



Lincoln Vital Signs
LincolnVitalSigns.org

Lincoln Vital Signs 2015.

Be informed. Get involved.

Lincoln Vital Signs 2015 is a continuation of the work begun more than a year ago. Commissioned by philanthropic organizations, the business community, City of Lincoln and Lancaster County, this report builds on Lincoln Vital Signs 2014 which was introduced in January 2014. For much of our updated report, we have two additional years of accumulated data to draw from as we provide a shared understanding of our city—both its strengths and challenges.

During the coming year, this report will become the centerpiece of a community-wide process to set priorities and action to make Lincoln even stronger.

WHAT'S NEW?

Vital Signs 2015 finds that Lincoln remains the envy of many cities across the country. The strength of our economy continues to draw people here while helping to maintain a positive quality of life, good schools, livable neighborhoods and arts and cultural activities.

In addition, this year's report discovered several trends indicating that many sectors of our economy are rebounding from the recession.

- BUILDING PERMIT VALUES ARE UP DRAMATICALLY
- JOBS ARE AVAILABLE
- HOMELESSNESS IS DROPPING
- LOW UNEMPLOYMENT RATE CONTINUES TO DROP
- CRIME REMAINS LOW

The economic upturn is not the same for everyone. Several findings are of concern.

- THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN POVERTY REMAINS HIGH
- HOUSEHOLD INCOMES HAVE DECLINED WHEN ADJUSTED FOR INFLATION
- UNEMPLOYMENT REMAINS HIGH FOR RESIDENTS WITH LOWER LEVELS OF EDUCATION AND PERSONS FROM MINORITY POPULATIONS
- THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE IS HIGHER THAN THE NATIONAL AVERAGE

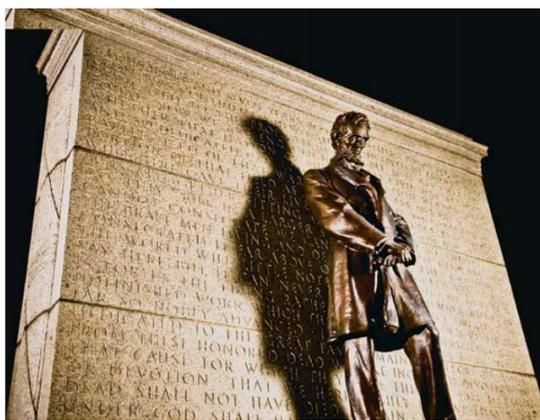
OVERALL FINDINGS

Three overarching themes continue to emerge from the report:

1 Lincoln has exceptional strengths and these should be nurtured. More people choose to move here, drawn by our low unemployment and cost of living. We continue to maintain high graduation rates, low crime, good health outcomes and effective civic services.

2 A growing proportion of our population faces real need. Median household income has declined and the number of people living below the poverty line has increased. The increase is primarily due to families falling into poverty; not people in poverty moving here.

3 Some of our children are vulnerable and at risk. The face of poverty in our city is the face of a white child. More than 12,000 of our children, or 20% live in poverty—the largest percentage of any age group. That translates to 12,100 children. We have a higher rate of children in foster care than the national rate.



LINCOLN VITAL SIGNS

Lincoln Vital Signs presents Lincoln's well-being in seven key areas:

- COMMUNITY PROFILE
- ECONOMY AND WORKFORCE
- BASIC NEEDS
- EDUCATION
- HEALTH
- SAFETY
- COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CULTURE

It is hoped that the full report, available at LincolnVitalSigns.org, will help us learn more about ourselves and fuel action to make Lincoln even stronger.

LINCOLN VITAL SIGNS LEADERS

Members of Lincoln's largest public and private charitable organizations created Lincoln Vital Signs to provide a comprehensive understanding of our community's strengths, and a way to share those strengths with the larger community. This year's updated report seeks to offer information about our community's successes, and areas that may need more attention.

FUNDERS AND ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS

- | | | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| Abel Foundation | Educare of Lincoln | Lincoln Partnership for Economic Development | United Way of Lincoln and Lancaster County |
| City of Lincoln | Foundation for Lincoln Public Schools | Lincoln Community Foundation | University of Nebraska Foundation |
| Community Health Endowment | Lancaster County | Nebraska Children and Families Foundation | Woods Charitable Fund |
| Cooper Foundation | | | |

READ ON TO DISCOVER WHAT WE LEARNED, WHY IT IS IMPORTANT, AND HOW YOU CAN HELP MAKE LINCOLN GREATER. →

For more information and a downloadable copy of Lincoln Vital Signs 2015, visit LincolnVitalSigns.org

Lincoln Vital Signs 2015. Be informed.

