

# Many Lane families fear poverty



(AP) — Many Lane County families are worried about coming up with money for clothing, food and medical care, a United Way survey shows.

One out of every six families surveyed for the organization's evaluation of community needs said their most serious problem was to meet life's basic necessities.

About 16 percent have difficulty putting food on the table and paying for rent and clothing, said the yearlong survey made public this week. About 23 percent were unable to pay for a doctor or prescriptions.

The United Way of Lane County, an agency that coordinates charitable giving to local non-profit agencies, randomly selected 400 county households for the survey.

Ed Weeks, a University associate professor who donated time for the project, said the survey indicates people are worse off since United Way of Lane County did its first evaluation five years ago.

"The most striking thing to me was the extent to which financial hardship now is the overwhelming concern of people in this county," Weeks said. "I was a little surprised."

The survey also found about a quarter said they couldn't afford medical insurance or leisure activities.

**The findings likely will mean a shift in priorities as United Way decides early next year how to allocate its annual donations.**

About 22 percent said they couldn't find full-time work and 37 percent said they had experienced anxiety, stress and depression related to their economic situations.

In the first survey in 1987, Lane County residents listed abuse, crime, unemployment, household violence and delinquency as the greatest threats facing their communities.

"This time, the results are quite different at the top of the list," said United Way spokeswoman Janet Anderson.

The findings likely will mean a shift in priorities as United Way decides early next year how to allocate its annual donations, said Priscilla Gould, the agency's executive director.

Two and one-half weeks into its annual fundraising campaign, United Way has raised 12 percent of its \$2.4 million goal.

About 85 percent of funds will be distributed to 70 social service programs run by 50 social service agencies throughout Lane County.

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