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The Flint Women's Study

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Goals

- Describe the hopes, dreams, needs, and contributions of women living in Flint and Genesee County
- Build on this information to improve the lives and well-being of women in the area

Why?



Big picture

- Who are we?
 - MSU Flint-based researchers and Flint community members
- The process
 - Interviewed 100 people who are women living in Genesee County or people serving women living in Genesee County
 - Everyone we interviewed is helping women in their own way, whether as a friend, a family member, a mentor, a pastor, by teaching practical skills, or by making things that other women need.
 - Now that we have the information, we have invited everyone back (plus a few others) to talk about what we could do together to empower and assist women in Genesee County. This effort will bring all of our talents and skills together on behalf of Flint-area women.
 - This is the goal for this morning

➤ Why we need all of us...

- 5 community and academic partners ran the study
- There are 100+ of you, representing an even larger network of people and organizations
- You know things we don't know
- You have skills, assets, and networks we don't have
- We need all of us to address the needs of women in the city
- Engaging everyone multiplies impact
- Participation → ownership → capacity → sustained programs and progress.



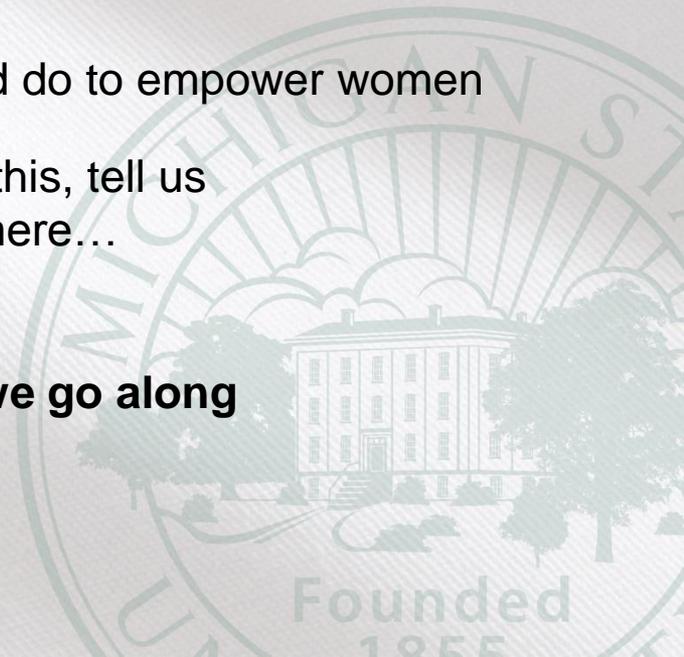
➤ Schedule for this workshop

- 9:00-10:30 Present results and suggestions from people we interviewed
- 10:30-10:45 Discussion and questions as a large group
- 10:45-11:30 Breakout groups to discuss potential responses and initiatives
- 11:30-11:50 Report back to the group, invite others to participate as needed

The goal is to leave with action items that people/agencies here are willing to take on. Key initiatives. We can do some things, but the main goal is to catalyze all of you to help do what you can. GOAL IS SOLUTIONS.

- PAPAS: Pick a place and start... anything
- No one sector can do it all
- Listen to the results and think about what you could do to empower women toward solutions
- If you know a resource or program that addresses this, tell us
- Or, if you do things that aren't even addressed on here...
- Meet back in 3-6 months to report

Please ask questions/comment as we go along





Interview questions

- What are the greatest needs of women in Flint?
- What are their deepest unmet needs?
- What do they suffer over?
- What do they lose sleep over?
- What are their challenges?
- What do they want?
- What are their biggest assets?



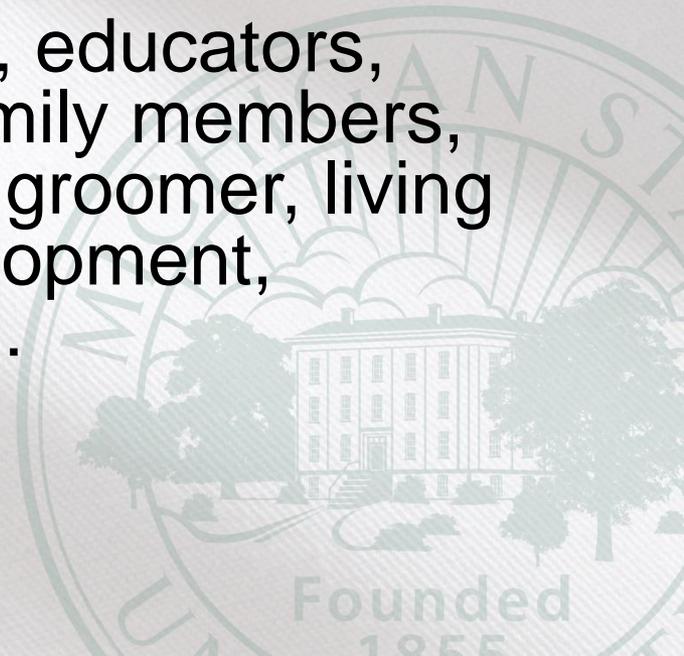
- What do women in Flint need most when they are pregnant?
- When they first have their babies?
- When their children are young?
- Needs of moms in general?
- Needs of young women?
- Needs of older women?
- Spiritual/religious needs? Physical health? Mental health? Relationships? Families?
- How about needs of differently abled women (deaf, blind, cognitively impaired)?
- LGBTQ women?



- What would give women here more hope and dignity?
- If you have one wish for women in the county, what would it be?
- Is there a question that isn't here?
Something I should have asked but didn't?
- Why did you agree to be interviewed?
- Are you interested in being part of whatever effort comes out of these interviews? (98 said yes and 2 said maybe)

► People we interviewed were...

- 94 women and 6 men
- 52 African-American, 41 White, and 7 who identified as something else
- 87 were both women living in the county and serving women living in the county
- Ages ranged from 18-84 (average of 48)
- They were counselors, pastors, educators, doctors, volunteers, friends, family members, social workers, teachers, a pet groomer, living in shelters, did workforce development, librarians, attorneys, students...



> The Belongingness framework

Belonging to self

- Self-confidence and self-worth
- Physical safety
- Psychological safety
- Financial security
- Childcare
- Women's education
- Children's education
- Jobs
- Financial security
- Transportation
- Healthcare (physical and mental)
- Housing
- (Life skills)
- (Food)
- (General life stability)

Belonging to others

- Physical and sexual abuse
- Romantic and partner relationships
- Sex, birth control and family planning
- Family relationships
- Grandparent caregiving
- Feeling valued
- Friendship and non-family support
- Mentoring
- Trust

Belonging to something larger than self

- Having meaning in life
- Having a voice
- Spirituality and religion
- Role and position of women in society
- Betterment of Flint
- Ways women serve others



➤ Additional codes

What to do

- Assets
 - Existing services
 - Human assets
 - Physical assets
- Suggestions for what to do

Populations

- Young women
- Pregnant women and new moms
- Moms in general
- Middle-aged women
- Older women
- Minority women
- Differently abled
- LGBTQIA
- North Flint



If you had one wish for every woman in the county, what would it be?

*Free quality education (including college) for all. *To know and value themselves. *To have the desires of their hearts. *hangout spot for women to talk to other women, a nice closet to trade clothes. *To find God and through that find joy and peace. *Self-esteem and confidence (“you are a gift”). *Jobs with childcare. *To be successful leaders. *To come together and love each other. *Enough money to take care of their needs. *To know her purpose, to heal from trauma. *No more killing would go on in any of our families, that the senseless pain would stop. *Their basic needs would be met: housing food, clothes. *Free high-quality childcare. *That it was easier to survive. *Good health. *Safety. *Truth. *to be successful with what they want to do. *Someone to go to all the houses in Flint and ask – what is keeping you from reaching your top goal. *That they could afford pampering twice per year to give them the strength to go on. *To know the resources available in the county. *Peace of mind. *That they will be listened to and be safe. *That they could be physically and mentally healthy and have healthy relationships. If they didn’t have to worry about being healthy, they could work on being happy. *Reliable transportation to a steady job. *More shelters. *To love themselves and know they are worthy. *Something (a home, a car) that is theirs. *Partners to help carry the load. *A good paying job. *Hope for their children’s future. *Free education. *Peace and confidence in themselves. *To feel like they and their children will be safe. *Homes. *Better role models. *To love themselves. *Peace of mind. *Access to the supports they need to take care of themselves and their families. *Peace of mind and happiness. *A real sense of empowerment. *No lead, poison, or deception. *Love – every aspect of love – to feel it, touch it, see it, want it, and not push it away. *To know that she is enough. *Peace. *To be happy, healthy, and wise to be able to do what she needs to do for her family. *To be well. *That their needs are met. *To be safe from trafficking, abuse, and violence. *A healthy happy, and prosperous life. *To live up to her full potential and meet her basic needs. *To dare to be themselves. *Long, paid maternity leave. *Respect, acceptance, and a community. *To pursue their dreams. *Less racism, sexism, homophobia, poverty, and misogyny and more access to resources. *To be able to support themselves financially. *To be seen, heard, and believed. *That they could be successful in whatever they do. *That they come together to get and give help. *That they know they are enough. *Happy, healthy, and meaningful lives. *Peace and calm. *Someone who truly loves, teaches, and mentors them. *Financial stability. *Peace. *Joy and happiness. *That their children are healthy, safe, and educated. *A decent income to meet their basic needs. *To be content. *Decent employment that allows them to support their family. *Good jobs and to not have to worry about money. *A better tomorrow that is safe. *To be treated equally. *To have opportunities. *To have their student loans paid. *To be secure, independent, and powerful. *To feel safe and secure. *To believe in herself. *To live up to their full potential. *Sanity!



Belonging to Self



Self-confidence and self-worth

Current situation	Suggestions
<p>Many women feel they are failures Some women feel they are stuck and their situations can't change Some women feel discouraged and powerless There are gender stereotypes about worth of women being tied to their appearance or having a partner</p> <p><i>"I think it really comes back to self-esteem for the most part, 'cuz we have this sayin'. It's like when you know your self-worth, you quit givin' people discounts, right? A lot of them really don't. They don't see the value that they have. They just see they need to do this or they need to do that. They don't give themselves credit for how far they've come, the things that they've gone through and overcame. They only see the road that still has to be walked or ran or whatever the case may be."</i> ID 129</p>	<p>Listen, empathize Be a friend A safe place to talk Point out and acknowledge women's successes, large and small Tell them that they are wonderful and amazing, wise, worthwhile, that they have important things to offer Tell them over and over and over Showcase women from similar situations who made it The support and love of other women Reach out to and get to know those around you Teaching, support, guidance so they can succeed at their goals Help them set boundaries and expectations of their partners Opportunities to try new things, to lead, to contribute Volunteer opportunities for older women Counseling and classes to learn about themselves</p>



➤ Self-confidence and self-worth

- *If there's anything that Flint women need is a sense of value and worth and just how incredibly strong they are. I don't think they hear that enough. I don't think they hear that they have strength and that they're strong because all they see is their kids and they're running wild and they can't control them. They feel like complete failures and they're not. They're just part of their environment and their kids are wonderful, beautiful people and they're wonderful, beautiful. Whoever the hell we can get to tell them that is who need to get. **ID 101***
- *How would you help all the women be confident? By sharin' and just sittin' down and sharin' with them, just sharin'. Yeah, havin' them share and you share with them of your experiences in life, your ups and your down, your mistakes. See, women don't wanna share. They don't wanna say, "I made a mistake with this," you know. They don't wanna say that. So, tell the truth. Just tellin' the truth and nobody gets to nowhere alone. You know you gotta have some help. You gotta wanna do better for yourself. You gotta want more. You gotta want. **ID173***



