



promises

- **Caring Adults**
- **Safe Places**
- **A Healthy Start**
- **Effective Education**
- **Opportunities to Serve**

Executive Summary

The Henderson County United Agenda for Children

would like to acknowledge and thank the people listed for their help with collecting and verifying the data collected.

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The Facts

Understanding the overall health and well-being of our children in order to better their lives is the ultimate goal of the United Agenda for Children. Past efforts on behalf of the UAC have led to an increased number of nurses in schools and more affordable housing for our citizens.

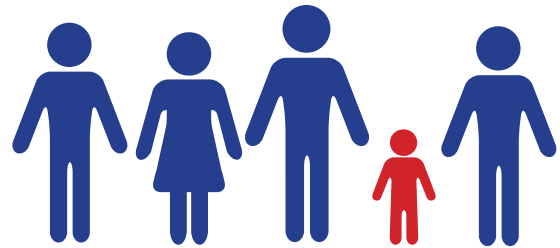
The data shows where we currently stand and helps us determine where we need to be headed as a community. We know that Henderson County is a great place for many children; there are some however, who would disagree. Our hope that is with this information, we can determine the gaps and develop concrete ways to improve lives. The United Agenda for Children can make real change in the way we think, work, and act for kids.

The 5 promises

Based on highly regarded research from the National Academy of Science's report on Community Programs to Promote Youth Development among others, children who experience at least four of the Five Promises are significantly more likely to achieve academic success, avoid violence, and become involved in their communities.

Just as the Five Promises have cumulative mutually reinforcing effects, so does the lack of them.

Caring Adults



All young people need and deserve support and guidance from caring adults including ongoing, secure relationships with guardians and parents as well as positive relationships with teachers, mentors, and neighbors.

The number of children ages birth to age 18 is only slightly smaller than the number of people over the age of 65.

The census data of 2011 states that approximately 22,523 children live in Henderson County, making one out of every five Henderson County residents under the age of 18.

There are 24.4% of kids living in single parent homes, and one in four families with a female as head of the household, had incomes below the poverty level. The number of children in foster care is higher than the state average and there has been a 23% increase in the number of children in custody of Henderson County's Department of Social Services since 2005.

Abused and neglected children are more likely to be arrested for criminal behavior as both a juvenile and as an adult.

Of the nearly 800 clients served in Henderson County through domestic abuse agencies during the 2009-2010 fiscal year, 17% were under the age of 25, and close to half of the sexual assault victims served were between the ages of 0-17.

Safe Places

All young people need and deserve to be physically and emotionally safe wherever they are- in homes, schools, neighborhoods, and communities, as well as online.

During the 2012-2013 school year, 231 students were identified as homeless, a 25% decrease in the number of students identified the previous school year.

Affordable housing continues to be an issue in Henderson County as almost half of renters and one third of owners with mortgages in Henderson County, spent 30% or more of their household income on housing. The 2013 fair market rent for a two-bedroom unit in Henderson County is \$777/month.

In Henderson County, the estimated average wage for a renter is \$10.03. In order to afford the Fair Market Rent for a two bedroom apartment at this wage,

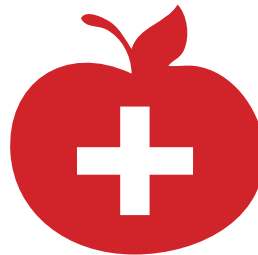
a renter must work



60
52

hours a week,
weeks a year.

A Healthy Start



All young people need healthy bodies, healthy minds, and healthful habits resulting from regular health care and needed treatment, good nutrition and exercise, health education and healthy role models.

There has been a significant decrease in the number of babies born to mothers ages 15-19 since 2009, proof that accredited parenting programs are working. In spite of this tremendous progress,

the number of repeat pregnancies is still one in four, and teen childbearing costs North Carolina taxpayers about \$392 million annually.

In 2010, the US Census estimates 25.3% of Henderson County children under the age of 18 were living below the poverty threshold. This is equal to approximately 5,567 children. The child poverty rate increased from 2005, when an estimated 22.6% of Henderson County children under age 18 were living below the poverty threshold.

A look at the long term data shows an increase in the number of Henderson County's children enrolled in public health insurance, but 9% of children under the age of 18 still had no health insurance coverage in 2011. North Carolina has continually been ranked high among the states who administer age-appropriate immunizations, with 97% of North Carolina children immunized by school entry.

The state data shows that prescription drug use is on the rise with one in five students admitting to using drugs such as OxyContin, Percet, Demerol, Adderall, Ritalin, or Xanax without a doctor's prescription. The second most common substances abused are inhalants and crack/cocaine.

An Effective Education

All young people need and deserve the intellectual development, motivation, and marketable skills that equip them for successful work and lifelong learning. These result from having quality learning environments, challenging expectations, and consistent guidance.

Only half of the child care centers in our county serve infants despite the increased need for care, due to the high cost associated with providing this service. We are also seeing the effects that rising costs of childcare are having on the children and families in Henderson County.

The average cost of infant childcare in North Carolina is 61.6% more than the average tuition at a Public College.

Opportunities to Serve

Every Child in Henderson County will have the opportunity to serve by making a difference in the community and helping others.

There are ample opportunities for youth to volunteer and contribute to Henderson County as a community. Local organizations including the school system, civic clubs, youth councils and youth groups all have a way for youth to interact with their community and give back.

The 5 Promises.

By driving citizens to make a promise to the youth of Henderson County that we will make sure they have these resources, Henderson County will be helping them succeed academically, socially, and civically. The 5 Promises of Henderson County is the next phase of the United Agenda for Children intended to create a movement of change.

It will take all of us in the community to make it happen; those of us with power over the budgets and policies, those of us with the power of the vote, those of us with the power to focus organizations, and those of us with the power to impact a child in our life.

Infant child care consumes 13% of a family's budget in a dual-income household and consumes 43% of the budget in a single-income household.

Approximately 13,300 children are attending Henderson County public schools for the 2012-2013 school year. **Currently, more than half (55.5%), of all the children enrolled in grades K-12 are enrolled in free and reduced price meals programs, slightly higher than North Carolina's state average.**

The cohort graduation rate in Henderson County is 82.9%; above the state average for North Carolina, and the Balfour Education Center succeeded in adding to the number of high school graduates in Henderson County by providing an alternative educational experience, ensuring students have the opportunity to excel and become contributing members of society.

Henderson County students are consistently taking the SAT and ACT tests at lower rates than students in the state as a whole.

However, Henderson County students who go on to state colleges are performing well. **Of the Henderson County graduates accepted to UNC System schools, achievement is high, with indicators showing numbers above the state average.**



**Children & Family
Resource Center**

Community. Kids. Connections.

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