

October 2013

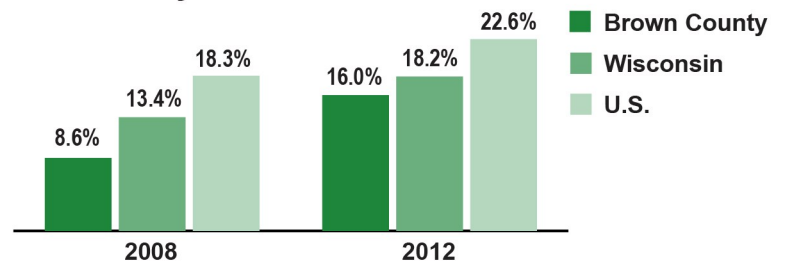
Economic Recovery Slow for Brown County Families

More People in Poverty, Fewer with Health Insurance

Nearly One out of Six Children in Brown County Now Lives in Poverty

The child poverty rate in Brown County rose from 8.6% in 2008 to 16.0% in 2012. This increase was far larger than the increase in the statewide child poverty level, which rose from 13.4% in 2008 to 18.2% in 2012. More than 4,700 additional children slipped into poverty in Brown County between 2008 and 2012, which represents a population greater than the village of Pulaski.

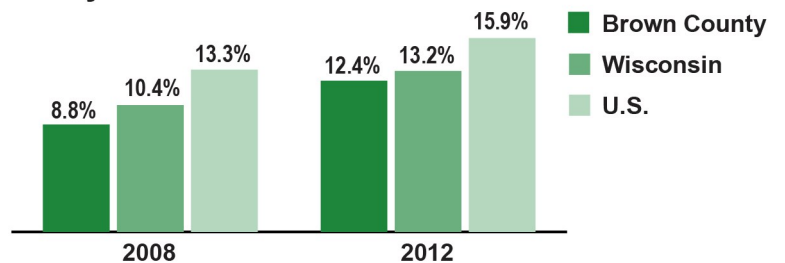
Child Poverty



Poverty in Brown County Has Increased

As a result of the recession, the total poverty rate in Brown County increased from 8.8% in 2008 to 12.4% in 2012. Brown County's poverty rate was lower than the Wisconsin average, which rose from 10.4% in 2008 to 13.2% in 2012. The statewide poverty level was lower than the national average.

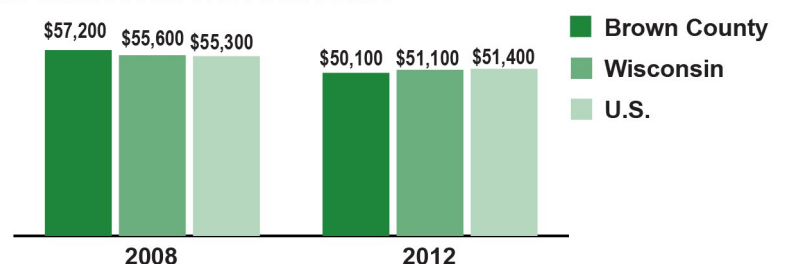
Poverty



Households in Brown County are Making Do with Less

The typical household in Brown County earned \$7,100 less in 2012 than in 2008. Median household income dropped to \$50,100 in 2012 from \$57,200 in 2008. A typical household in Brown County earns roughly 2% less than both the state and the national average.

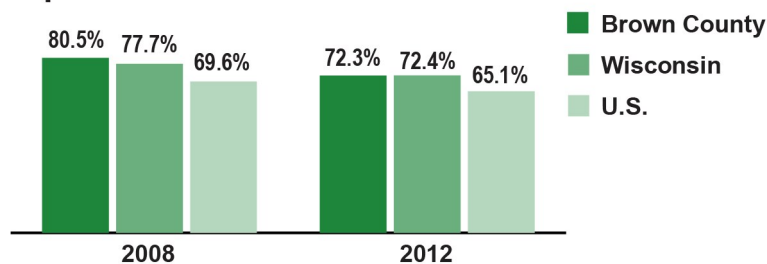
Median Household Income



Fewer People in Brown County Have Private Health Insurance

The percent of people in Brown County with private health insurance decreased from 80.5% in 2008 to 72.3% in 2012. The increase in the unemployment rate impacted health insurance coverage, since most families obtain insurance through their employers. Brown County and Wisconsin in general still had significantly higher rates of private health insurance coverage than the nation as a whole.

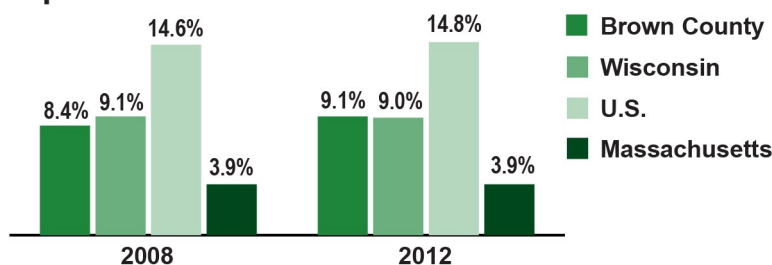
People with Private Health Insurance



Implementing Health Care Reform Could Significantly Improve Access to Insurance

The percent of Brown County residents lacking health insurance increased from 8.4% in 2008 to 9.1% in 2012. This closely mirrored the increase at the state level. Both Brown County and Wisconsin had a much smaller share of their population without health insurance than the national average, but far above the 3.9% rate in Massachusetts. That state implemented health care reforms in 2007 that served as the model for the Affordable Care Act.

People with No Health Insurance



How to Help Brown County Families Affected by the Recession

Families in Brown County are still feeling the effects of the recession, when steep job loss pushed many residents into poverty and resulted in the loss of health care coverage. Brown County's economic situation is better in some respects than the national average, but far too many families are struggling to make ends meet or going without health insurance.

It is discouraging that three years into the recovery, poverty rates and income remain stubbornly low, and the uninsured rate remains high. But there are some basic steps we can take to help boost the local economy and help Brown County families pull themselves out of poverty, including:

- Increase the minimum wage and then adjust it each year for inflation.
- Give businesses access to a well-trained workforce by providing schools and colleges the resources they need to prepare

students for employment. And provide students with the financial aid they need to succeed in their educational efforts.

- Adjust the Homestead tax credit for inflation each year, like the rest of the tax code.
- Create a strong public/private partnership to help Wisconsinites get insurance through the Affordable Care Act and to help reach the Governor's target of cutting the uninsured rate in half.
- Maintain funding for safety net programs such as food stamps and federal unemployment benefits that help lift families out of poverty and pump money into the still sluggish economy.
- Increase school readiness by improving children's early learning and development opportunities through high-quality child care, early education, home visiting, and parent engagement.