Physical safety

Current situation	Suggestions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Partner violence• Sexual assault• “Driving while Black”• Fear their husbands or children won’t come home• Fear of someone breaking in to their house at night• Childhood trauma “<i>bad things happen to sad kids</i>” ID 151• Gun violence• Physical assaults in neighborhoods• Harassment in the MTA• Gang activities <p><i>I was inside the City of Flint, and we had issues with people breaking into our home. They were selling drugs across the street, and our house was spray-painted with gang symbols so people knew that it was okay to sell drugs in our neighborhood. ID 326</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clean, safe playgrounds• Better sidewalks and bus routes• Make sure girls have homes, opportunities, feel valued and heard, so they aren’t vulnerable to pimps• Summer jobs for teens, after school programs for kids and teens• Ads on buses saying that partner violence, sexual assault, and trafficking won’t be tolerated here• Empower men to speak up against partner violence and sexual violence• A comfortable, safe community space for women that’s easy to get to; “a safe place to be”• Gun buy-back programs – mentoring for kids to stay in school



➤ Physical safety

- *I'm talkin' almost every single day. Shoot outside. Shootin'. My kids can never lay outside ever. Abandoned house right next-door to me. They just tore one down. The city came and tore down and stuff. It's a pervert across the street. Drug house next to his. **ID 206***
- *They suffer and lose sleep over their husbands and sons... that they won't be safe, won't come home, or won't have the opportunities that they need because of what they look like. **ID 102***
- *[She doesn't feel safe in her neighborhood. Her marriage is also ending]. She's terrified to leave her home. Her home is her safety net, but her home is also the place where she feels most broken. **ID 259***



➤ Physical safety: suggestions

- *These pimps promise the girls the world. They say, 'I'm the only one that can keep you safe, I'm the only one that will provide for you, I'm the only one that cares about you, I'm the only one that loves you,' and they're actually right. We wanna create a community where the pimps aren't right. What we have to do is we have to value our girls, and we have to give them opportunity, and we have to build them up, and we have to make sure that they're not going without, so that they don't need what the pimp is initially selling them. That's what I would, first and foremost. That could be done through school programs, afterschool programs in particular, that really focus on—our girls are creative, they're artistic, they have a lot of things that we can nurture. Women and girls have a different way of expressing themselves, and they need outlets to do that and have their voice be valued and heard. They need opportunities for vocational education. They need opportunities for employment. A majority of the girls that I work with and the majority of the families—anywhere between 60 and 80 percent at any given time of the families that I'm working with are homeless. **ID140***



➤ Physical safety: suggestions

- *We need men to come to the table. Because I think men—man will listen to another man. I think it's gonna take men partnering with us... I think if we have leaders in our communities, in our churches, in our schools, I think if we have some male facilitators partner with us, work with young men, I think that'll make a difference. Because as women, women together, we are fierce and we are strong and we are driving force to bring change and empower women, but I think it's gonna take men to come to the table and to be the driving force to help empower men and to get men to understand that when someone says a sexual joke or look at a particular young lady that's walkin' past and make a inappropriate comment, it's gonna take another man to step up and say, "We shouldn't do that. That's not appropriate." That's what I think we need to—we need to have more men come to the table and be a part of our change. **ID 303***



Psychological safety

Current situation	Suggestions
<p>Lack of a sense of safety and security</p> <p><i>“Women have been invited to the table, but they’re not always welcome.” ID 326</i></p> <p><i>“It's easy for them to take a guarded place because they don't feel like they would be safe. They don't feel like they can trust others. Even if they had, many times, something to offer to that conversation, they would only maybe sprinkle out a little bit to test the waters because of... fear and the experiences of their words being turned around by media, their words being turned around by someone else of a different race.” ID 125</i></p>	<p>A comfortable, safe community space for women that’s easy to get to; “a safe place to be”</p> <p>Opportunities for women to connect and talk and be heard without being judged</p> <p>Role models and mentors</p> <p>Quality childcare so moms don’t worry while they’re at work or school</p> <p>Lift up the women around you. Help them be strong so they can help others be strong.</p> <p>Teach them skills (fixing lights, cars) so they aren’t afraid to be alone</p> <p>Especially support women in abusive relationships</p>



➤ Psychological safety

- *Fear, fear I'm gonna be left out. Fear I'm gonna be judged. Fear I may be subjected to reprisal. Fear that the door may be closed to me because I've associated myself with you, fear... I think the greatest need is to have the environment or such as a culture to allow us to be free to be who we are. You know to get that point of freedom, freedom to speak, freedom to act and freedom to be visionaries and freedoms to act out on what it is that we see as best for us as individual women and as women as a whole, the freedom to support without being ridiculed, the freedom to not feel that we have to have the permission of men to accomplish the goal that we have set for ourselves.*
ID 262



➤ Psychological safety: suggestions

- I think about a comforting space, where women could just walk in, would be a renovated house, just a renovated residence, not a big, brick, stark building, where you go in and there's all these cubicles, but just a house that has some little spaces that are private, where a worker and a woman could sit down, just sit down and have a conversation... private, confidential. Not necessarily a mental health therapist, but someone that they could just share some of their thoughts and then maybe be given some resources.... There's a lot of women within the community that don't have what you would call any formal higher-educational background, but they're very wise. They have a lot of knowledge and a lot of ideas that they would like to impart and share and mentor. That's what I see. So that when that woman finishes that conversation, she knows that she can just stop in, or she can just call. Someone will listen to her for ten minutes and then tell her, "You're doing the best you can. Here's a—we talked about some of the things that are out there. Maybe this would be something you might want to try. Or have you thought about this?" Sometimes that's all they need. They just need to be able to verbalize it without fear of any kind of repercussion. **ID 320***



Childcare

Current situation	Suggestions
<p>Lack of quality childcare: the good ones are located outside Flint</p> <p>Inadequate state support for childcare</p> <p>Affordability is a concern: poverty interacts with the quality of childcare accessed</p> <p>Childcare impacts on earning capacity: women work shorter hours or quit work</p> <p>Childcare responsibilities interfere with school and other roles</p>	<p>Childcare with flexible hours for moms with 2nd or 3rd shift or weekend jobs</p> <p>Affordable, quality childcare in the city</p> <p>DHHS pay higher reimbursements for childcare</p> <p>Transportation to after school programs</p> <p>Free childcare for students on Flint university campuses (Mott, UM-Flint – it could be a student job)</p> <p>Train and pay childcare workers better (this would make good quality childcare and good jobs)</p> <p>Ask women what they need and involve them in providing it</p>



Childcare

- *Childcare is just extremely too high – the rate of single mothers, and the cost of childcare. Up until Monday, I was payin' \$640 a month for my daughter. It was not subjective to my income. It was this is what you have to pay. If you're making \$8.40 an hour, there's no way. The secretary at my job can't even afford the daycare that my daughter goes to. They can't get jobs. You have to consider a plethora of them have been raped, molested, abused in the foster care system. They're not trusting of just sending their children anywhere, so they can't make ends meet. **ID 179***
- *I don't think there's enough options for affordable childcare that is good enough, sometimes the families can't always do it. I think they're expected to. Again, women with multiple children have jobs. Sometimes they gotta' go to—the cost of childcare, I think offsets those salaries. **ID 106***
- *I think they wanna have quality childcare and by quality I don't mean necessarily in a center. They could have friends and family, but to know that they can go grocery shopping and they don't have to worry about the boyfriend taking care of an infant. I mean we see way too many of these cases where these young boys, men, have no idea what they're doing and end up doing tragic things. So, I think any mother is going to wanna have safe, affordable, quality childcare. **ID 305***



Education for children

Current situation	Recommendations
<p>Education is a tool to break cycle of poverty and injustice</p> <p>Education may not be encouraged</p> <p>Sometimes kids just don't have a model or a sense that there is a future for them</p> <p>Schooling disrupted by poverty, lack of housing and overall instability</p> <p>Failing graduation and higher dropout rates in high schools</p> <p>Poor quality, under-resourced schools in the city of Flint</p> <p>Closing down of schools affected sense of belongingness for children</p> <p>Transportation problems- longer travel time for parents to drop-off kids</p> <p>Bullying</p> <p>High student-teacher ratio</p>	<p>Encourage and value education; "make kids stay in school."</p> <p>Teach kids that "education equals money."</p> <p>Provide stipends to students to keep them in school</p> <p>Ensure reliable transportation to schools</p> <p>Fund schools</p> <p>Afterschool programs</p> <p>Interaction with older adults</p> <p>Teachers live in the area- so children will have role models</p> <p>Better salaries for teachers</p> <p>Competent management and educational leadership to support teachers</p> <p>Bringing people from these schools who have succeeded to speak/mentor</p> <p>Introduce programs about gun safety in schools</p>



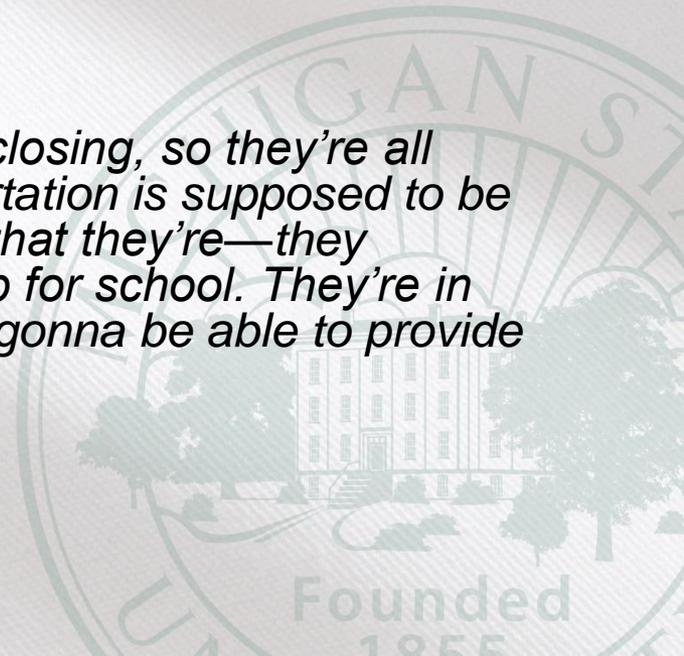
Child education

Poverty as a challenge for education

- *Education is empowering. There's already a difficulty in graduating high school in this town because of many things, but I think because of the chaos of poverty and then the transient residents because a lot of people are functionally homeless even though they're living with a roof over their head, but they're living with this friend or that friend. There's, I think what I mean by the chaos of poverty is really the lack of constancy... Even if you don't have money, if you have an education then you have a vision. I think getting people educated is crucial and right above eating and safety and shelter. **ID 115***

Need to reliable transportation for schools

- *The schools around Flint just keep closing and closing, so they're all crammed into just as few buildings and transportation is supposed to be supplied but I've heard from a few moms, now, that they're—they decided even after school—they signed them up for school. They're in school, and then they decided, "Well, we're not gonna be able to provide bussing." **ID 200 and 251***



Child education

- *Maybe showcase people that have been there, have done it and have succeeded. I was saying, I was in foster care until I graduated high school. Then it was up to me. Everybody was hands off; I was on my own. I didn't have anybody saying, hey, go to college. It's free for the first couple of years. Nobody encouraged it. I think to have more inspirational speakers, motivational speakers going to the schools and promoting it more. **ID 104***
- *[My daughter] learned early that **education equals money**. I just was told—and my parents were awesome... but I was just told, “You gotta go to school. You gotta go to school,” but they didn't know why to tell me to go to school, but my daughter—we were in the ministry, and the pastor says, “Education equals money.” When you say it like that, and then—and the pastor... —if you went to school, for your As, you would get—was it four bucks?... four for As, three for Bs, two for Cs... That was it. He paid the children for their grades because education equals money, and they would—and it wasn't a competition among the children. It was just they sat down with themselves, and they would work hard. ‘Course, they wanted the money, but he was also promoting them to go in school and—‘cause you couldn't just get good grades by [imitates humming] I want good grades. They had to actually study. That was how—what she went through with—through the ministry. Education equals money—he actually paid them for their grades when they brung up the report card. **111 and 141***



