the state must also provide the operating funds needed by colleges and universities.

Education Futures for L.A. Women

Pathways to Peril

School achievement remains below national average; dropout rates remain high; many who enter college fail to complete degrees; few women prepare for engineering, science or math careers; adult education levels remain stagnant.

Pathways to Success

School achievement rises, more students complete high school and go on to technical training or college; increasing engagement of women in training in technical and scientific fields; rise in levels of basic literacy and adult education.

If Los Angeles Were A Village With 100 Women...

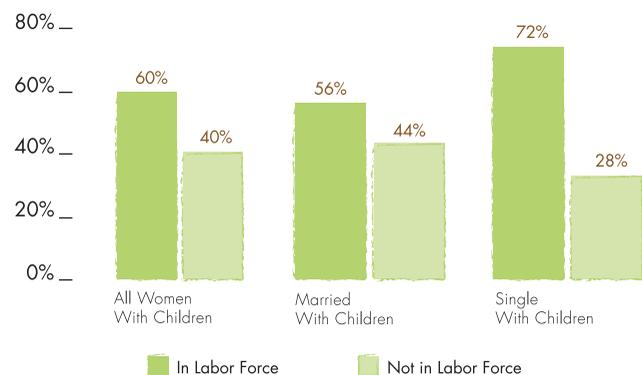
- 60 of 100 women with children are in the workforce
- 26 of 100 working women have clerical jobs, 11 are managers and 11 are in sales
- 6 women are business owners



Women at Work

- Women are 44% of the county's workforce, 1.9 million strong. 56% of women age 16 or older are in the labor force, about the same as the 1990 rate of 57%. 74% of men are in the labor force, down from 77% in 1990.
- 60% of all women with children are in the labor force, with higher rates for those with older children. The rate of single mothers who are working has surged to the current rate of 72%.
- The most educated are also most likely to be in the labor market. 76% of college graduates are in the workforce compared to 55% of those with less than high school education.
- From 1990 to 2001, more than 1,000,000 former welfare parents entered the county's labor market, increasing competition for low-wage jobs. Most remained below the poverty level. Those who received education or skill training have had higher earnings.
- Occupations with the largest projected growth in number are primarily low-wage jobs. Average hourly wages for the top five are: Retail Salespersons (\$9.45), Food Preparation (\$7.79), Cashiers (\$8.56), Registered Nurses (\$30.24), and Waitresses (\$7.44). The high proportion of women in these occupations indicates that many of the jobs available to women in the coming years will fail to provide adequate income.

Majority of Women with Children in L.A. County in the Labor Force, Highest Rate for Single Mothers



U.S. Census Bureau, 2004 American Community Survey

TOP WOMEN'S JOBS IN LOS ANGELES

Jobs With the Most Women		Jobs with Highest Percent of Women		Jobs with Highest Annual Earnings for Women	
Office & Administrative Management	282,000	Health Care Support	83%	Legal Occupations	\$76,680
Sales	120,000	Personal Care	78%	Computer Occupations	\$66,089
Production (Manufacturing)	117,000	Education & Library	69%	Health Care Practitioners	\$60,067
Health Care Practitioners	67,000	Office & Administrative	68%	Architecture/Engineering	\$58,465
	65,000	Health Care Practitioners	61%	Management Occupations	\$55,025

U.S. Census Bureau, 2006 American Community Survey; California Employment Development Department

- Women are now working in many occupations traditionally thought of as male dominated. For example, women are 49% of employees in legal occupations, 33% in computer and mathematical operations and 20% in protective services. Construction remains the occupation with the lowest share, with just 3% female employees.
- 22% of women who work full time work in the top five occupations for women's earnings.
- The informal or "off the books" economy, estimated to be 15% of the county's workforce, employs thousands of women in jobs such as nannies, housecleaners and hair stylists. Since their employers do not submit payroll taxes, these women are not protected by safety net provisions such as disability insurance or Social Security, and there is a shortfall in government revenue to support essential public services, including schools, police, and indigent health care.

