

HOOSIER MEDIOCRITY FACT SHEET
Compiled by George Fish and David Fey for the
“Overcoming Hoosier Mediocrity” workshop
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HEALTHCARE / PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

Indiana’s rank in terms of percentage of adults who smoke was 5th highest as of 2006, according to CDC statistics. That percentage was 24.1. The national average was 20.1 percent. The state with lowest percentage of adult smokers was Utah with 9.8 percent.
<source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Behavior Risk Factor Surveillance Survey, 2006.>

Next category: Obesity. As of 2008, Indiana ranked as the 9th most obese state in the US, with 26.8 percent of its adult residents obese. <source: webmd.com>

Recently, in February 2008, *Popular Science* magazine ranked the 50 greenest cities in the US. Guess what? Indianapolis didn’t make the list. Not only that, *no Indiana city made the list*. They used four areas of environmental initiatives and awarded points according to their level of success in the various cities surveyed. Those four areas were prevalence of renewable energy used in the production of electricity, extent of resident’s use of public transportation and carpooling, number of buildings certified as “green” by the US Green Building Council, including size of city areas devoted to green space, and number of comprehensive recycling initiatives. Unlike Indiana, which placed no cities on the list, three adjacent states had multiple entries. Illinois had three: Chicago, Springfield and Joliet; Michigan had two: Ann Arbor and Livonia; and Kentucky had two: Lexington and Louisville. <source: popsci.com>

Indiana is the third most polluted state in the nation, following only Alaska and Ohio. <source: *Indianapolis Star*>

In addition, as a side-note to the aforementioned data from *Popular Science* magazine, Indianapolis’s public transportation system is generally regarded as abysmally inadequate.

“The National Alliance on Mental Illness gave Indiana a grade of D for its public mental health-care system.” To be fair to Indiana, however, twenty other states also received a grade of D, and D was the national average. Indiana’s low grade is due principally because of flat-rate spending on mental health for the past several years, and Indiana’s tendency to incarcerate the mentally ill for minor offenses rather than steer them into treatment. NAMI’s evaluation is based more on quantity of services and accessibility rather than quality of services, which, as many a “psychiatric victim” can inform, range frequently from merely inadequate to incompetent, dismal and even destructive. <source: *Indianapolis Star*, George Fish’s mental health advocacy work>

Indiana had the number of persons without health insurance increase from 2006-7 by 722,377. That percentage of increase may have dropped under Gov. Daniels’s relatively recent healthcare initiative. We don’t have the revised numbers on that trend but the current spike in unemployment isn’t helping to alleviate the problem. <source: *Indianapolis Star*>

A story in the *Indianapolis Star* in March, 2009, ran this headline: “Indiana Last in Funding from the CDC”. “Indiana ranks dead last among states in getting federal funds to prevent disease and injuries...” the story began. Indiana got \$12.74 per person last year from the CDC while the

national average was \$17.60 per person, and the average among Midwestern states was \$17.69 per person. Another quote from the article: "...the state doesn't have a public health institute, and none of its universities has a public health school. With no infrastructure, there's little staff to carry out programs, deterring the CDC from sending money here."

In terms of other federal health grants, Indiana ranks 49th in funding from the Hospital Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), 35th in funding from the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response for the Hospital Preparedness Program (ASPR), and 45th in state per capita spending for healthcare. <source: *Indianapolis Star*>

Four schools in Indiana are having their air quality monitored by the EPA. This was announced the same day that the Indiana General Assembly (called by the late Harrison Ullman, Editor Emeritus of *NUVO* and Indiana Journalism Hall of Fame inductee, "America's worst legislature") weakened a bill to monitor air and water pollution in Indiana's schools. <sources: *Indianapolis Star*, *NUVO*>

The recent Gallup/Healthways Well Being poll determined that Indiana ranks 45th in the nation in overall quality of life, and while ranking 29th in access to necessities (with 28 out of 50 states ranking above Indiana), Indiana ranked 35th in physical health, 42nd in "life evaluation" (how people evaluated their current lives and future expectations), 43rd in mental health, 45th in quality of work at people's jobs, and 48th in healthy behavior. <source: *Indianapolis Star*>

It takes the average Hoosier applying for Social Security disability benefits 749 days (over 2 years) to get an administrative hearing on his/her disability claim (most claims are routinely denied upon first filing). By contrast, the average wait nationally is only 505 days. The reasons cited for this delay in Indiana are lack of personnel, underfunding, and mismanagement at Indiana's Social Security offices. <source: *Indianapolis Star*>

ECONOMY

<source for all (except where noted): *Indianapolis Star*>

Indiana had unemployment rate of 9.2% in January, while the national rate in January was 7.6%, in February, 8.2%. Indiana's unemployment rate is projected to go to double digits statewide by 2010; already, several Indiana cities have double-digit unemployment.

As of the week ending March 7, 2009, Indiana saw the highest increase in new unemployment claims for the nation, 22,494 new claims, up 5,600 from week before.

Indiana's percentage of high-layoff-prone manufacturing jobs is 16.6%, highest in nation. Indiana has always had 500,000 or more jobs in manufacturing since 1941. Puts the number of working Hoosiers in manufacturing jobs at 20% of work force.

With closing of Navistar, closings & layoffs in auto, auto parts & RVs, Indiana especially vulnerable. Has lost 176,000 manufacturing jobs since 1999, major reason why 4 decades ago Hoosier per capita income above the national average, but for last decade, below the national average.

Before the current recession, economists were predicting very slow job growth for Indiana, a job growth rate of less than 1%.

Indiana ranked 39th in per capita income in 2008 at \$34,103, up slightly from 40th in 2007, principally because Georgia dropped from 37th to 40th. Indiana's 2.7% per capita income growth rate is less than the 2.9% national average.