Women's education

Current situation

- Education improves earning, avenue for upward mobility
- Education increases women's independence, making them less vulnerable to violence
- Barriers include:
 - Pregnancy, illness, childcare, family member illnesses
 - Access to education depends on access to basic needs
 - Lack of educational role models
 - Racism, sexism, structural inequality
 - Vulnerable college students take on high debt and then drop out

Recommendations

- More childcare on college campuses in Flint for college students
- Mentoring young women, having examples in the community
- Representation of women in leadership
- A hub for women to support discussion of education and specific needs for women that are aspiring to either go back to school or to obtain a trade or certificate.
- Promise program for college should include older adults
- Trade job training opportunities (welder, electrician, plumber)



Women's education

- *Interviewer: What do you wish—what are the top three to five things you wish someone had taught you or you think that young women need to be taught?*
- *Interviewee: I wish they would have made me stay in school, number one. I think also education, cuz there are a lot of the ladies that may have dropped outta school, because they've had children early and education hopefully helps to get you the better paying jobs. When you have the children early, you put yourself on the backburner to put them to get it. It's just very extremely difficult to try to juggle the childcare. Even to have to be able to get childcare, to be able to go to school and try to do it all. Single parent moms tryin' to do it all, so they generally put themselves on the backburner, so that their kids can go forth. It leaves them behind the eight ball, because they can only get minimum wage jobs because of their educational background. That hinders them from having a better paying job with the money to be able to take care of their household. Maybe education would be—or some way to help those that are in that situation to still be able to obtain one for themselves. It's gonna be hard enough, but that keeps 'em in a low income bracket. Maybe have a lot of kids, but not enough to sustain the house or the apartment or whatever. Just barely makin' it. ID 201-206*



➤ Women's education

- *The lack of opportunity, a lot of times you become pigeonholed. The lack of encouragement, that's kind of broad. Education is not encouraged. It's not valued like it used to be. If my mother dropped out in tenth grade, then why should I go and graduate? Then once I graduate from high school, I see these people who are doing illegal things. They make more money than I do working at McDonald's. **We have to give them an opportunity to do better than what they see. ID 158***
- *I think there needs to be a hub for women in terms around education discussion and specific needs for women that are aspiring to either go back to school or to obtain some type of trade or certificate for that.. **ID 125***



Jobs for women

Current situation	Suggestions
<p>High rates of unemployment or under-employment</p> <p>Part-time jobs with no benefit packages</p> <p>Minimum wage jobs because of lack of education</p> <p>Working multiple minimum wage jobs</p> <p>Linked to access to transportation: not all jobs are on the main bus line</p> <p>Employability declines with age for older women</p> <p>Weaker/saturated job market in Genesee county, and specifically in Flint</p>	<p>Education and training opportunities (access to post-secondary school education)</p> <p>Better access to affordable quality childcare</p> <p>Access to reliable public transportation or lower car insurance costs</p> <p>Job training and mentors to help girls engage and stay in job training</p> <p>Mentors</p> <p>Job training for women other than college</p> <p>Examples of female plumbers, electricians, welders</p> <p>Incentivizing businesses to hire from within the community</p> <p>Help women start small businesses – cleaning businesses, community gardens</p> <p>Jobs that fit around kids’ school schedules</p> <p>For girls: quality education, after school activities, social interactions, a sense that there is a future for them...</p> <p>Employ people as peer educations for health, birth control, violence prevention, etc – this provides jobs and improves health</p>



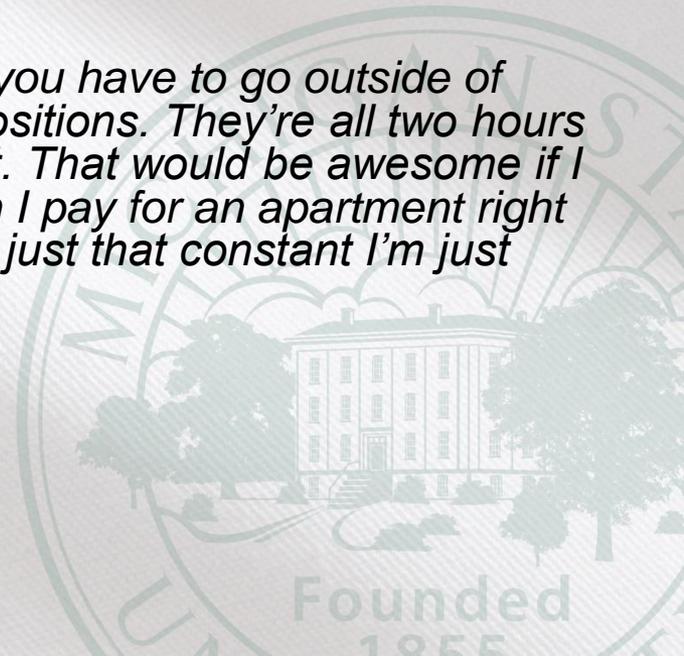
> Jobs

Societal: “The pink ghetto”

- *In the fields where women are predominant like teaching and nursing, you have wages that aren't comparable, and so, you never are able to get a mix of men into those industries 'cause they don't wanna for that kinda money especially if they've got all kinds of debt from school. Why would they do that? So, it's you know and the pink ghetto is everything from women who are doing the housekeeping jobs at hotels and the women who are the waitresses and the women who are the stylists and the nail technicians. Then you get to all of the women who are in retail selling clothes and stuff for your house. It just keeps going, going, going. **ID 305***

Local job market and transportation challenges

- *There are no jobs... They are never hiring. Then you have to go outside of Genesee County. Then I get emails for different positions. They're all two hours out. I'm like, that'd be great if my car could make it. That would be awesome if I knew, again, I could afford to live there or how can I pay for an apartment right off the bat because my car can't make it there. It's just that constant I'm just stuck here because I'm struggling. **ID 156***



> Jobs

- *Women... want a safe, clean, nurturing environment to raise them and their children in. They want to work. I haven't seen any of our women who don't want—who's able to work, who doesn't want a job. The thing of it is, is when they get a job, is that some of 'em—we had one woman working two jobs because she wanna provide for her family, but then she wasn't seein' her children... They wanna work. They want the American dream. I see that for every woman that walks through our door, whether she has income or not. Whether she gets disability. They want to live the American dream like everyone else. **ID 303***
- *If you turn 16 and you don't want to go to school anymore, you don't have to. You can just quit. Well, that's fine, but then what are you gonna do? You have to be able to take care of yourself. I, personally, would like to see a lot of things that were removed from our formal education system, things that had to with building trades and vocational education, put back in, so that when teens graduate from high school, they have some kind of skill, something that they can do, if, for some reason, they do not go on to any other higher education. You like to cook? Great. Teach people to cook. They may not end up with a chef's degree, but they may be an excellent cook. Someone likes to be around kids. Well, maybe they don't go to college and get a—they're not a childcare specialist or early-education teacher, but they could have a skill that they could still get that—some kind of employment in the childcare industry because they have some kind of certificate. **ID 320***



➤ Financial insecurity

Current situation	Suggestions
<p>Chronic source of stress</p> <p>Low paying jobs</p> <p>Lack of financial literacy, money management</p> <p>Financial insecurity in young women leads to unhealthy relationships</p> <p>Older women on fixed incomes choose between medications and meals</p> <p>Financial insecurity influences food and lifestyle choices</p> <p>Generational poverty</p> <p>Utility bills (water, electricity) and insurance charges are higher in the city of Flint than elsewhere</p>	<p>Have food stamps or other assistance cover soap, deodorant, feminine hygiene products</p> <p>Deliver diapers to every doorstep</p> <p>Teach financial literacy, how to make/follow a budget: churches are one good place to do this</p> <p>Lower prescription costs or free medical care</p> <p>Raise the minimum wage</p> <p>Education and job training</p> <p>Affordable quality daycare</p> <p>Solving transportation problems to expand access to work</p> <p>More manufacturing jobs</p> <p>Lower taxes in the City of Flint to enable more companies to come in to the city</p> <p>Lower utility bills (water and consumers)</p> <p>Teach people to turn off lights or devices they are not using</p> <p>Teach drivers education in school (it's expensive)</p>



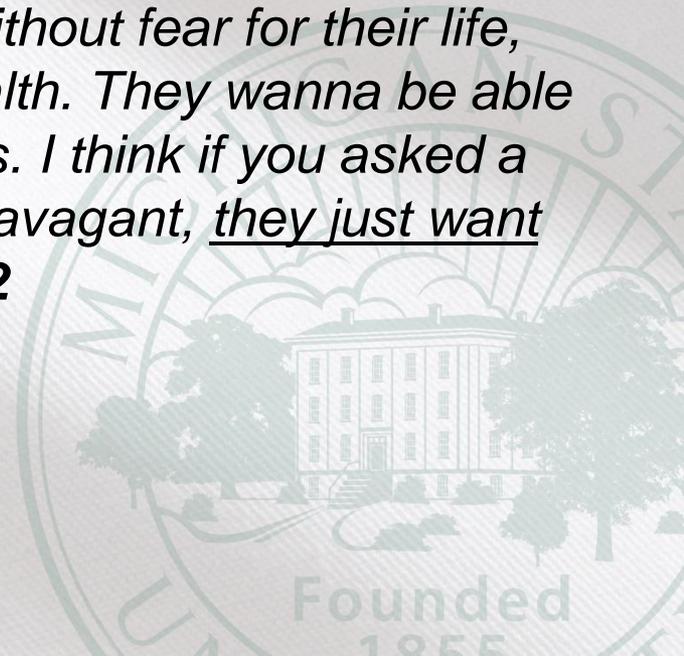
➤ Financial insecurity

- *Part of the depression is, “I have \$733. My rent is \$510. My utilities are \$210, and I don’t have a car, so I caught the bus to get my things. Can you help me get those deodorant and dish detergent because I’m negative \$10 in, now, so that spirals me back into a depression. I already struggle to get outta bed. If I had dish detergent there, it probably would motivate a little bit to, at least, clean my kitchen but, since I can’t afford it, I’ll just stay in bed. I might as well not even take my meds because seein’ those dirty dishes is gonna depress me anyway.” ID 179*
- *I think the women with children that they’re not gettin’ enough food stamps and they not—they don’t have the skills for a good payin’ job and I think they just is stressed. They just stressed. You got four babies and no help, and the money they give them is not enough to last for a whole month and so, I believe that that’s what it is. ID 110*
- *I had a lady tell me, “I can’t even afford pads this month.” Like I said, it’s easy to give away food, but that’s just a Band-Aid to the problem, and it often creates another problem because, if you have a Bridge card, and you say, “You have \$50 cash you’re about to spend at the grocery store, I’ll give you \$50 in food. Just give me the \$50 in cash to buy this,” is illegal. ...It’s, like, she’s not sayin’ I’ll give you \$50 for \$25, I’m just sayin’, dollar for dollar, you’re about to spend this \$50 in this store. Can I just buy your food, and you get pads and my medications and a little bit a deodorant – oh, and “Can I get some soap, so I can go apply for a job?” That whole component is not there. ID 179*



➤ Financial security

- *...She came back to me and said, “I applied to Howard.” It was just amazing. I called her back and I was going, “That’s so exciting. Your grades are good,” and whatever. “I don’t have the money to apply to turn in the application because I need the money.” You know, to apply. She ended up, financially, not being able to survive there and came back and had a baby. **ID 169***
- *Most women just want to live comfortably, without fear for their life, without fear for their children, or for their health. They wanna be able to make a living and provide for their families. I think if you asked a lot of them, they wouldn’t want anything extravagant, they just want to not, every day, be such a struggle. **ID 142***