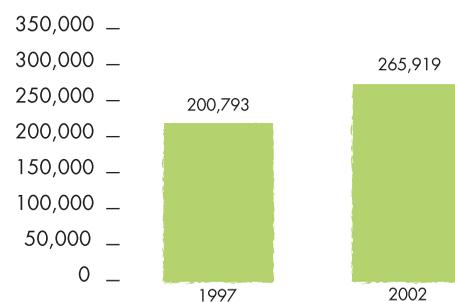
- 13% of women-owned businesses have employees, providing jobs for 263,000 workers. Firms with employees account for 82% of total sales and receipts of women-owned businesses.
- 87% of women-owned businesses are one-person operations with no employees.



Women Business Owners

- 266,000 women-owned businesses were operating in Los Angeles County according to the 2002 economic census, up nearly one-third from 201,000 in 1997.
- Women-owned firms had total sales and receipts of \$41.8 billion, led by wholesale trade at \$8.4 billion, manufacturing at \$5.8 billion and retail at \$5.7 billion.
- Women with their own *incorporated* business earn an average of \$50,500, compared to \$34,900 for all working women. Earnings for women who are self-employed in their own *unincorporated* businesses average just \$21,800.

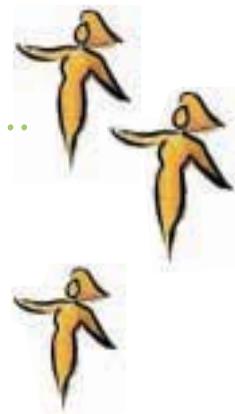
Women-Owned Businesses in Los Angeles County, 1997 and 2002



U.S. Census Bureau, 2002 Economic Census

If Los Angeles Were A Village With 100 Women...

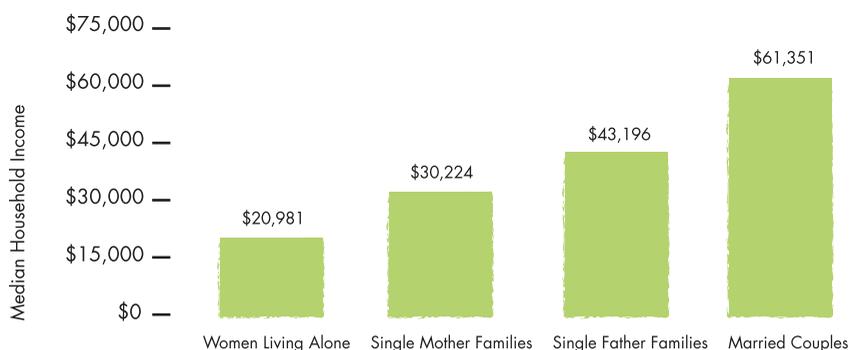
- **34** women work full time, with median earnings of **\$35,000**
- **18** women are below the poverty level
- **1** woman with two children is on welfare, living on **\$704** per month



Income

- Wives' earnings have propelled family income growth: income for married couple families rose 8% over the past 20 years, although income from sources other than wives' incomes declined.
- Median earnings for women who worked full time, year round, are \$34,941, compared to \$36,581 for men. Wages in California have remained persistently flat, although the cost of living continues to increase.
- Median income for single mother families is much lower than married couples or single father families, including earnings and other sources of income such as welfare support.
- Women's earnings trail those of men at every level of education, and the gap is actually greatest at the upper levels of education. The male-female income gap is \$8,500 for those with no high school diploma, and nearly \$20,000 for those with a graduate degree.
- Averaging \$892 per month, child care would consume 21% of a basic monthly budget for a single parent with two children. This would require a minimum annual income of \$42,936 to cover basic living expenses in Los Angeles County. However, given the much lower actual income of women, many cannot afford to pay for child care.
- The federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is an income supplement and work incentive for low-income families and singles. In 2005, 786,310 Los Angeles County tax filers received EITC payments averaging \$1,862, making EITC an important resource for low-income working women.