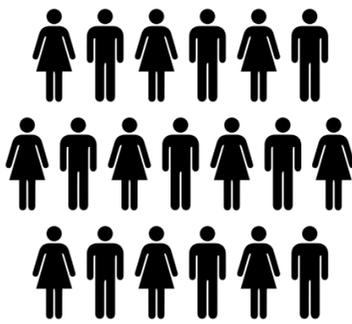
Lincoln Vital Signs is intended to inform conversations, spark connections and spur collaboration. We offer this ongoing information to paint a picture of our collective successes and challenges and to catalyze community-wide insight and action to develop a vision for the future.



COMMUNITY PROFILE

Lincoln's state of well-being is one of the highest in the country and the city benefits from population growth and increased diversity.

#10
IN OVERALL
WELL-BEING



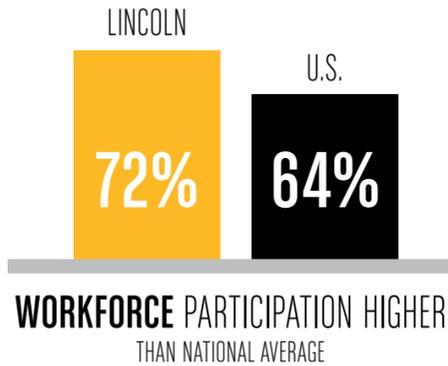
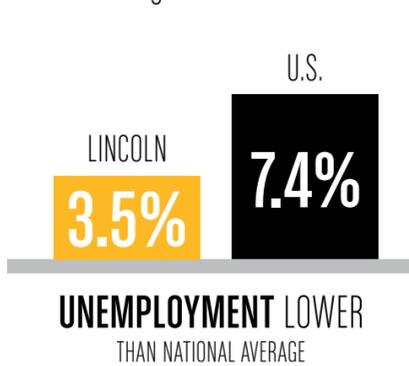
68%

GROWTH IN
NON-WHITE
POPULATION
SINCE 2005

19% POPULATION
GROWTH
SINCE 2000

ECONOMY AND WORKFORCE

Lincoln maintains low unemployment with high workforce participation and a highly-educated workforce. Our cost of living remains below the national average.



HOUSEHOLD INCOME (ADJUSTED FOR INFLATION) HAS DECREASED SINCE 2008 **-4%**

NATIONAL AVERAGE COST OF LIVING **-10%** BELOW NATIONAL AVERAGE



BASIC NEEDS

Lincoln's overall poverty rate remains higher than the national average. After a high in 2012, homelessness is showing some decline.

58%

THE NUMBER OF
PEOPLE IN POVERTY
HAS INCREASED 58%
SINCE 2005



6 NEIGHBORHOODS
IN EXTREME POVERTY
(NONE 10 YEARS AGO)

12,100

CHILDREN IN
POVERTY
(89% INCREASE SINCE 2008)



1 IN 5
CHILDREN LIVE
IN POVERTY

For more information and a downloadable copy of Lincoln Vital Signs 2015, visit LincolnVitalSigns.org



Get involved.



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EDUCATION



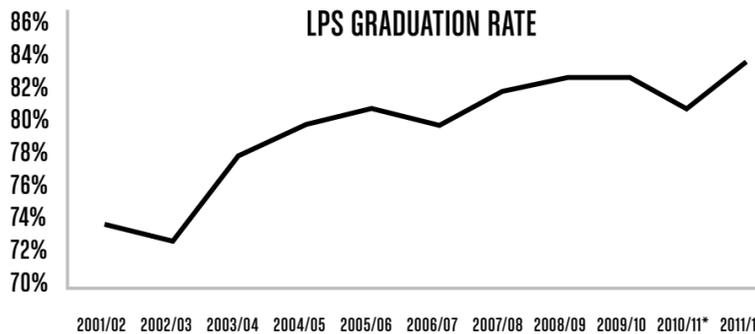
Lincoln is a highly educated community. The number of students enrolled in Lincoln Public Schools continues to grow and they continue to score high on standardized tests. Graduation rates also remain high.

139% INCREASE IN NUMBER OF STUDENTS RECEIVING FREE LUNCH SINCE 2000

83% OF PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS GRADUATE (VS. 78% NATIONALLY)

62% OF LPS GRADUATES ENTER POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

23% PUBLIC SCHOOL ENROLLMENT INCREASED SINCE 2000



6% FEWER LOW INCOME PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS GRADUATE AT LOWER RATES

*In 2010-2011 Nebraska started tracking graduation as the 4-year graduation rate (graduating within 4 years of starting 9th grade).