➤ Financial security: Suggestions

- *More of uses more electric, more gas to warm the home or more people in the house. Help them to manage, to make it efficient, so they'd be able to stay in a home and deal with the—like changin' light bulbs or changin' from gas to electric stove. Teachin' people to unplug they fans or anything that's not usin' that need to be used during the time, so they'd be able to maintain they bill in the home. Lot of times, we don't even know or even try to maintain to cut lights off. You know, just wake up the brain and say, "Hey, cut the lights off." **ID 201-206***
- *A lot of people have bought houses in the last—I wanna say, the last three or four years, I've noticed that a lot of people stepped up and bought houses as things became available to people. I think that's wonderful that the opportunities come up. I also noticed that it caused people to change the way that they were living as far as them credit cards that have sucked so many people in. I've watched people closing them credit cards out in their lives and stepping toward being debt-free. I think that's a wonderful thing. That mindset has went there 'cause people—churches started teaching about the debt-free area. I've seen a lot of people coming out of debt, stepping in that area, and I think that's wonderful. **ID 150***



Transportation

Current situation	Suggestions
<p>Limited bus routes, long waits Transportation affects access to jobs (not all good jobs are along the bus line) High cost of car insurance and the \$500 ticket you get for driving without insurance are transportation barriers Licenses suspended because people drive without insurance because it's expensive Sidewalks in the city are uneven and discontinuous; this is difficult for people in wheelchairs or who have poor balance</p>	<p>Rework bus lines Consider adding smaller buses or vans to more places Bus stops with places to sit, shelters from the weather Improve wheelchair accessibility of sidewalks and businesses in the city Improve sidewalks in the city Better snow removal Teach people to bike and expand options for biking Improvements to Your Ride Provide grants for elderly people or disabled people to use Lyft or Uber around town on a sliding scale Shuttle services to the grocery store or doctor for mothers of small children Teach drivers' education in school; it's expensive privately Bus routes that can take people home after 2nd shift Bus passes on a sliding scale</p>



Transportation

- *Your Ride: I think the need is great, but the supplies they have, they're not timely at all. I've known people who've waited for hours waiting for their ride. It needs to just be revamped a little. Hire more drivers, more busses so that it can actually work the way it's supposed to work. Again, the concept is great. It's just in reality it's not working as it should. ID 158*
- *How would you go about trying to address some of the transportation issues? Interviewee: If there was a lot more resources than bus routes including some that are redundant to the same place. The way that we have it right now it's really much more like a hub and spokes sort of a thing. It's efficient for the city, but not efficient for the people. I would like to see more loops. I would like to see easier access to Your Ride where people can book rides in the vans. I would like to see more services located in a decentralized fashion. More grocery stores, more retail. I mean people would have neighborhoods that they could walk in. I think the lack of sidewalks is really awful, especially in winter, in a city that's in winter a good portion of the time. It scares me to drive down the street and have people be walkin' in the street because the snow is heaped up on the sidewalks. Sometimes there are no sidewalks. They're discontinuous if you have a disability. It's really difficult. I think about having my students actually have to go someplace with a wheelchair... Then the snow removal problem is a huge problem. ID 115*

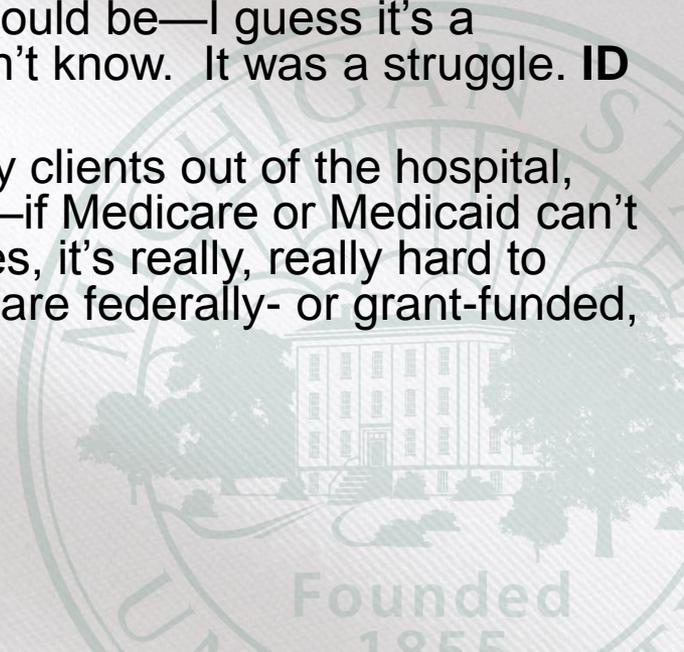


Physical healthcare

Current situation	Suggestions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>The working poor – people who make too much for Medicaid but not enough to pay for their prescriptions</u>• Mobility limitations for older women• Physical health worsened by infrastructure challenges<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hard to access to healthy food• Few health and fitness activities in the winter• poorly maintained parks do not promote physical exercise• More liquor stores than grocery stores	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Universal free healthcare• Integrate health centers with “one-stop shopping” for needs – mental health, housing, food, etc.• Healthcare that is trauma-informed and integrated with diet and physical activity counseling• Better, more evidence-based treatment for chronic pain• Mobile clinics linked to an electronic health record that provide birth control, diabetes care• Longer paid maternity leave• Better communication among doctors for people with multiple doctors• Better insurance coverage for dental care and prevention (esp for Medicaid, Genesee Health Plan)• More physical activity options in the winter• Healthy food and cooking classes targeting adults

➤ Physical healthcare: challenges

- Healthcare is big. Meals, if they don't have any family. A lot of them struggle with getting healthy meals. Transportation to doctors' appointments. It's very hard for them to navigate social security, and DHS. They don't do online applications. A lot of 'em you can only apply things online, or you get a faster answer if you apply online—they don't know how to do that. **ID 142**
- She was really struggling then. She was like, "Well, how much is each pill?" I think that was a struggle of her makin' that decision on it. I was sittin' there just lookin'. I was helpin' her the best way I can. I'm not a doctor to say, "Well, take this." I have to keep remindin' her that. She wanted me to add up and count of how much pill for ten pills for that—for her to have for that month when she needed thirty. She's just payin' for ten. I think it should be—I guess it's a prescription plan of lower bill payment. I really don't know. It was a struggle. **ID 201**
- Absolutely, especially when I have to transition my clients out of the hospital, trying to find those needs that they're not able to—if Medicare or Medicaid can't pay for it and they're on a fixed income themselves, it's really, really hard to meet those needs. Those resources that are free are federally- or grant-funded, it's so limited. **ID 288**



➤ Mental healthcare

Current situation	Suggestions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High health professional turnover, difficult to maintain continuity of care (don't want to tell story over again multiple times) • Problems with coordination of care • Mental health stigma, especially in the African-American community, is a barrier to seeking mental health care or talking about problems • Few male social workers to work with men and families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a clinic that specializes in PTSD treatment • Have mental health professionals help with food stamp enrollment and other practical needs • Retaining mental health professionals for continuity of care (the current turnover is high) • More mobile mental health services • Active community outreach for mental health and addiction services • More after 5pm appointment options • More discretionary money from the state for prevention of mental health problems • Make sure providers are empathic • Help health professionals do what they need to do (e.g., mandatory reporting) but not be judgmental • Much faster Medicaid approval of substance use detox/inpatient (2 weeks may be too late) • Get addiction treated under the mental health umbrella in Michigan • Work to reduce mental health stigma (at home and at work) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mindfulness, mental health care, knowing that it is okay to talk to a competent, a culturally competent, mental health professional if you feel stressed. ID 102</i> • Integrating physical and mental health services can help to reduce stigma ID 115 • Encourage people to seek help and don't judge them if they do

➤ Mental health care: combating stigma

- *Mental health might be way up there because I think for women in general, we're ashamed a lot about our mental health and too many of us try to shoulder through it. I know too many women who think it's just normal to have a breakdown in their car privately at 7:30 at night and just be sobbing. That's just the thing that happens to them at least once a week and they think that's okay. **ID 139***
- *I think you do it—you can't be in your office or in your building waiting for people to walk through the doors for help. Everybody doesn't have that capacity to do that. You have to go where people are and let them know that they are somebody, that they matter, that they're visible, and that we care. Because somewhere along the line, something happened where they lost that, and somebody needs to remind them of it. I think that's what helps to reduce stigma is by going to where people are, and you may have to go multiple times. The first time you go out, people aren't just going to believe that automatically. It might take 20 times before they actually say, "I might can trust these people. They might actually have something here. Let me call and maybe just talk to somebody over the phone and see what they're talking about." Before you even walk through the door, you might have to call two or three times. I definitely think coming outside of our own comfort zone and going out in the community where people are, where the most—where there's the most need is what's going to continue to decrease stigma. **ID 169***



➤ Mental health care: suggestions

More different kinds of services to get a good fit/shorter wait times

- *Well, I feel like a lot of people have given up on their own mental health because they feel that they're not really making any progress when they go and talk to somebody. They just have given up. They don't really trust that it works, anymore. Yeah. I think there could be more services available. That would be helpful. Right now, everybody mostly funnels through Genesee Health Systems. Sometimes, they have to wait a really long time to get help, even for substance use. **ID 200 and 251***

Make sure employees of social service programs are respectful and are there to serve

- *More programs to address their underlying needs. There's plenty a mental-health programs here, but there's not good access to them. When they are going out, oftentimes, I watched the – not the Rise to Wellness, but the transportation. They treat 'em any type a way when they pick 'em up. We need to start being vested in who we hire and make sure that they have their best interest. We need to start puttin' them around people and social service agencies who actually are social minded and not just here for job security because they know their poverty is not going anywhere, so I'll do this. We need to stop just hiring anybody for the sake of fillin' positions. We need to go back to quality management in hiring. **ID 271***
- *What do women needs to give them hope and dignity? Just having a voice for sure. I think the more we talk about having some people to talk to, maybe just having a place... A safe space where it's inclusive obviously, but where it's very women-based in the sense of we're here to talk about women care, mental and physical, and we're all here struggling and learning together to become better women and people in general, and having resources for those who need to have somebody to talk out things. I know my sister struggles really hard and other people I've encountered with finding a therapist that really listens to their needs and what is constantly circling in their head and how much of a difference it makes when you finally click with a therapist that really works with you instead of blows you off and just says, "You're just depressed." **-ID 157***



> Housing

Current situation	Suggestions
<p>Unstably housed families (families staying with others, on a couch)</p> <p>Shelters are full, especially for women and families, women have no place to go, then social workers have to call CPS b/c woman is homeless with her kids</p> <p>Lack of shelters that house families together</p> <p>Finding a house is difficult for people with mental health issues</p> <p>Lack of safe, affordable houses that are close to work</p> <p>Living in Flint is expensive because of water and heat/electricity</p> <p>What is considered “affordable” is not well defined</p> <p>Many abandoned houses, rundown neighborhoods</p> <p>Inadequately equipped houses with substandard heating and cooling system</p> <p>Poor accessibility of houses for differently abled people</p> <p>Neighborhood safety is a shared concern</p>	<p>Access to safe, affordable housing</p> <p>More shelters or shelter beds, esp for women and families</p> <p>Government support for housing and homeless shelters</p> <p>Reduce water rates, heat/electricity rates in Flint to be more similar to the suburbs</p> <p>Access to mental health friendly housing for individuals with serious mental health (not 2 story buildings)</p> <p>More affordable assisted living facilities</p> <p>Fund overall housing infrastructure</p> <p>Work to solve financial vulnerability so women can enjoy home ownership and safer neighborhoods</p> <p>Start a Housing First program here?</p>