Much Lower Income for Female-Headed Households in L.A. County



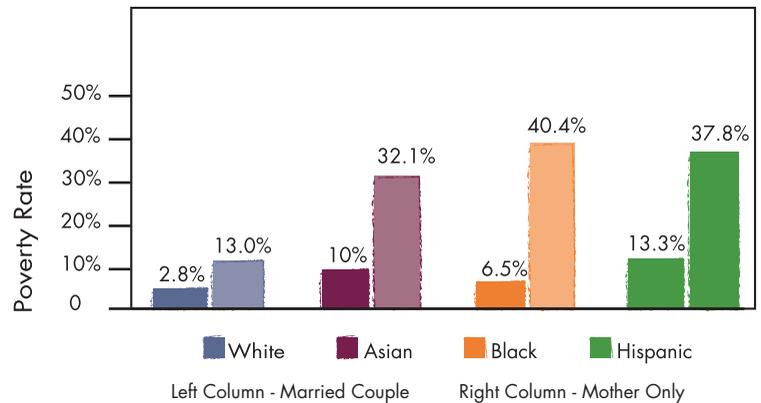
U.S. Census Bureau, 2004 American Community Survey

Poverty

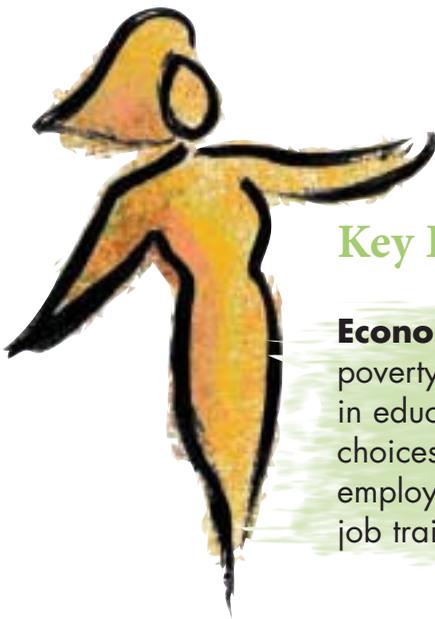
- The poverty threshold varies based on income and family size. For example, the 2006 poverty line is \$13,200 for a single mother with one child, and \$20,000 for a couple with two children.
- 40% of single mother families with children under 18 are poor, compared to 11% of married couple families, and 26% of women living alone.
- 217,000 women were in “working poor” households in 2004, with at least one employed person and earnings less than the poverty level. This included 37,000 full time workers and 179,000 part time workers.

- 82,500 women received public assistance income from the county in 2005, including families with children, indigent adults and elderly.
- 379,000 women were covered by Medi-Cal health insurance, and 156,000 received Food Stamps in 2005.

Much Higher Poverty Rates for Single Mother Families in L.A. County



California Department of Finance, Demographic Research Unit



Key Economic Issues

Economic trends threaten women’s economic security. To avoid risks of poverty, women must prepare to be economically productive through their choices in education, occupation, employment and family responsibilities. Public policy choices are an important component of economic security in areas such as employee protection measures, public assistance rules to promote education and job training, income supplements such as EITC, and housing assistance.

Economic Futures for L.A. Women

Pathways to Peril

Continued thinning of middle class and growth of lower and upper income groups; lack of qualified workforce in technical fields limits ability to attract high tech businesses; decline in women’s incomes.

Pathways to Success

Increase in high tech industries provides middle class incomes for more workers; women gain access to better paid jobs through educational and employer training opportunities.

If Los Angeles Were A Village With 100 Women...

