Data Sources. Although data on the smallest local units of analysis (such as the neighborhood or census tract) are certainly powerful in terms of supporting the argument that something must be done, data on the same conditions or problems at the county, state, or national levels can also be useful in providing a basis of comparison against which local figures can be judged. Additional statis- tical references based on census data include USA Counties, Statistical Abstract of the United States, and the State and Metropolitan Area Data Book, all of which can be accessed online. Other sources include local social service agencies, the United Way, community councils, centralized data-collection resource centers, centralized in- formation and referral agencies, law-enforcement agencies, hospitals, and school district offices. This resource includes such data categories (for both counties and cities) as racial/ethnic breakdown, age, gender, the number of people with less than a high school education, and the number of people in poverty.

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