



Esperamos que esta publicación le interese. Aunque las personas entrevistadas aquí son inmigrantes, no debemos olvidar las otras culturas representadas en la comunidad de Springfield y todos los idiomas hablados aquí. Tenemos todos una responsabilidad de ayudar a las personas en la comunidad, para que se sientan seguras y unidas. Posiblemente Ud. se está preguntando, "¿qué puedo hacer yo para ponerme cómodos a mis vecinos?"

Aquí son algunas sugerencias:

Tenga paciencia.

Conozca las otras culturas y sus creencias. Las diferencias pueden ser interesantes, y las semejanzas pueden sorprenderle.

Participe en los eventos y actividades de la iglesia, la escuela, el barrio, o el club.

Enseñe tolerancia a sus hijos, mostrándola a través de sus acciones.

Prepárese para las nuevas experiencias.

The Springfield-Greene County Health Department would like to thank the participating families for allowing us to share their thoughts and experiences. A special thank you is also extended to Farrow Vaiden, María Pilar Martínez and Diana Batista who so graciously lent their interpreter skills to make this project possible.

A special heart-felt thank you goes to Esther Webster, not only for her valuable assistance on this project, but also for her tremendous contribution to our community. She is truly a public health partner and has been instrumental in helping us carry out our mission of "Helping people live longer, healthier, happier lives."

Every effort was taken to assure the accuracy of the translations included in this report card. Any discrepancies are further evidence of the difficulties encountered when dealing with language barriers.



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## 2005 COMMUNITY HEALTH REPORT CARD

### THE FACES OF IMMIGRATION

Brought to you by the Springfield-Greene County Health Department  
in celebration of Public Health Week, April 4-8.



Poor Home, New York City Tenement, 1910  
Photo by Lewis Hine (masters-of-photography.com)

*"Give me your tired, your poor,  
your huddled masses yearning to be free..."*



### RESOURCES

Cox Care Mobile  
Servicio medico gratuito a niños.  
(417) 269-5437

Westside Public Health Center  
Centro de vacunación  
(417) 874-1220

The Kitchen Medical and Dental Clinic  
Atención médica y dental gratuitos a  
personas de escasos recursos y sin  
seguro médico.  
(417) 837-1504

Women, Infant and Children (WIC)  
Ayuda nutricional y educación para  
mujeres embarazadas, bebés y niños.  
(417) 864-1079

Grupo Latinoamericano  
Programas culturales y educativos.  
(417) 865-0608

Ozarks Technical Community College  
Clases de Inglés  
(417) 895-7147

Centro Multicultural "Mano a Mano"  
Centro de consejería, y orientación  
familiar. Programas para toda la  
familia.  
(417) 879-8500



*"What do you wish you'd known before coming to the United States?"*

That was the question asked of four Hispanic families in our community. Here are their translated words.

*"I wish I had known about WIC services and the doctors available here. If I had, I would have come sooner. Yes, I would do it over again."*  
-Maria

*"I would have liked to have known how to drive."*  
-Alma

*"I thought it would be easier to find work here than it really is. I wish I had known more about American money, like how to count pennies, nickels and quarters. I also didn't realize it would be so hard to learn English. Yes, I'd do it again because the government here has helped us, especially with the children and the pregnancy. Our government in Mexico doesn't offer this much help."*  
-Maria

*"The most important thing we wish we'd known was English."*  
-José

...These words by Emma Lazarus were added to the Statue of Liberty in 1903 and have welcomed millions to Ellis Island. In fact, between 1892 and 1954, twelve million immigrants voyaged across the sea, forsaking the life they knew for a new life they could only imagine. Among the reasons they came included religious and political freedom, employment opportunities and prosperity. While the immigrants' new lives were full of opportunities, there were also many challenges. The language barrier was a major obstacle. Lack of monetary resources forced many into tenement living. These tenements were often overcrowded, lacked proper sanitation and propagated communicable diseases. Limited job skills compelled many immigrants to work long hours for little pay.