- 21 of 100 home buyers are single women
- 42 of 100 female-headed families pay more than 40% of their income for rent
- 1 woman is homeless



Renters or Homeowners

- 65% of female householders are renters and 35% are owners - almost exactly the reverse of the rate for married couples (64% homeowners and 36% renters).
- Unmarried women were 21% of recent home buyers nationally in 2003, up from 14% in 1995. Married couples were 63% and unmarried men were 17% of buyers.
- To spend no more than the Fair Market Rent, a family of four would need full time, year-round work at \$22.87 hourly or \$47,560 per year – far more than the median income of \$30,000 for single mother families.

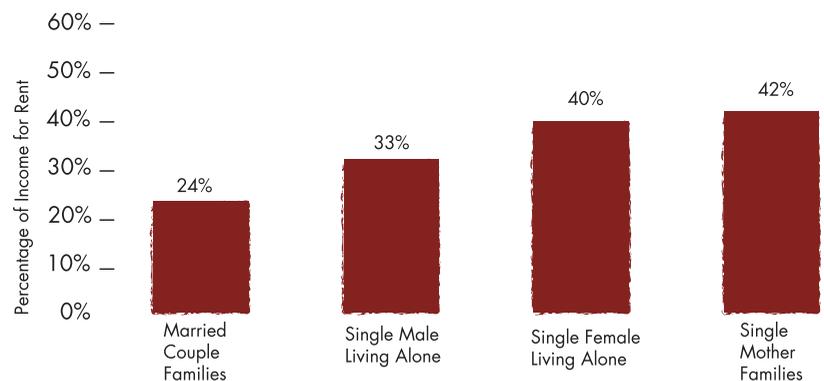
Cost of Home Buying

- Only 19% of first-time home buyers in L.A. County could afford a median price home as of July 2006, a rate that has declined steadily for many years.

Cost of Rent

- Single mother families have the highest rent burden of all households, followed closely by single women living alone. More than 40% of female-headed households pay 40% or more of their income for rent.
- Incomes for renters fell by more than 4% from 1989 to 2002, while homeowner incomes increased 7% (adjusted for inflation).
- The standard for affordable housing is a cost of no more than 30% of income. The 2005 "Fair Market Rent" in L.A. County for a two-bedroom apartment is \$1,189.