> Housing

Make affordable housing affordable

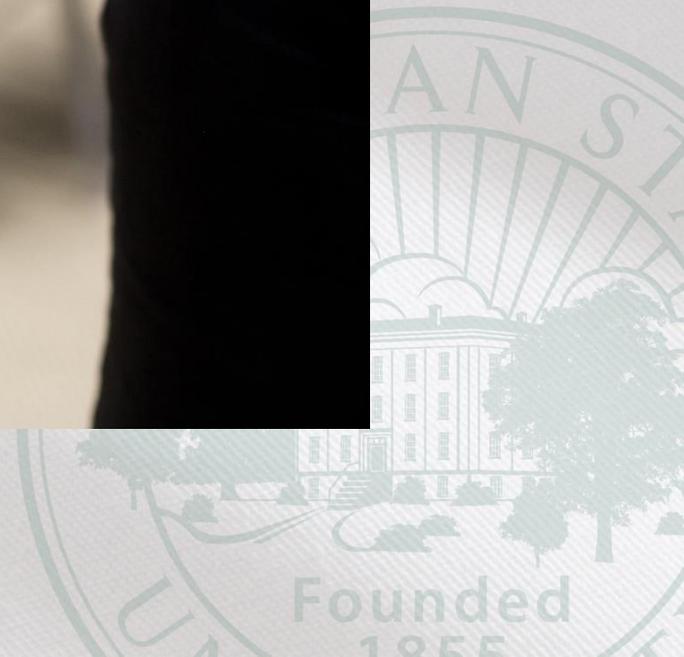
- *It made no sense to me... when you're lookin' at the rates for the rent, and they consider it to be affordable housing, and then they tell you that you can't make more than this, I'm tryin' to figure out well, off this income that you said I can't make more than, how the hell am I supposed to afford rent that's almost \$600 a month? Make this make sense. I'm no mathematician, but that does not add up. ID 129*

More shelter beds

- *There's not enough shelters, no. No, shelter in Flint has great programs, but there's not enough for them. Our domestic violence shelter at the Y never has room. That's one of our biggest, in Access anyway, that's one of our biggest barriers, is that there's not the resources available. ID 106*



Belonging to others



➤ Physical and sexual abuse

Current situation	Suggestions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Intergenerational trauma experience• Sexual abuse & assault• Partner violence• Human trafficking (many high risk girls have already been in contact with a recruiter)• Victim blaming: they are shunned, set aside, not believed• In partner violence, the perpetrator works to make victims think it's their fault somehow – this is hard to see and address alone• Limited support for survivors• Poverty relates to physical and sexual violence because when people don't see a purpose for things, what you do doesn't matter. It leads to meaninglessness and empty time	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recognize that it's happening• Recognize that abuse intersects with other vulnerabilities (homelessness)• Help women know they are loved and valued so they don't feel they need bad relationships• Help women be financial secure so they don't feel they need bad relationships• Education<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Telling girls from the time they are born that they deserve to be respected and don't have to put up with abuse• Teach the community about the power and control wheel – that it's not normal and not OK, how to seek help• Teach girls (and boys) red flags (isolation, they don't want you to work, they say they'll take care of everything for you)• Healthy Relationship Safe Dates program in the high schools• Awareness, awareness, awareness. #MeToo is great.• Enroll men and boys in preventing sexual violence and violence against women• Get all the rape kits tested• If someone goes in to discuss a Protection Order, have a social worker follow up with them to offer services• Services/awareness for senior and LGBTQ women• Police training to arrest 40 year old men for sex with 15 year olds. She can't consent and she isn't just a "bad kid."



➤ Physical and sexual abuse: suggestions

- *What are the needs of young women? I think prevention, like Safe Dates program. Healthy relationship [education]. They need to understand what that healthy relationship looks like, because they need to identify red flags. Cuz they don't know and understand, then they won't recognize those signs. Because everyone's gonna be charming. Most people, gentlemen that you meet, they're not gonna—well, most of 'em are not gonna go into—they're gonna try to wow you and woo you into—do everything that they can to—so you can be all about them. Then, it might be slowly that they try to isolate you away from your friends. They don't want you to work. They're gonna provide all your needs cuz that's the way they're gonna gain power and control over you. I think, at a young age, if we started educating youth on what a healthy relationship looks like, both male and female... We want young men to know—not every young man has a positive male role model in the household. We want them to know what the healthy relationship looks like so when they get into a relationship, they'll wanna treat that person with respect. **ID 303***
- *How can we break the cycle? Wow. That's probably one of the hardest things to do, because you're talking about changing a whole cultural mindset. I think it has to start with young girls, and telling them from the time they're born that they deserve better. They don't have to put up with abuse. They are—they deserve to be respected, just because they are a person. **ID320***



➤ Physical and sexual abuse: suggestions

We gotta figure out a way to break those barriers and to reach the everyday people, and to take the programs into the schools, into just a regular McDonald's, and try to reach out to the manager, or Walmart, the manager, "Can we do a presentation for your staff?" I think that's the way we need to go, cuz we—to me, we are seein' the same faces, and they're wonderful supporters, but everything is, to me, is word of mouth. I think we need to broaden the people that we're reaching out to.

*I was just in Texas, and I saw they have a billboard about—it said, "We sue sexual predators." That's what it said. Then it said somethin' about, "We're working to stop human trafficking." I said we need—even if it's billboards. To me, people drive past billboards and you look at 'em and you read 'em. I think we have buses. I would love to see something plastered on the bus. Where we got these bus that wrapped. They have all these different logos for breast cancer. I would love to see somethin' about sexual assault on there. I would love to see something about domestic violence on there, human trafficking. Because buses go all throughout our communities. **ID 303***



➤ Romantic and partner relationships

Current situation

- Lack of commitment in relationships
- Broken relationships
- *“Men are scarce,” “Keeping up with other women to keep a man”*
- Competition to get a man (hair and nails are two biggest industries in the county)
- Abuse in relationships is normalized (eg. jealous boyfriend is sexy)
- *“You have a piece of him. Next door neighbor have a piece of him. Cousin have. This over here got a piece. That one man might have five women. Everybody has a little piece. If I don’t think enough of who I am as a woman, if I don’t feel good about who I am, I will feel that’s all I deserve is that little piece. Is that sad?” ID 162*
- Limited resources for women who want to get out of bad relationships
- Teenagers having babies so they have somebody to love them

Suggestions

- Help women not settle for someone who doesn’t work or who mistreats them (personal and financial confidence)
 - *“You don’t have to accept that.”*
- Have mentoring for men and boys on how to be good men, husbands, and fathers
- More jobs for men so they can provide
- Help women learn to be alone without being lonely
- Help women become financially independent
- Have homeless shelters that house couples together
- A more responsive justice system to protect survivors of partner violence
- Make resources available for women who want to get out of abusive relationships
- Educate girls to love themselves first

▶ We can't help the women without helping the men

Helping Black men to help Black women:

- *The black people, especially our men, are depressed. If our men are depressed, then we're down. We're depressed, too, because we can't get up ahead of them. We need them, and they're being pushed down. They don't have jobs, and they don't have any security. They are fearful of police. As a result, they turn to drugs or alcohol or whatever to try to comfort them. They can't help themselves or anybody else. **ID 401***
- *The prison pipeline, the incarceration rate for men, there's a lack of men. They're disempowered in ways that make them unavailable for healthy relationships. Just in sheer numbers and then in terms of being beaten down by the system. **ID 115***



Sex, birth control, and family planning

Current situation	Suggestions
<p>Girls and young women need birth control</p> <p>Sex ed in many schools could give more information on how to prevent pregnancy</p> <p>Some respondents think access to birth control is good, but that girls (and boys) don't see it as important: <i>"It's just not part of their culture."</i></p> <p>Respondents not sure if FQHCs here will implant IUDs</p> <p>Attitudes toward birth control: "Pills make you fat, IUDs make you sterile, and condoms aren't natural"</p> <p>Possible cultural discomfort with birth control pills (?)</p> <p>Attitude that getting pregnant is their destiny or that it will cement a relationship or hold a man.</p> <p>One doctor complained that her teen patients come to her complaining they can't get pregnant: <i>"First of all how long have you been trying? Second of all, why?"</i></p>	<p>Doctors and schools should discuss the details of birth control options, preventing pregnancy, and preventing STIs</p> <p>Easier access to female condoms (Health Dept has them)</p> <p>Think about ways to improve accessibility to long-acting birth control like IUDs and Depo, including making sure they are covered by Medicaid and within an easy distance</p> <p>Transportation can be a barrier & dosing is time-sensitive – do everything possible to offer birth control in as many places as possible</p> <p><i>"Help them understand that pregnancy won't solve their problems."</i></p> <p>Role models around healthy relationships and women who succeed in other areas – the idea that there are options</p> <p>Help girls feel like they have a different future, that this isn't inevitable – access to education, jobs, things outside Flint</p> <p>Work on boys to push birth control also</p> <p>Work to address negative attitudes toward birth control</p> <p>Encourage couples to get STI tested with their partners</p> <p>Teach the "Comprehensive Sexual Health" curriculum in schools.</p> <p>Birth control education can be a volunteer opportunity for medical students</p> <p>Help ensure confidentiality at medical appointments re: birth control</p> <p>Caseworkers should talk about birth control</p>

Sex, birth control, and family planning: Suggestions

- *I think they need to be empowered around men. They need to have role models and information. Role models is perhaps the most important around healthy relationships the earlier the better. Because I think people get into habits and then you get beaten down and they get pregnant. They assemble barriers that are really hard to get around. I've seen a lot of women who are pregnant early and then they end up goin' back to school in their late 30's. Those are the women I think that have been successful. The opportunities for them are less, so this early start sort of a thing.. **ID 115***
- *I think it's not that they don't know about birth control. It's not part of their culture. That age group is the safety. 'Cause when I think preteens or young teenagers, I think women who want to grow—or girls who want to grow really quickly into women, and end up putting themselves in really bad situations, really bad relationships from such a young age, who may or may not end up getting pregnant at a young age, and then thinking that they ruined their life, when, realistically, it's not over. They need opportunities. They need to be aware of the opportunities they have, where it's like if you had a young child—if you had an unplanned child at a young age, that doesn't necessarily mean your life is over, so support for those girls, I think. **ID 299***



Family relationships

Current situation	Suggestions
<p>Both parents and kids need a community and supports</p> <p>Lack of supportive partners (especially for new moms and pregnant women)</p> <p>Cycle of broken and dysfunctional families</p> <p>Men are disempowered, unavailable for healthy relationships</p> <p>The unhealthy notion that <i>“it is okay to stop parenting a teenager”</i></p> <p>Women caring for a lot of generations</p>	<p><i>Any new mom in our county that has a baby deserves competent, trained, helpful non-judgmental support</i> IDI 40</p> <p>Mom’s Bloom: trained volunteers that come in and help new moms with the baby, housework</p> <p>Normalize parenting challenges and provide support (education, emotional, practical).</p> <p>More affordable family activities for families with older kids, places for intergenerational activities</p> <p>Help parents parent teens.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe places for families with teens (parents and kids) to get together and have fun and support each other • <u>Support groups for teens, parents of teens, and grandparent caregivers</u> • More places like Memorial Park <p>Nonthreatening parent education (people weren’t sure about where)</p> <p>Family counseling with evening hours</p> <p>Churches can provide education about healthy family relationships</p> <p>More role models of healthy family relationships</p> <p>Reduce incarceration rates; help people get records expunged</p>

