

October 2013

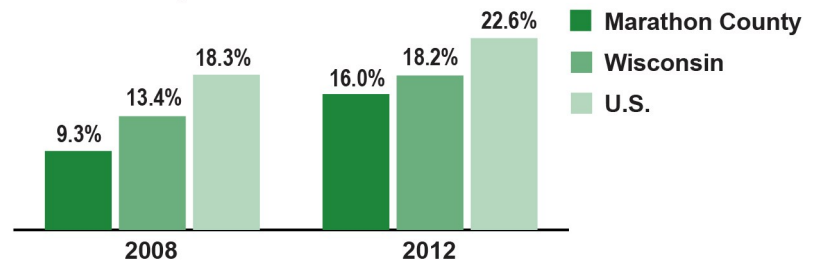
Economic Recovery Slow for Marathon County Families

More People in Poverty, Fewer with Health Insurance

One out of Six Children in Marathon County Now Lives in Poverty

The child poverty rate in Marathon County jumped to 16.0% in 2012 from 9.3% in 2008. Marathon County's child poverty rate is still lower than the statewide average, which rose to 18.2% in 2012 from 13.4% in 2008. Nearly 2,500 additional children slipped into poverty in Marathon County between 2008 and 2012, which represents a population greater than the town of Stettin.

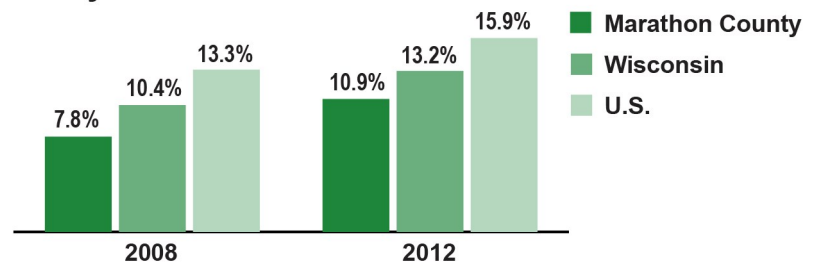
Child Poverty



Poverty in Marathon County Has Increased

As a result of the recession, the total poverty rate in Marathon County increased to 10.9% in 2012 from 7.8% in 2008. In 2012, Marathon County's poverty rate was below the Wisconsin average, which rose to 13.2% in 2012 from 10.4% in 2008. The statewide poverty level was lower than the national average.

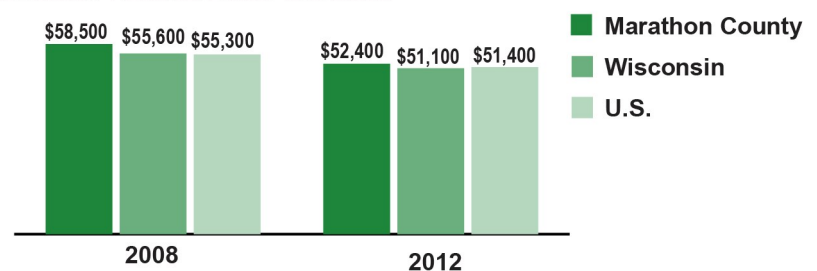
Poverty



Households in Marathon County are Making Do with Less

The typical household in Marathon County earned \$6,100 less in 2012 than in 2008. Median household income dropped to \$52,400 in 2012 from \$58,500 in 2008. A typical household in Marathon County earns roughly 3% more than the state and national average.

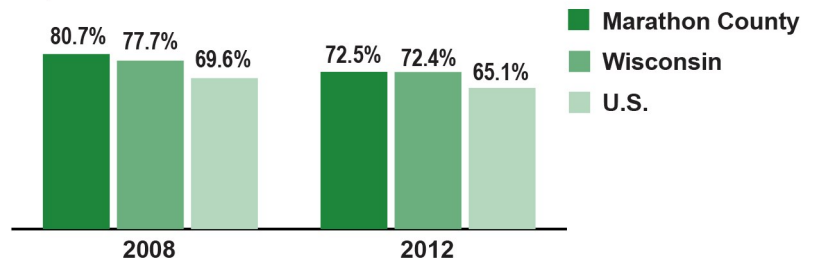
Median Household Income



Fewer People in Marathon County Have Private Health Insurance

The percent of people in Marathon County with private health insurance decreased to 72.5% in 2012 from 80.7% in 2008. The increase in the unemployment rate impacted health insurance coverage, since most families obtain insurance through their employers. The percent of people with private insurance remains well above the national average in Marathon County and Wisconsin as a whole, but the difference has narrowed.

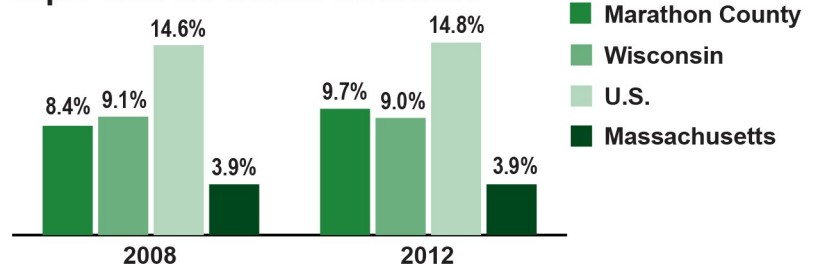
People with Private Health Insurance



Implementing Health Care Reform Could Significantly Improve Access to Insurance

The percent of Marathon County residents lacking health insurance rose to 9.7% in 2012 from 8.4% in 2008. Both Marathon 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 Marathon County Families Affected by the Recession

Families in Marathon 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. Marathon County's economic situation is better in many 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 Marathon 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.