Female Headed Households in L.A. County Pay Highest Percent of Income for Rent

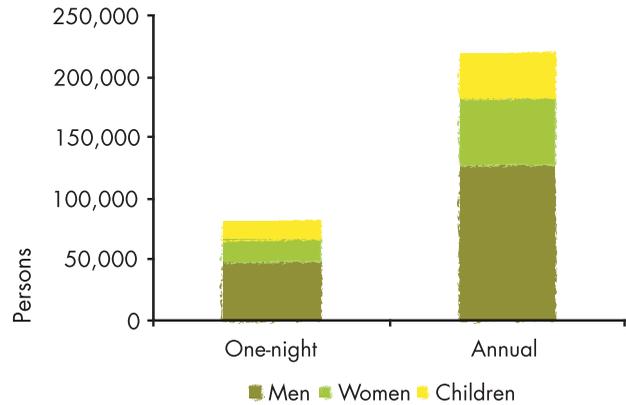


U.S. Census Bureau, 2004 American Community Survey

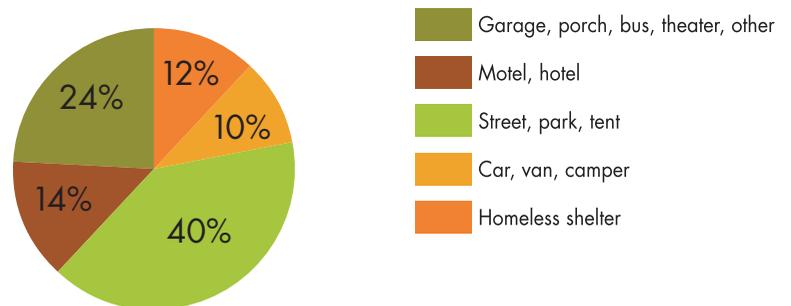
Homelessness

- 88,345 people are homeless every night in Los Angeles County, according to the 2005 Homeless Count. A total of 228,000 people are estimated to be homeless at some point over the course of a year, slightly more than 2% of the county's population.
- 5,000 or 17% are children. Many homeless families are young mothers age 18 to 29 with preschool children.
- 32% of homeless school-age children are not attending school, leading to obvious shortfalls in education.
- At 88%, the vast majority of homeless usually sleep outdoors on the street, in parks, or in places not intended as living quarters such as cars, motels, abandoned buildings or buses.
- At the time of the 2005 Homeless Count, 13% of women and family members, 11% of men and 5% of transgender people were in homeless shelters.
- Women were 32% of the 35,000 identified as "chronically homeless" who have extended periods of homelessness, many with co-existing physical or mental disabilities, alcohol or drug use.

Four in Ten Homeless Persons Are Women and Children



Few Homeless in Shelters; Most Sleep Outdoors

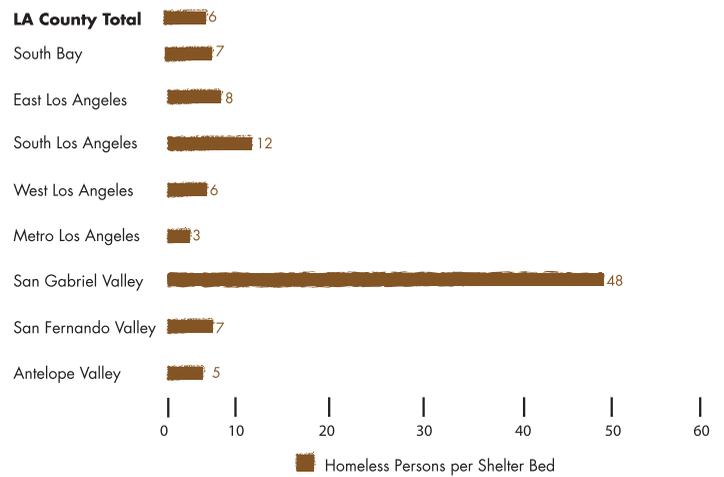


Applied Survey Research, 2005 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count

Homeless Resources

- 15,590 homeless shelter beds are available in L.A. County, according to a study for the 10-Year Strategy to End Homelessness.
- Shelters serving homeless families currently have the capacity to serve 1,986 families with 5,986 beds. This means that only 26% of homeless families can be served at any given time according to a 2006 report by Shelter Partnership.
- The homeless population and homeless shelters are unevenly distributed, with highest numbers in Metro (Downtown/Hollywood) Los Angeles and South Los Angeles.

San Gabriel Valley Has Greatest Unmet Need For Homeless Shelter Beds



Applied Survey Research, 2005 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count, and Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority

- The San Gabriel Valley stands out as the area most lacking in homeless service resources. The area has just 216 beds to serve 10,500 homeless residents, or 48 homeless persons per shelter bed.



Key Housing and Homelessness Issues

Rising family homelessness not only represents an immediate crisis, but holds long-term consequences for families and children. Measures to prevent homelessness through “housing first” approaches can reduce the destructive impact of homelessness and pave the way for actions to improve economic stability.

Housing and Homelessness Futures for L.A. Women

Pathways to Peril

Affordable housing supply shrinks and cost of living increases. Growth in number of homeless families; continuing economic segregation in housing.

Pathways to Success

Homeless prevention services stabilize families in economic crisis and provide access to short-term and long-term solutions; increase of publicly supported affordable housing.