Supporting mothers

- *If we see that a woman is falling down, that's why it's so important for another woman to lift her up, and to be able to stand in a gap and help, especially within her family system, help those children and try to help her regain her strength in some type of way. Because the woman is an integral part of the family system. **ID 164***
- *Kent County has Moms Bloom. It's basically like a group of volunteers, and they're trained, but they go into homes of new parents and they help. "Okay, mom, you need to go take a nap. I will watch the baby while you take a nap," or, "Hey, I will vacuum for you or do dishes." I mean, I would love to do that, but I'm sure older women too would still love to be needed and want to feel like they are doing something. **ID 114***
- *We had parent relief. That parents need break from the kids for a while. They did a parent retreat... first they can breathe. Second of all, how to deal with kids of different stages of what they goin' through... Learn how to redirect and to get them out of their mold. Plus other parents was in the room, so they can tell their stories. **ID 201-206***



➤ Friendship and non-family support

Current situation	Suggestions
<p>A lot of women, younger and older, feel alone in their lives and in their challenges</p> <p>Older women feel isolated, marginalized</p> <p>Lack of community support for older women</p> <p>Women who aren't connected or loosely connected to their communities (family connection dissolves when people move away for employment)</p> <p><i>“Women try to solve everything on their own” ID 169</i></p>	<p>A safe space for women to figure out who they are and what they want</p> <p>“Support” – all kinds, practical, emotional, a safe space to talk</p> <p>We can all reach out and support each other – talk to the people next door.</p> <p>Listen</p> <p>More awareness of resources that exist – no one could quite tell me how to do this.</p> <p>A network of women</p> <p>Moms groups, older women's groups, groups for women in general</p> <p>Even one or two people you can reach out to for help has a huge protective effect</p>



➤ Friendships and non-family support

- *Support groups where women can just come and just talk. You can phrase it as a dinner with no specific goal but communication. It doesn't have to be a rhyme or reason. You just open up communication, open up dialogue, have a known speaker that's there that the community might know, like Mayor Weaver. Somebody that just come and say, "This is an open dialogue session. Whatever you wanna talk about, we can talk about." -ID 351*
- *They felt like they had a lot to give to those kids, so all the parents, people who are my age, have to go drive far away, work; earn money. There's a lot of older seniors in our community who have time and a lot of knowledge, and then there's a lot of young people whose parents are gone, so it feels like we should create more spaces that we can do intergenerational activities together. ID 323*



➤ Friendships and non-family support

- *Here in Genesee County?... Women need to be aware of who they are that they are very important , that they give a lot, have given a lot to the community. They have a lot of wisdom and knowledge on what to do, how to do, and a lot of that has just been put to sleep and nobody wants to know. Nobody really cares and it's just been put to sleep and just go ahead on and say, "Well, I could," or "I know how to do that," or "I could do that, but nobody ever asked me, you know. So, I just go to sleep with it," you know. So, I think that connectivity is women bein' able to connect with one another and feel free to do so. I think that that's a big help and you got so many women now, especially in the mature age where women are livin' alone and it's a sense of fear with a lot of 'em, sense of fear. They need some type of group that they can come together and share some of the things that they experience, some of the fear that they have and stuff like that.*

How would you help women get past that?

- *I think that if women could come block to block, door to door. If I'm livin' on the fifth floor in a high rise, let me take my left side. Whatever side I'm livin' on or livin' in that complex let me take from just five of us get together and we share. Let's see can we get together and talk about a recipe and then that gives us somethin' to open up...—and out of that, sometime you build a lastin' relationship as well as a friendship, you know.. **ID 173***

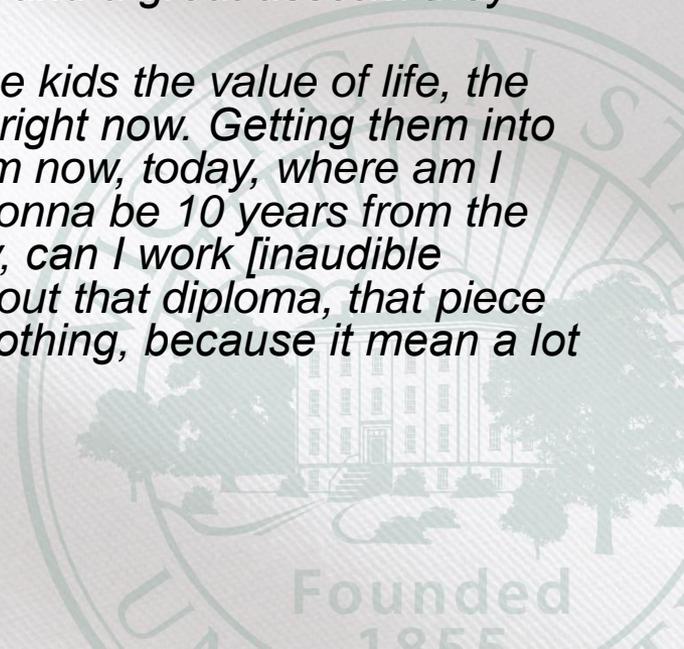


➤ Mentoring

Current situation	Suggestions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An overall sense that the mothers, older sisters, more experienced women are missing or inaccessible• Young women, pregnant women and new moms, parents of teens all struggling• Where are the role models and the women who can show us how it's done?• People with limited exposure and experiences outside Flint• Lack of respect for oneself and others• There are grandmothers who are neighborhood pillars with a lot of wisdom	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expose girls to women in Flint who have made it• Mentors (20somethings or professional women) as a way to keep girls from dropping out of school• Mentor matching program: Younger women and mothers need mentors, support, and friendship and older women have time and wisdom and need to feel like they have something to offer. <i>“Match the book club ladies with the juvenile detention girls”</i> and <i>“everyone would benefit.”</i>• Also, have teens volunteer to help elderly people with computer tasks at community centers (gives teens something to do and helps the older people)• Places kids can go for mentoring• Some girls and young women found mentoring from the women in their church communities; others felt judged and didn't go back• Mentoring around everything from how to be a successful woman in the world, school, employment, how to parent, to basic life skills (opening a bank account, doing laundry, etc.)• Help girls dream and then surround them with supports

➤ Mentoring

- *[Older women] need to be listened to, because they want to tell us all their wisdom, so I am all for it. I love talking to them... I think they should be paired up with [laughter 30:42] groups. Have um, make um, get together and talk to, cause they just—they wanna tell their stories, and they wanna tell their wisdom. Their needs are to help, I mean, they have so much to give... They still have so much to give when they're retired, all my book club ladies they're just bored, and maybe if they could come and help younger women then everyone would benefit. Instead of just, you know, doing whatever, the casino, or the whatever, and filling their retired time. They could really benefit from sharing all their wisdom. **ID 265***
- *You've been a mom or you've had your career, you don't stop having important things to say. You still can be a great part of our community... let them know that they're still needed and still valued in our community and a great asset... they have so much value still. **ID 114***
- *You gotta teach these kids too. You gotta teach these kids the value of life, the real value of life... You can start mentoring the kids right now. Getting them into something positive... Where you gonna be in life from now, today, where am I gonna be. If I don't go to school today, where am I gonna be 10 years from the day, or 5 years. Well, if I don't get that diploma today, can I work [inaudible 00:41:20] two more years? No, you cannot. Not without that diploma, that piece of paper. Don't say that piece of paper don't mean nothing, because it mean a lot these days. **ID 198***



➤ Feeling valued and needed/wanted

Current situation	Suggestions
<p>Self-doubt Sense of worthlessness Body image issues <i>“For some of these clients, this is the first time in their lives that they’ve heard things like, you don’t need to be battered, or you have value regardless of what your weight is, or your access to make-up.”</i> ID 101</p>	<p>Women want:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>“The people I know seem to really want to be more productive in their community.”</i>• Pregnant women want to feel valued as people (not 100% about the baby)• To be able to talk about difficult experiences/abuse and be heard• <i>To be listened to, to be taken seriously, to be able to foster their ideas, especially if they’re entrepreneurs or in school or starting programs or organizations – support with that</i> <p>Meaningful employment helps Tell girls they can be successful Celebrate small accomplishments Help women open up and see their strengths: <i>“to see who you really, really are because really, really you do have a lot of wisdom and you do have a lot to offer. You just don't know it sometimes.”</i> Utilize older women who have time (they have a lot to offer)</p>



➤ Feeling valued

- *It became really apparent to me after I had [my son]. I had him at [a local hospital]. As soon as he was out of me they didn't care about or for me anymore. I was glad that he was being prioritized, but I just had an emergency C section to be left alone in a room for an hour afterwards is unacceptable. I think women need to be shown that they're genuinely cared about when they're pregnant and that it isn't about the unborn baby, it's about their value as a person and probably in general women need to understand more and be more valued as people. **ID 139***
- *First and foremost, we don't value the women here. As a community, we don't value the common, the every day woman. I think we do value women. We have lots of women in some powerful positions and we certainly value them, but we don't value our girls. We don't value our young moms. We don't value the single, working mom. Not in a way that is demonstrated with support. **ID 140***



Belonging to something greater than self



➤ Having a voice

Current situation

*I think if you hear the cry of the women, young women especially here in Genesee County, it's a cry of what about me? Who cares about me? Who's gonna hear me? So, I think that we need some people that we can trust to care about them from a passionate standpoint and from a point of experience and know that it's okay and they need people around 'em that's gonna be real. That's gonna not hesitate to be real and tell them their story because on the inside of all of us, there's a story and sometime, in order for you to help me, I need to hear your story. So, what we've—we gotta stop suppressin' the story so that we could help people with what we've been through. **ID261***

Suggestions

- It's easier to speak up when your basic needs are met
- More understanding healthcare providers and social service workers
- Improve empathy and acceptance of women with special needs (wheelchair, deaf, cognitively impaired, etc.) – make sure they have a seat at organizational tables
- Encourage women to speak up and don't judge or punish them when they do
- Opportunities for older women to contribute – they are still useful
- Safe spaces for marginalized women (e.g., LGBTQ)
- Safe spaces to talk about and address abuse
- Culture shift to take women's perspectives seriously
- Encourage women to participate in civic engagement

➤ Having a voice

What can help to make women feel heard?

*[Sighs] It's gonna have to be a culture shift. It's gonna have to be a shift in the mindset and the way both men and women think. Women, we have to feel like we can say what we need to say, regardless of whether or not... we've been heard. I'm guilty of that. I'm guilty of staying quiet because I'm concerned about how somebody's gonna react to what I have to say. Or I don't wanna be perceived as the angry black woman because I'm passionate about a particular subject. It's a culture. It's a mindset shift that has to happen. I think we just need to work on changing the mindset, letting people know that women have something to say and they shouldn't be brushed off, regardless of their color, and that it should be taken for face value and not what you believe their intent is. **ID 326***



➤ Having meaning in life

Current situation	Suggestions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Women feel they are stuck and struggling• Women struggle to make sense of their lives due to poverty and limited opportunities• Not having a career• Financial insecurity-affects their dignity and choices• Women's requests are not followed through or taken seriously• The pressure to look beautiful• Older women worry about their legacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Women want to be involved, supported, acknowledged, to feel like they're contributing, to feel like they matter.• Get struggling women together and help them problem-solve and report back on assignments• If they know "<i>who they are and that God ordained them to be who they are then they'll be able to love themselves and not degrade themselves.</i>"• Help women find something to give to the world and acknowledge their own contributions in giving it• Especially look for ways to help older people or widows/widowers find "<i>that will to live.</i>"• Invite people to participate – let them know they are needed

➤ Meaning in life

What do you think would give women around here more hope and more of a sense of dignity?

