

# WHO IS ALICE?

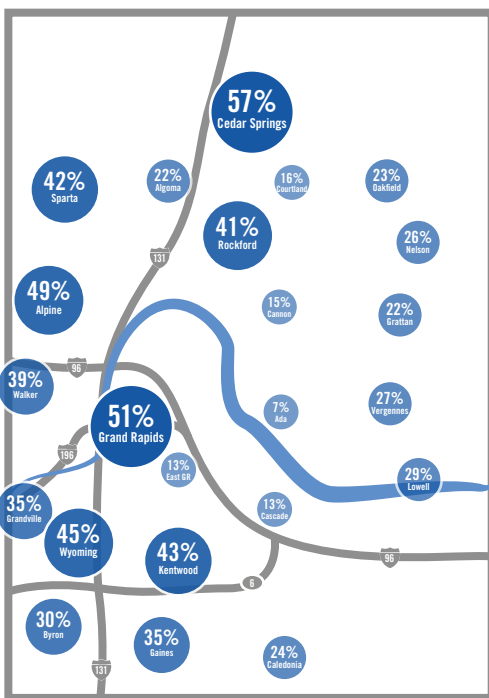
*Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed*

ALICE – Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed – represents those in our communities who are working yet still struggling to make ends meet. ALICE households earn more than the U.S. poverty level, but less than the basic cost of living in the county. When ALICE is combined with the number of people living at or below the poverty line, we find the total number of people who are struggling to afford necessities like housing, child care, food, health care, and transportation.

## ALICE IN OUR COMMUNITY

The ALICE research project found that 39 percent of Kent County households are at or below the ALICE threshold. Most of these men and women of all ages and races get up each day to go to work but bring home a paycheck that does not stretch enough to cover their family's basic needs. ALICE could be your nursing assistant, childcare provider, home health aide, security guard, teaching assistant, store clerk, and office assistant – workers essential to every community's success but who struggle to survive on what these jobs pay.

**We all know ALICE.** ALICE is our neighbors, friends, coworkers, or family members.



ALICE households in Kent County.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP ALICE

The everyday hardships of ALICE families impact the wider community too. By raising awareness about ALICE, sharing ALICE's story, supporting programs that help ALICE, and stimulating an informed discussion among residents and leaders, we can improve the well-being of ALICE households and our communities together.

More affordable child care, housing, and transportation options can help ALICE families make ends meet. Job training can help prepare ALICE families to move up the ladder to better-paying jobs. More opportunity for high-quality education will ensure school and career success for children.

Learn more about how you can help ALICE and download the full Michigan ALICE Report at [www.hmwu.org/alice](http://www.hmwu.org/alice)

**A THRIVING COMMUNITY FOR ALL**

[hmwu.org](http://hmwu.org)



Heart of West Michigan  
United Way

# ALICE IN KENT COUNTY

## 2015 Point-in-Time Data

**Population:** 636,369 | **Number of Households:** 237,259

**Median Household Income:** \$54,340 (state average: \$51,084)

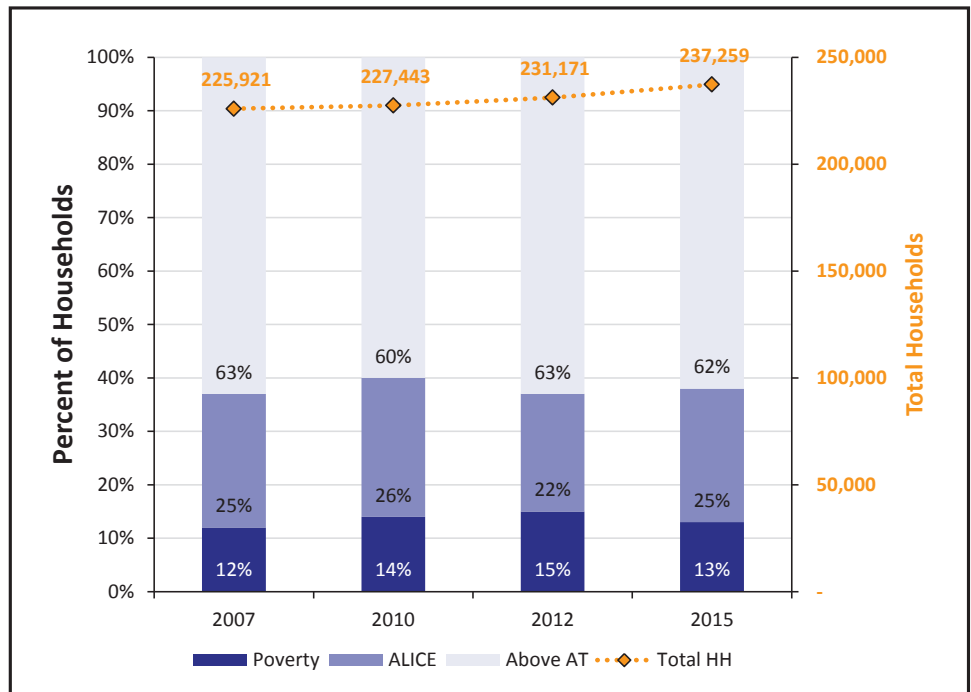
**Unemployment Rate:** 5.3% (state average: 7.2%)

**ALICE Households:** 25% (state average: 25%); **Poverty Households:** 13% (state average: 15%)

## How many households are struggling?

**ALICE** is an acronym for **A**sset Limited, **I**ncome **C**onstrained, **E**mloyed – households that earn more than the Federal Poverty Level, but less than the basic cost of living for the county (the ALICE Threshold, or AT). Combined, the number of poverty and ALICE households equals the total population struggling to afford basic needs. The number of households below the ALICE Threshold changes over time; households move in and out of poverty and ALICE as circumstances improve or worsen. The Great Recession, from 2007 to 2010, caused hardship for many families. Conditions started to improve in 2010 and 2012 for some, but not for all.

## Households by Income, 2007 to 2015



## What does it cost to afford the basic necessities?

The bare-minimum Household Survival Budget does not include any savings, leaving a household vulnerable to unexpected expenses. ALICE households typically earn above the Federal Poverty Level of \$11,770 for a single adult and \$24,250 for a family of four, but less than the Household Survival Budget.

## Household Survival Budget, Kent County

	SINGLE ADULT	2 ADULTS, 1 INFANT, 1 PRESCHOOLER
<b>Monthly Costs</b>		
Housing	\$519	\$737
Child Care	\$-	\$1,184
Food	\$184	\$609
Transportation	\$349	\$697
Health Care	\$184	\$707
Miscellaneous	\$142	\$428
Taxes	\$181	\$343
<b>Monthly Total</b>	<b>\$1,559</b>	<b>\$4,705</b>
<b>ANNUAL TOTAL</b>	<b>\$18,708</b>	<b>\$56,460</b>
<b>Hourly Wage</b>	<b>\$9.35</b>	<b>\$28.23</b>

Sources: 2015 Point-in-Time Data: American Community Survey. ALICE Demographics: American Community Survey; the ALICE Threshold. Budget: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD); U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA); Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS); Internal Revenue Service (IRS); Michigan Department of Treasury; Early Childhood Investment Corporation.