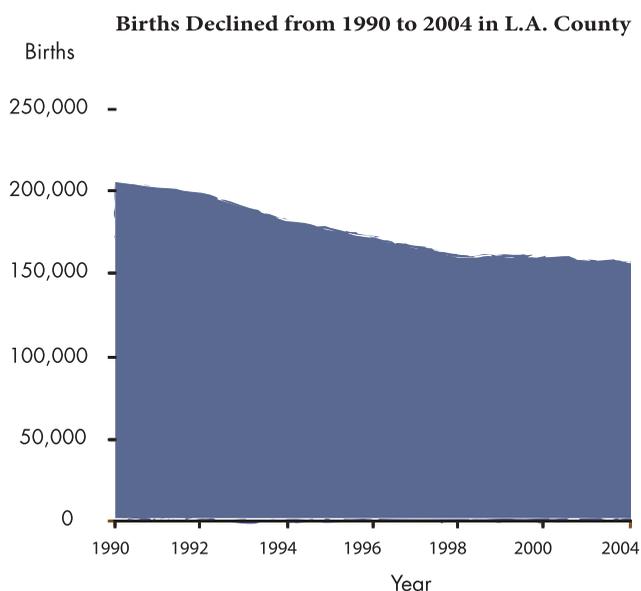
If Los Angeles Were A Village With 100 Women...

- **22** women have no health insurance
- **15** women eat five servings of fruits or vegetables a day, **73** eat a few and **12** eat none
- **28** women are overweight and **20** are obese



Birth Trends

- Births in the county have fallen steadily since 1990. Teen births declined from 12% to 9.5% of births and births to mothers 35 or older rose from 11% to 18%.
- Maternal and infant health measures in the county improved steadily from 1990 to 2004:
 - Prenatal care in the first trimester of pregnancy rose from 71% to 90% of births
 - Infant deaths declined from 8 to 5 per thousand births
 - Low birth weights increased from 6% to 7% of births, possibly due to the increase in multiple births that are often a result of fertility drugs



California Department of Health Services

Life Expectancy

- Life expectancy for California females born in 2003 is 82 years, up from 73 in 1950. Male life expectancy is currently 77 years, compared to 66 in 1950. Those who survive to age 65 have longer than average life expectancy: 86 years for women and 84 for men.

Death Trends

- 75 years is the average age of death for L.A. County women. Accidental deaths have the lowest average age of death at 51, and Alzheimer's disease is highest with the average age of death at 86.
- For women, coronary heart disease claims more than three times as many lives as stroke, the second leading cause of death for women.
- Breast cancer death rates inched down from 30 in 1993 to 22 in 2002 (per 100,000 women). Breast cancer is the 7th leading cause of death for women, but ranks second in premature deaths.

Health Insurance

- 22% of adult women age 18 to 65 are uninsured, according to the 2003 California Health Interview Survey. More women than men have health coverage.
- 53% of adult women have employment-based coverage, 18% are covered by publicly funded programs such as Medi-Cal, and 7% purchase their own insurance coverage.
- Just 1% of women age 65 and older are uninsured, thanks to availability of low-cost coverage through Medicare, combined with other private and government programs.

Fitness

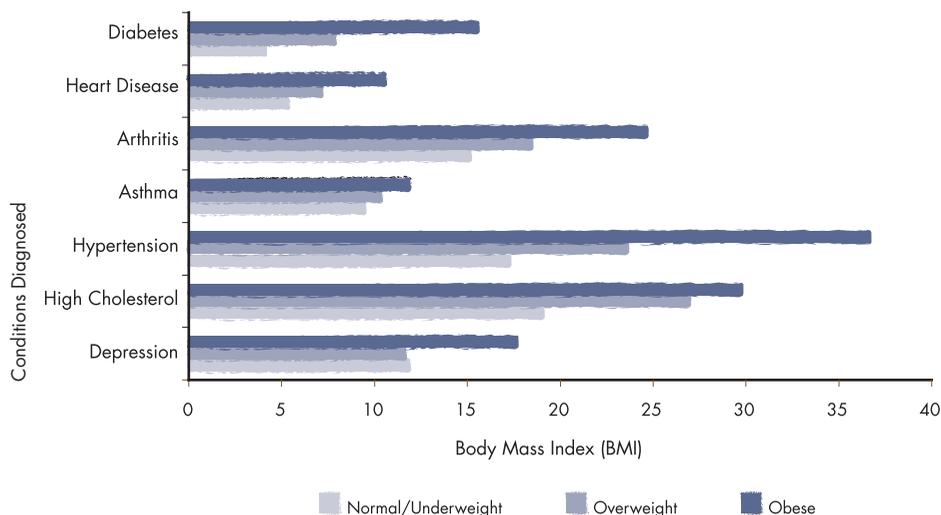
- 41% of women report being physically active, 10% say that they get some exercise, and 49% admit that they are sedentary with little or no physical activity.
- Just 23% of girls in grades 5, 7 and 9 met all six fitness standards in 2005 state testing. 48% met five standards and 70% met four standards. 9th grade girls had the lowest fitness rates.