I think if they could be involved in somethin' that makes them feel like they doin' somethin'. Yeah 'cause it's just when you watch 'em on the news, they just frustrated. They just sittin' home waitin' on the check every month and it's gone before they get it... Yeah, make them feel like they contributin'...—give 'em assignments and stuff to come back and then be able to speak on somethin' that they can do. Prepare somethin' to do 'cause then they—you teachin' them to teach themselves. I think they just need to be involved with bein' a part. Yeah, 'cause they don't vote because they feel like they don't matter. So, they don't get involved if they don't feel like they matter and that whole concept need to change there because whether you involved or not, it's gonna impact your life because you're part of the system. So, it's gonna impact your life in a bad way if you're not involved to share what you feel. Put your feelin's in there. So, you get a group of women together and then you ask them, "Okay, so out of resources, what resources do you think could help you get from point A to point B? Then how are you gonna contribute with these resources? How are you gonna contribute as a way of givin' back while you gettin' 'em to get from point A to point B? What could get in the way of you gettin' from here to here?" ID 110



➤ Spirituality and religion

Current situation

The pastors said we needed to ask about spiritual needs of women in Flint

For some women, religion/spirituality was their answer: to value, meaning, strength, guidance, hope, dignity, grounding, mentorship.

- Faith provides some women with a sense of who they are: God loves me so I should love myself
- Churches can bring people together across neighborhoods, ethnicities honestly under one roof
- Many churches help with practical needs (diapers, ovens)
- Churches can be a source of social support for women and for families
- Some churches teach about physical changes with pregnancy, menopause, with decisions about death and burial, losing a spouse or child – this is useful
- Some teach parenting skills, marriage classes, financial literacy
- Faith helps some women cope: “Fear not, I am with you.”

Other women had seen young women come in in short skirts, heavy makeup, or whatever challenging life circumstance and feel judged and not come back.

Several felt that many churches are sexist and could do more to empower women

Violence, rape, murder here are real and some people are angry with God. Others combine that anger with their faith to catalyze action.

Suggestions

- Encourage people to take time for spiritual self-care – whatever helps them feel replenished
- Church networks can be a good way to get the word out about resources
- “*Flint has too many churches*” (600 in Genesee County) - consolidate some of the small, struggling ones so they can spend less work keeping the doors open and more serving the community.
- Interfaith initiatives: “*Work together, instead of being separate congregation, here, here, and here, and I understand that, but why don’t you come together, and work as one.*”
- Churches further outside of Flint could give more to the community (they have more resources, but give less back)
- Churches should reach out to the difficult to reach as much as possible
- **Most church members are women.** The “*faith community has an obligation to take up the mantle for women, to fight their causes,*” empower them and address their needs. Have women speak, address their spiritual, physical, and sexual health.
- Have churches showcase strong women
- More tolerance of agnostics and athiests
- Love and serve LGBTQ women
- Meet people where they are: Have meditation or ways to fill the vessels of those not comfortable in traditional religious settings
- Recognize that some people need God AND mental health care

➤ Spirituality and religion

Judging vs. embracing:

- *I think that the churches are a tremendous strength, but I'm not sure what kind of supports are available for non-churchy people... There are some limitations then around [church as social support] because if people are engaged in anything that the church doesn't like, including potentially premarital sex, substance use, prior incarceration, then I think that they can get judged. It may not be as much of a friendly place. Different churches are different about it. **ID 115***
- *So what let you turn your life around? Interviewee: It was me. The guy I married his brother was in prison and he told him to take me to the [mosque] and I went there and when I went in there, of course I had eye shadow on and a skirt up to here— 'cause I thought I was goin' to church and I got in there and saw them women with the long dress on and their skin was so pretty and everything. I went and stood in the corner tryin' to pull my dress down. I had this on this material that stretched. I was tryin' to pull it down. So, one lady, one sister came over and she said, "You don't have to stand in the corner. We all come through that door like that," and so we kept goin' and the eatin' habits and just that put—that kinda like formed me into a woman. **ID 110***



➤ God and coping with trauma

I would want every woman in Genesee County to know her purpose, which what she was created for, which would come back to, created to serve God first. That knowing your purpose, that every woman—that there's a healing that takes place in our heart from what the things that she's been through. The trauma, cuz I think that's where it starts, cuz you can get money. You can get a job. You can get a house. If you still messed up in here [in your heart], it's for nothing, cuz you're gonna always find yourself back in that hurting. ID 201-206

My spirituality is connected with who I am professionally and who I am personally. My spiritual self really drives who I am as a person, and everything else just fell in line with that.... In the Bible, it says, "All things work together for the good of them that love the Lord," and that's true.... I had a friend who was killed by another young lady. She was ran over by this young lady, and she didn't make it. My best friend didn't make it. She left behind a set of twins and a son, and the young lady who ran her over left behind children as well. My friend died. She went to prison. Then, the whole movement of nonviolence, peace, social justice, why aren't people valuing life, humanity? Why aren't people considering themselves, the life of others, their children in the heat of anger? All of those things were stirring inside of me, but I wasn't ready to really act on it just yet. Then a few years later, my aunt was killed by her boyfriend. She was just sleeping on the couch, and he shot her in her head... They were engaged to be married.... I think that act, coupled with seeing some young people in community, young lives, a 6-year-old sleeping in the backseat of a parents' car, or a 13-year-old walking to the store for a bag of hot Cheetos, or a son walking down the street and get shot in the drive-by, or in the kitchen with grandma, preparing dinner, and somebody decides to drive through a neighborhood and randomly shoot through the neighborhood and shoot in house, and the young person, 10 years old, who's in the kitchen with grandma is the only fatality. The 13-year-old is the only fatality. The six-year-old is the only fatality. I think those things, coupled with my own personal grief and loss, really touch my social-work side and also my evangelistic side and my humanistic side, to say, "This is not okay. We can't accept this."... We made a call to action and said, "There has to be people out there who aren't comfortable with this uncomfortable silence. Someone has to be willing—a collective body of people have to be willing to speak up." I refuse to believe that nobody is willing to take a stand, and young people are getting killed. ID 164



➤ The faith community and empowering women

I think the faith community has an obligation to really take up the mantle for women, to fight their causes, their needs, and provide these type of outlets and empowerment.... I was actually at a local church and witnessed a man, leader in that faith community tell a woman to get off the pedestal, get out of the pulpit. Yeah, it's 2017. That just happened. I was just floored, and I collected my things and left quietly because that's not the environment.

*I think women have a need for spiritual enrichment. I'm not just talking about a relationship only with God, but just that my spirit is being fulfilled, my quest in life, that somehow the desires I had they're—hit on the head—not wrong but okay. They need to have that spiritual inspiration that, wow, girl, you're awesome, and you can achieve. I think the role of the faith community and churches and pastors are supposed to feed that, not set up walls and make them feel like they have to jump through hoops to obtain that. I see that happening a lot if you're female and if you're a woman in this community. **ID 125***



➤ Church communities can teach about life

- *I personally at our church try to stress the fact that we have to help each other make it through the next phase of life. So for young girls who are becoming mothers, you have to remind them about certain things about how to take care of their bodies and how to take care of the children. As you move into menopause, it's a thing where you need to have people share some of the things to expect and some of the things that you may have to watch for or go through... One lady was telling us that you get older and start just farting. It just happens. You don't think about it and you just kind of figure out what's going on, but sharing some of the things that happen as you keep going from one stage to the other... I guess as you're aging, making decisions about death and burial, having a sick spouse or something, how to get information to help—again, the phase that you go through when you lose a spouse or you lose a child. Sometimes that's a low point and there's support that's needed to help people through those time periods. **ID 163***



➤ Role and position of women in society

Current situation	Suggestions
<p><i>I have to constantly advocate and fight. You get denied for the most ridiculous reasons and you have to fight. As a mom, it's very, oh, just calm down, oh you—we, the professionals, know better. We don't support women as experts on their children. We don't even support women as experts on their own body. When you're not an expert, your own children or your own self, and it becomes such a struggle and fight to advocate and to get your needs met. Even just accessing some basic services. It's really hard to do. IDI 40</i></p>	<p>Education, childcare, access to diapers are equality issues</p> <p>Support and empower other women – help them succeed.</p> <p>Invite women to the table, take their perspectives seriously, don't minimize them</p> <p>Be aware of intersectionality (female, racial or sexual minority) – the more marginalized identities someone has, the more vulnerable she is.</p> <p>Hire women from this community</p> <p>Fight messages to girls and women that tell them that they can't succeed and all they are is how they look</p> <p>Treat girls like they matter</p> <p>Address sexism and racism</p>



➤ Role and position of women in society

If you were to wish all women in the county one wish, what would it be?

*Interviewee: Well, I think it would be for us to be able to all put aside our differences—be it racial, class, educational achievement—and come together to build a community, because it's when the women come together—like they say, it's the women that build a nation and you can't build a nation if your community is not built because that's what makes up the nation. **ID 297***



➤ Role and position of women in society

*Don't pacify me or patronize me. Really hear me out and put me in places that show you understand and represent that I am valued, not just lip service, but also action. Invite me and allow the gifts that I bring to this world to flourish. Stop putting up policies and issues that hinder me from being who I am. Don't enforce society norms that squash us and silence us. Be a silence breaker. Help me. Advocate for me. If you are a male, advocate that, okay, this is a great meeting, but where are the women around the table? Advocate for me even when I don't know I'm being advocated for. Go the extra mile. Think about me when you're making decisions and how it will impact me. I think that says I'm valued. That says I matter. **ID 125***



➤ Betterment of Flint

Current situation

- Neighborhoods are adopting parks
- Women are starting Flint handmade organizations
- Women run a lot of community, faith, and other action organizations in the county
- People want to be proud to be from here – they want something they can be proud of, *“that bigger than yourself kind of feeling.”*
- People want to feel included, welcome, part of something great here
- *To make the city look nice—a lotta times, they won’t do it, because, “Well, the residents are just gonna mess it up, anyways.” That’s the attitude, a lotta times, and that’s—if you constantly hear that, all the time, you start to believe it. IDI42*
- A lot of organizations in the city compete rather than cooperating

Suggestions

- Clean, safe environments help women feel safe and valued
- More media involvement in highlighting the good, positive things happening in Flint – more people should visit here
- Recruit companies that would agree that if local kids made it through either high school or a 2-year technical degree, they could have a fast track into getting hired
- Have a public display of accomplishments of women and people in general from Flint
- Empower people within the city to take care of the city
- Revitalization of the community Centers in all parts of Flint



➤ Betterment of Flint

*Maybe more of media involvement in positive aspects of Flint. I just feel like there are things that really could highlight the good, positive things that are happening, but yet they don't ever show it. **ID 142***

*You would market Flint and recruit companies that would agree that if local kids made it through either high school or a two year technical degree, that they could have a fast track into getting hired. **ID 158***

*What would give me hope? I think I have a lotta hope now. I think, from my position in the community, whatever that may be, I see all these different things goin' on. I see the good in people. I see the good work that's happening here. I'm excited about Flint's future. I just want these groups, these people to all work together for the same—we all have similar purposes. We're just doin' it in separate places. We need to come together. **ID 326***



Needs of specific groups



> Needs of specific groups

Category	Current situation	Recommendations
Young women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need creative outlets - Need strong, informed mom - Lack of role models in the community - High rates of trafficked girls - High rates of teen pregnancy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Specific programs to promote their creativity - Mentoring programs, models, examples - Identify girls at risk of trafficking and intervene - Sex education and access to contraceptives (address misconceptions)
LGBTQIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Woefully under-resourced and under-served” - “The most hated and the most misunderstood” - Trans women of color face double burden - Limited access to resources such as housing - Unaddressed mental health challenges - Death by suicide and homicide - Lack of trained healthcare professionals - Lack of protection for seniors who haven’t come out - Trans women- face difficulty at work place, straight men feel discomfort around them - Not welcome in religious homeless shelters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Menu of community supports they can access - Diversifying sex education to include LGBTQIA - Open clinics specific for their needs - Educating people, especially human service providers - More access to information and services - Lower stigma, more acceptance - ‘Meet and greet’ events so they can build support networks