Before the current recession, Indiana ranked only 44th in the nation in economic growth. <source: Bureau of Economic Analysis>

Since 2005, and before the current recession, Indiana ranked 39th in the nation in new jobs created, and 47th in job growth as a percentage of the workforce. <source: Bureau of Economic Analysis>

Governor Mitch Daniels calls Indiana's unemployment compensation "Rolls Royce benefits" because unemployed Hoosiers can get up to 54% of their former weekly wages in Indiana, the third-highest benefit level in the U.S. However, maximum weekly benefit is only \$390/week, equivalent to an hourly wage of \$9.75/hr. for a 40-hour week. And to have that equal to 54% of the take-home pay, a worker would have to have had a job making \$18/hour, which means a lot of laid-off manufacturing workers are receiving far less than 54% of their former income. But many laid-off Hoosiers receive far less than \$390 per week; I received \$151 per week, & my colleague Dave Fey received even less. Further, unemployment benefits are 100% subject to federal income tax, and the vast majority of unemployment benefits are also subject to state income tax (a small percentage of the benefits are exempted from state income tax).

Indiana's total tax revenue for February 2009 was \$42 million less than projected, the third consecutive month in which actual revenue rates fell short of projections. For Indiana's sales tax, it was the 4th consecutive month in which actual revenues fell short of projections. Indiana's total tax revenue is down 10% from February 2008. However, despite calls from Indiana legislators to draw on revenue needs from Indiana's budget surplus of \$1.3 billion, Governor Daniels wants to leave the surplus untouched, instead calling for budget cuts.

Social justice advocates say Indiana's "modernization" of the welfare application process, which relies on toll-free phone filing and Internet filing, rather than use of individual caseworkers, is causing a significant drop in the number of people eligible from actually getting benefits.

EDUCATION

<source for all: *Indianapolis Star*>

Much of Indiana's economic woes and lack of good jobs is due to the low educational level of Indiana's work force. Philip Powell, an associate professor of business at Indiana University mentions in this regard, "We're stuck. We're stuck because we don't have the knowledge base we need in the labor force. A lot of that is because of our really mediocre primary and secondary educational system."

Because of this, high-tech jobs that demand high skill levels are not coming to Indiana to replace low-skill manufacturing jobs, which are declining.

Only 28% of Indiana's 3.1 million workers have college degrees, compared to 39% nationally.

To be economically competitive in 2025, Indiana will need a workforce that is 60% comprised of college graduates.

46.6% of all graduates of Indiana colleges and universities leave the state within one year of graduation.

The largest in-migration into Indiana comes from those with a 10th grade education or less.

Only 1/3 of Indiana's workers have a high school diploma or G.E.D.

Governor Daniels wants to cut state operating cost funding for Indiana's public colleges and universities by 4%.

For years now, ISTEP test scores have either stagnated or declined.

Despite the poor performance of Indiana's primary and secondary schools, Indiana's superintendents of schools (but not other school employees) often get substantial retirement benefits and perks in addition to their regular salaries and stated retirement benefits.

At both Indiana University-Bloomington and at Purdue University-West Lafayette, the football and basketball coaches receive higher salaries than the university presidents.

SPORTS

<source for all (except where noted): *Indianapolis Star*>

Indianapolis's Capital Improvement Board (CIB) projects a \$47.4 million deficit for the publicly owned sports facilities of the Lucas Oil Stadium, Conseco Fieldhouse, and Victory Field, up from an initial projected deficit of \$43 million. The original projected deficit was \$20 million for the Lucas Oil Stadium, and while the CIB would like to re-negotiate the sweetheart contract given to the Colts for their use of the Stadium, the Colts are not interested. An original \$15 million deficit was expected for Conseco Fieldhouse because it is expected that the Pacers will default on its \$15 million payment for operating costs. The team is losing money, but 2008 was also its second-highest year in players' salaries and bonuses in recent years, at \$70 million. The Pacers have a way, of course, of not only losing ball games but also getting into on-court and off-court brawls. The Colts usually lose in the first round of the playoffs.

To pay for the CIB's deficit, Indiana will double the statewide liquor tax and increase the Marion Co. food and beverage tax from 2% to 2.25%. The Colts and the Pacers will be asked to chip in \$5 million apiece (but as mentioned above, the Pacers are already expected to default on their \$15 million share of the payment for Conseco's operating costs).

While Indianapolis hosted games of the Sweet 16 of the NCAA in 2009, and will host the 2012 Super Bowl, it is indeed problematic if Indianapolis's economy has benefited much at all from all this sports activity, except for certain downtown surges that leave nothing behind for the rest of Indianapolis.

Indianapolis is the 4th worst sports city in the nation, which it determined by comparing per capita income to ticket prices. < source: forbes.com>

QUALITY OF LIFE

<source for all: *Indianapolis Star*>

The *Indianapolis Star* monitored complaints to the Mayor's Action Center about potholes, abandoned vehicles, trash and loose animals, and found that the speediness of the City's response to the complaints varied depending on the average income where the complaint originated:

Income level of neighborhood	Average response time
\$55,000 or more	11.3 days
\$35,000-54,999	12.1 days
\$25,000-34,999	17.7 days
under \$25,000	24.7 days

On May 27, 2008 two complaints were filed with the Mayor's Action Center on major potholes in the streets—one from the prosperous Normandy Farms neighborhood near Eagle Creek Reservoir, median household income, \$85,093; the other from the low-income Martindale-Brightwood neighborhood, median household income, \$24,559. The Normandy Farms pothole was fixed 6 days later, while the Martindale-Brightwood pothole wasn't fixed until 94 days later!

Indiana ranks 49th among the states in online access to public record.

Indiana ranks 49th among the states in the efficacy of its process for determining the state government budget.