Obesity

- 28% of women are overweight and an additional 20% are obese. Men have a higher rate with 43% overweight and 22% obese, as reported in the 2005 L.A. County Health Survey.
- Adult obesity rates rose one-third, from 14% in 1997 to 21% in 2005. Obesity for the 18 to 29 age group doubled, from 9% to 18%. The obesity rate for Latinos is 29%, with African-Americans at 28%, Whites 17% and Asians 6%.
- Obesity is a factor in many serious health conditions and consequently contributes to the costs of both private and public health care.



More Chronic Health Conditions for Obese and Overweight Adults



2005 Los Angeles County Health Survey

Tobacco

- Cigarette smoking by women declined from 14% in 1997 to 11% in 2002. Smoking rates in Los Angeles are highest for African-American and White women, with rates more than double those of Asian women and Latinas.
- Lung cancer, largely caused by smoking or exposure to second-hand smoke, ranked third as a cause of death for Los Angeles women in 2002.

Alcohol

- 44% of women report drinking alcohol in the past month. Binge drinking in the past month (5 or more drinks on one occasion) is reported by 11% of women who drink alcohol, and 2% of all women are chronic drinkers (two or more drinks per day, every day) compared to 6% of men.



Key Health Issues

Dual issues of providing medical care and preventing disease confront Los Angeles in women's health. In medical care, nearly 1 in 4 adult women are uninsured. In preventive care, rising obesity threatens the long-term health of adults and children, presenting a challenge to every sector of the community to develop ways to halt and then reverse this trend.

Health Futures for L.A. Women

Pathways to Peril

Rise in chronic illnesses among low-income population precipitates major county budget crisis due to public health costs. Death rates rise due to complications of diabetes and heart disease, wiping out advances in extending lifespan.

Pathways to Success

Rise in adult and childhood obesity is halted and starts to decline; healthy lifestyles become fashionable and fitness increases among children and adults. With continuing advances in medical care, death rates decline for many leading causes.

Creating Pathways Out of Poverty

Education

The demand for high quality education covers a wide range of needs. On the one hand, the county is confronted by the demand to produce more college graduates and technical workers; and on the other hand, by the need to improve the basic literacy of many adults who are the parents of the future workforce. Meeting these demands requires school districts and higher education systems to:

- Build and support K-12, vocational/technical and college education infrastructure.
- Improve K-12 educational achievement and preparation for college.
- Develop awareness, aspiration, knowledge and skills for higher education among parents, children and teens.
- Focus on the unique needs of Latino youth, the majority of young adults: this is a critical element that must be addressed to meet future workforce needs.
- Expand adult basic education to improve skills of adults in math, problem solving, use of information technologies, reading, writing and speaking English.

Education drives income. Postsecondary education is essential for higher paid occupations, signifying that young women must receive guidance early and throughout their school years to prepare for future careers that pay a living wage. Youth and their parents alike need ongoing information about postsecondary financial support and the long-term benefits of higher education.

Economic

The county's economic health demands more highly trained workers. To meet the needs of the 21st century economy, more college educated and highly trained technical workers are essential. Lacking a qualified workforce, businesses could be forced to go elsewhere or import more foreign workers.