Thankfully, with government intervention and the advancement of public health, many of these challenges have been overcome. Today we have regulations governing the work week, overtime compensation, and safe working conditions. We have regulations that help assure the safety of water and food supplies. Homes and apartment buildings must meet health and safety standards. Vaccines are available for many communicable diseases and are provided at no cost through local public health agencies. But much remains to be done. The language barrier continues to demand our attention. The Ozarks is a rediscovered destination for immigrants from around the world. The Hispanic population is among the fastest growing in our community. What are their special challenges? Perhaps no one can lend us better insight than Esther Webster...

Esther Webster grew up in Mexico, studied English all through school but possessed no great desire to come to the United States. That all changed when she met a man, an American missionary, fell in love and married. After seven years in southern California, the Webster family, which now included two small children, moved to the Springfield area in pursuit of a safer environment. Shortly thereafter in 1997, Esther began providing interpreter services on a voluntary basis at a local Hispanic church. What began as a volunteer position soon became a career as her services were in high demand at other churches, medical facilities, schools and the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program.

Esther identifies "language, education level and status" as the most common barriers experienced by Hispanic immigrants. These by themselves or in combination can affect almost every aspect of an immigrant's life, including the ability to secure adequate employment, access medical care or tend to daily activities. However, she does see a brighter future. "While English is a very difficult language, many Hispanic adults are willing to learn. Their children are becoming fluent through the school system and share this knowledge with their parents. The English as a Second Language program (ESL) is taught in Springfield schools with adult classes offered at Ozarks Technical Community College," states Esther. She believes there is a great willingness on the part of the community to provide services to immigrant families. WIC is a prime example. Esther remembers interpreting for a mother with three small children. The mother had not eaten for several days so that her children would not go hungry. WIC was able to provide the family with not only food vouchers, but nutritional education and moral support as well.

While Esther's interpreter services are a skill, she sees them as a privilege. "Through interpreting, I can serve God, give him honor and glory and help someone else."

Sources: www.americaparknetwork.com and www.murthy.com

## COMMUNITY HEALTH DATA



NC = No Significant Change

Greene County 2003

5-Year Mean

Trend

Missouri 2003

Maternal Health (percent of total live births)	Low Birth Weight	7.7	7.0	Up	8.0
	Mothers as Medicaid Participants	50.5	46.8	Up	45.4
	First Trimester Prenatal Care	89.5	89.3	NC	88.5
	Births to Mothers Under Age 18	3.1	3.9	Down	3.5
	Mothers Smoking During Pregnancy	21.0	19.4	Up	18.1
Children's Health and Wellness	Child Abuse and Neglect (rate per 1000 children)	10.9	13.1	Down	6.8
	Immunization Rate (percentage of children, public clinics)	87.2	90.4	NC	84.9
	Infant Deaths (per 1000 live births)	7.1	6.9	NC	7.8
Communicable Disease (incidence per 100,000 population)	Gonorrhea	113.0	80.6	Up	157.1
	Tuberculosis	3.7	4.4	Down	2.3
	HIV	3.3	5.9	Down	6.9
Deaths (crude rate per 100,000 population)	Cardiovascular Disease	354.4	378.5	Down	369.9
	Lung Cancer	65.9	70.3	Down	66.1
	Breast Cancer	19.5	15.8	Up	16.2
	Motor Vehicle Crashes	20.3	16.4	Up	21.1
	Suicide	13.4	13.5	NC	12.1



We hope this report card has given you food for thought. While we took the liberty of profiling the immigrant population, we must not forget all the different cultures represented in the Springfield area and the many languages that are spoken here. Each of us has a responsibility to make our community one in which everyone feels safe and connected. You may be asking yourself, "What can I do to help my new neighbors feel more comfortable?"

Here are a few suggestions:

Be patient.

Learn about other cultures and their beliefs. The differences may intrigue you, and the similarities may just surprise you.

Organize and participate in outreach activities through your church, civic organization, school, neighborhood, club or work group.

Teach children acceptance, and let them witness it through your actions.

Stretch your comfort level and be open to new experiences.

*"Almost always the creative dedicated minority has made the world better."*

-Martin Luther King, Jr.