1/3 HEALTH

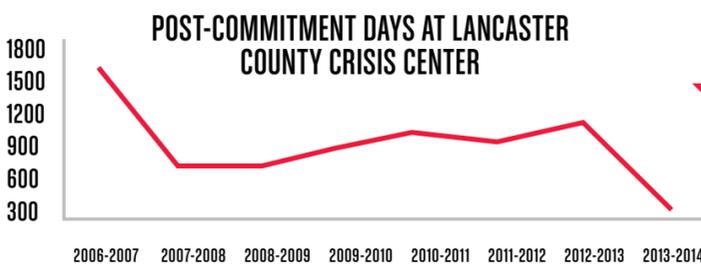
OF CHILDREN ARE OBESE

Lincoln is somewhat healthier than other American communities, maintaining lower obesity and inactivity rates than the rest of the U.S. More can be done to decrease rates of chronic disease and counter rising health costs.

OVERALL OBESITY, DIABETES AND PHYSICAL INACTIVITY RATES BETTER THAN U.S.

OBESITY: 25% LINCOLN 29% U.S.
DIABETES: 6% LINCOLN 10% U.S.
PHYSICAL INACTIVITY: 20% LINCOLN 25% U.S.

USE OF CRISIS SERVICES FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE IS DECLINING.



2000: 29%
2013: 46%
PEOPLE WHO ALWAYS FEEL SAFE & SECURE IN LINCOLN

1/2 VIOLENT CRIME RATE IS HALF OF COMPARABLY-SIZED CITIES

SAFETY
Lincoln remains a safe community with a low crime rate.

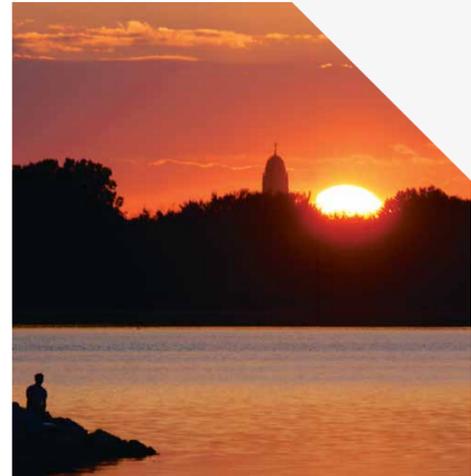
COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT & CULTURE

Nebraskans continue to generously support organizations with their time, charitable giving is slightly more than the national average.

LINCOLN: 3.3%
U.S.: 3%
AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD CONTRIBUTIONS TO CHARITY

For more information and a downloadable copy of Lincoln Vital Signs 2015, visit LincolnVitalSigns.org

Prosper Lincoln Get involved.



WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Beginning in May, Prosper Lincoln, a new community effort, is launching to make our city an even better place to live and grow. Everyone is invited to participate in a community-wide discussion to help set priorities and establish a shared community agenda for positive change.

Representatives from all sectors of our city—businesses, non-profit organizations, neighborhoods, government, faith communities, philanthropies and individuals—are leading Prosper Lincoln, and they are planning meetings, events and an online survey to ensure everyone has a chance to participate. Discussion will center on three main topics:

- 1** Nurture youth success from cradle to career.
- 2** Grow economic prosperity.
- 3** Enhance quality of life.



WHAT SHOULD OUR COMMUNITY DO TO ENSURE YOUTH ARE SUCCESSFUL, OUR ECONOMY GROWS, AND OUR COMMUNITY IS STRONG AND VIBRANT?

SHARE YOUR IDEAS AT PROSPERLINCOLN.ORG

Now through July 1, ideas for action will be gathered. Then in August, the Prosper Lincoln Steering Committee will use the information to create a community agenda and develop working groups to begin building action plans. The work culminates this fall when a Prosper Lincoln Summit will be held to present action plans, share pledges and commitments to bring it to life.

GET INVOLVED

It is up to all of us to participate and take action. Together, we can determine how to drive positive change in our city.

WHY PRODUCE VITAL SIGNS?

Our initial study was started, and Vital Signs 2015 continued, because leaders of Lincoln's philanthropic organizations were concerned about cuts in federal, state, and local budgets. The city's relatively small philanthropic community does not have the resources to single-handedly make up the difference, nor can government or the business community. It remains clear that these complex issues must have collaboration among all sectors of our community.

ABOUT LINCOLN VITAL SIGNS INDICATORS AND SOURCES

Lincoln Vital Signs 2015 was written by **Nancy Shank**, PhD, MBA, and **Stacey Hoffman**, PhD, both of the University of Nebraska Public Policy Center.

The complete report and a downloadable copy of Lincoln Vital Signs 2015, including data sources and citations, is available at LincolnVitalSigns.org.

LINCOLN VITAL SIGNS WILL BE UPDATED IN FUTURE YEARS TO MEASURE AND TRACK COMMUNITY PROGRESS AND CHANGES.



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