It's never too late to learn. Women already in the workforce can benefit from modest – or more dramatic – improvements in their education that can open the door to better paid jobs. As welfare reform continues, policies that emphasize basic literacy, skills training and placement in jobs that pay a living wage can help provide better earning opportunities for welfare parents and their children.

Child care can make or break women's success in the workforce. Many women can't work full time because of the high cost of child care. For women with young children, child care is a key element that makes it possible to get education and training to qualify for well paid jobs, and to work a full time schedule.

for the Women of Los Angeles

Housing

Lack of affordable housing for moderate- and low-income individuals and families is the number one issue. An enormous proportion of renters are paying more than the federal standard for affordable housing, with few current prospects for expansion of supply.

Rising costs of housing and stagnant wages make it likely that the number of homeless women and children will continue to rise. Regardless of what other issues may have led to homelessness, if housing is not available at a rate that families can pay, homelessness will be an ongoing threat, especially for female-headed families.

Homeless prevention or “housing first” is preferable to longer-term family shelters. Keeping families housed prevents trauma and offers a stable environment to work on financial and personal issues such as building job skills to provide income. Keeping children in their own homes, schools and community improves their chances of success in education and later life.

Health

Healthy lifestyles may be as critical as medical care. Tobacco, alcohol, poor nutrition, and lack of exercise have an enormous impact on health and life expectancy. The challenge is how to encourage healthy behavior at individual, family and community levels, and diminish unhealthful habits.

Rising obesity rates threaten women’s health and county finances. Obesity is a major risk factor for diabetes, heart attack, stroke and many other conditions, creating troubling scenarios for ill health of residents and burgeoning costs for treatment that could overwhelm the public health care system.

Access to health care for low-income uninsured is a problem at current levels, and may become worse as employers cope with rising costs by reducing or eliminating health insurance benefits. Lack of needed health care can generate much more difficult and expensive treatment in later stages of an illness; treatments that could be avoided by timely access to affordable and culturally responsive medical care.

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Much of the data in this report is from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2004 American Community Survey (ACS) for Los Angeles County. Other data sources include county and state departments, as well as studies by respected research organizations.

The four largest race/ethnic groups are described in the report since ACS sample data are not available for smaller groups, including American Indians, Pacific Islanders and persons of multiracial heritage. Asian data includes Filipinos, but not Pacific Islanders. The terms African-American and Black, Hispanic and Latino are used interchangeably throughout the report. "White" includes Non-Hispanics only.

Demographic data:

- 2004 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau, <http://factfinder.census.gov>
Note: the 2004 ACS counts household population, but does not include residents of "group quarters" (i.e. dormitories, shelters or institutions such as nursing homes or prisons), who account for about 2% of the total population. Smaller ethnic groups such as American Indians and Pacific Islanders are not described in this report since ACS data is not available due to sample size.

Education data:

- California Department of Education, <http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>
- 2004 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau, <http://factfinder.census.gov>
- California Postsecondary Education Commission, www.cpec.ca.gov

Economic and poverty data:

- 2004 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau, <http://factfinder.census.gov>
- 2002 Economic Census, Survey of Business Owners, U.S. Census Bureau, <http://factfinder.census.gov>
- Deborah Reed, "Women, Work and Family in California," Public Policy Institute of California, 2004, <http://www.ppic.org>

Housing and Homelessness data:

- 2004 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau, <http://factfinder.census.gov>
- 2005 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count, Los Angeles Homelessness Services Authority, <http://homelesscount.lahsa.org/>
- Operating at Capacity: Family Shelters in Los Angeles County, Shelter Partnership, <http://www.shelterpartnership.org>

Health data:

- California Department of Health Services, <http://www.dhs.ca.gov>
- California Health Interview Survey, UCLA Center for Health Policy and Research, <http://www.askchis.org>
- Los Angeles Health Survey, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, <http://www.lapublichealth.org>

Principal data sources are listed here. For questions about other data used for this report, contact the United Way Research Department at (213) 630-2130.

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