Needs of specific groups

Category	Current situation	Recommendations
Differently abled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of safe, accessible space - Transportation challenges-accessibility of bus stops - Isolated - Lack of daycare for differently abled kids - Discrimination at work - Expensive and shorter summer programs - Accessibility locations within classroom - Limited access to information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Authentic inclusion in all aspects (including the media) - Renovation to increase accessibility - Better communication for deaf (ASL) - Creating platforms for them to connect with others and share their stories - Affordable programs - Pick up services during winter - Help that also considers their dignity and pride
Pregnant women and new moms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Motherhood is portrayed as flawless - Access to clean water and nutritious food - Access to transportation - Lack of affordable, good quality childcare - Lack of focus on contraceptives (by health department) - Dignity in care and valuing women in postpartum care and respecting their choices - Lack of paid maternity leave - Lengthy and bureaucratic processes to access state provided services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support new moms with basic needs - Teach new moms about real pregnancy and childbirth experience - Start parenting education during pregnancy - Home-based postnatal follow-ups - Non-judgmental care for younger women, substance using pregnant women and women having recurrent pregnancies - A one-stop shop, that specializes in pregnancy - Infant mental health programs: training



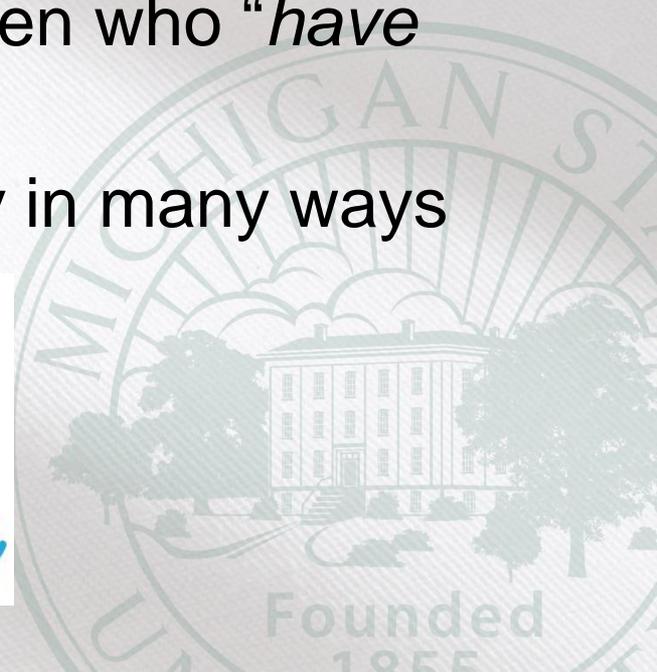
> Needs of specific groups

Category	Current situation	Recommendations
Older women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Second motherhood- grandparent caregiving - Limited employment opportunities (ageism at work limits employment opportunities) - Poor social support; difficulty maintaining lasting relationships (due to out migration of people) - Loneliness - Lack of quality, affordable healthcare - Do not feel valued and respected - Struggle to get healthier meals and transportation to doctors - Elder abuse - Housing problems (subpar residences) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Affordable healthcare - Help building a legacy - Home visits focused on homebound older women - Introduce community activities, meet and greet programs targeting older adults - Understand their desire to offer and create avenues for their contributions (matching older women with young girls) - Identify elderly abuse and respond to it - Subsidize housing - Provide timely and affordable home repairs



➤ Assets and resources

- There is a list of resources from our interviews in your folders. If you know of others relevant to needs we've discussed, please list them on the assets sheets provided on your table.
- Human assets include:
 - Resilient, tough, tenacious women who “*have PhD in adversity*”
 - Women serving their community in many ways



Ways women in Flint/Genesee County serve others

Adopts parks. Teaches women to sew, bake, fix a bike, knit. Homeless outreach. Business owner. Substance abuse counselor. Union president. Pastor. Mother. Caregiver. Educator. Grandmother. Volunteer. Elected official. Psychologist. Doctor. Leads women's organizations. 12-step group member. Runs shelters. Friend. Job training. Works at a nursing home. Mentors young women. Volunteer. Case manager. Runs a women's group. Pet groomer. Tutor. Teacher. Teaches teens to use a computer. Works in a literacy center. Owns a salon. Combats elder abuse. Librarian. Vice president of a company. Daughter. Helps her neighbors find furniture. Makes highways safer. Professor. Runs a support group. Writes. Helps in any way she can. Works with children with autism. Evangelist. Social worker. Community health advocate. Philanthropist. Attorney. Supports survivors of domestic violence. Life skills trainer. Librarian. Helps court-involved women. Volunteer senior companion. Patient navigator. Coaches a girls' swim team. Runs a clinic. Works at the Chamber of Commerce. Sister. Photographer. Teaches children to read. President of neighborhood group. Architect. College student. Friend.



What would give women in Genesee County more hope and dignity?

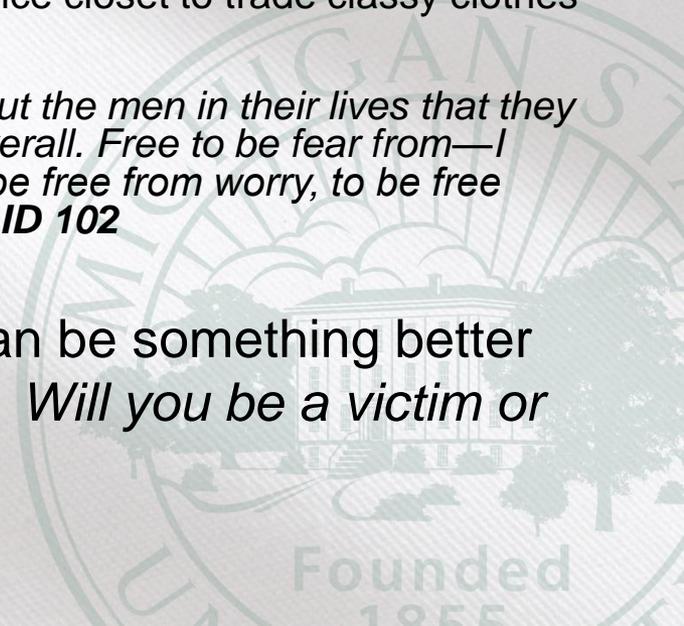
A belief that they are wonderful, beautiful people with worth. Endurance. **God**. To contribute. To have positive goals and mentors. Equal opportunity. Truth and accountability from government. Job training and education. **Employment** so they can take care of their personal needs. Seeing women in leadership roles. To stand on their own. Encouragement. People to build the city up. Knowing someone cares. Having a voice. Not keeping problems quiet. Detox. Truth. Quality people in social service agencies who care. **Education**. Classes on how to fix cars and houses and advocate for themselves in the workplace. Outstanding **female role models**. Public recognition of accomplishment. Women's Centers all over Flint. Good paying jobs so they can own a home and a car. A better national climate – for Obama to be President again. To know God's love. A good income. Something they could work on together. Support. Being valued and respected in the streets and stores. Resources. **Being appreciated**. Self-esteem. Being heard. Love that is not compromised. Visibility. **Respect**. **Opportunities**. Less racism, sexism, poverty. Treat them as experts. A job and a place to live. Being treated well by people with power over them. Blight clearing. **Safety**. Equality and equal pay. To be taken seriously. Knowing that people are there for them. Being comfortable in their natural beauty. To see their children have a better life. To see other women succeed. Recognition that they are smart, capable, and get things done.

**Bolded answers came up multiple times*



➤ Suggestions that came up a lot

- Affordable quality childcare
- Mentoring
- People wanted more information about services and resources.
 - They weren't sure the right format for a single resource clearinghouse (they weren't satisfied with 2-1-1) and weren't sure how to get the word out, but said this a lot.
- Women's Centers, hotlines, or hubs for women
 - *...Just if you had a building and it was called "All Women," and they just came for—something like that, where they know I could come if I needed help with my children, and this would be... more on the serious help. We're not talking about somewhere where they're gonna say, "Here's a couple hundred dollars. Do this and this,"—a place where they can come get some real help, sign-on help. ID 111&141*
 - Nice hangout spot to come and talk to other women, nice closet to trade classy clothes
- The toll that chronic stress takes on women:
 - *Free from worry about their sons, their husbands, about the men in their lives that they nurture and care for, their daughters, their children, overall. Free to be fear from—I mean, I'm sorry. I meant need to be free from fear, to be free from worry, to be free from socioeconomic matters, just making ends meet. ID 102*
- More shelter space
- Helping girls and young women see there can be something better
- *Yes, that was wrong what happened to you. Will you be a victim or a warrior?*



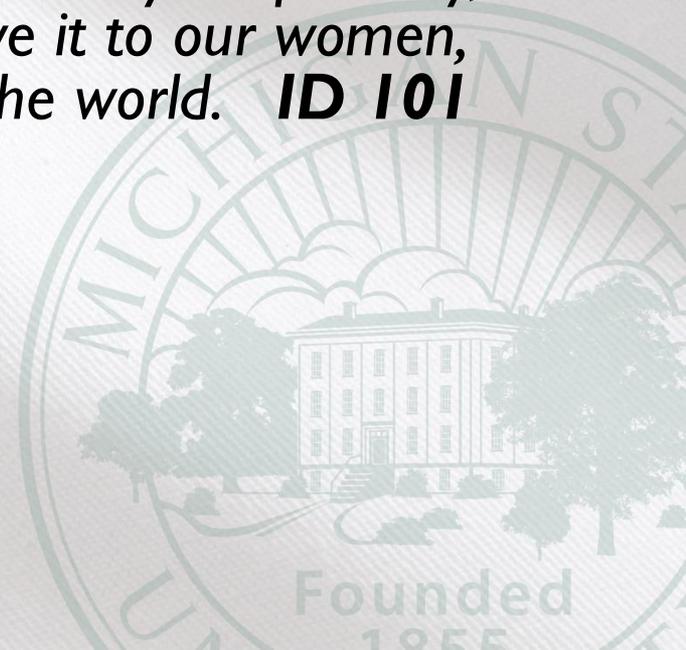
➤ Final thoughts: Help girls dream

*You've got to work with girls. It's not that you forget about their mothers or their fathers, but if you're gonna plant the seed of hope, if you're gonna help a girl remember who she can be or to be a dreamer and then surround her with the supports, then you've got opportunity, but it's gonna take generations. She's got to be able to grow... and raise her children in a different world, but she's got to be able to see that world and experience it herself... Simple programs where every girl from the time that she's four or five years old through those horrendous middle-school age years is told that she can be successful, that she can attain these things that are going to bring her a better quality of life. Then have a community be responsive to her rather than negate what it is she's trying to do. So, it's tremendously difficult, but to me, we've got to focus on girls. **ID 303***



➤ Final thoughts

*Women's deepest unmet needs? I think it's hope quite honestly and that's hard to quantify and show when you have it, but it's very easy to see when you don't. Not very many women in Flint believe that their situations can change. They believe that they're stuck. They don't believe that they have the ability to change or the power to advocate for themselves. They don't recognize that the people who do have the power to do those things because they learned how to do it from someone... This city desperately, desperately needs hope. I think if we can give it to our women, they can be the carriers of it and give it to the world. **ID 101***



▶ Flint Women's Study Team

Academic and community leads:

- Jennifer Johnson, Maji Hailemariam, Kent Key, Bernadel Jefferson, Janice Muhammad

Qualitative coders:

- DeOnica Greer, Maji Hailemariam, Kent Key, Jonne' McCoy White, Raven Miller, Fallon Richie, DeWaun Robinson, Sharon Saddler, Bryan Spencer, Monica Summers

Administrative support:

- Morgan Flees



> Takeaways and next steps

- You are important.
- You make a difference.
- You contribute.
- You are worthwhile.
- You are valuable and vital.

THANK YOU



Takeaways and next steps

Contents of the folders

- Green sheet (actions and resources)
- Evaluation

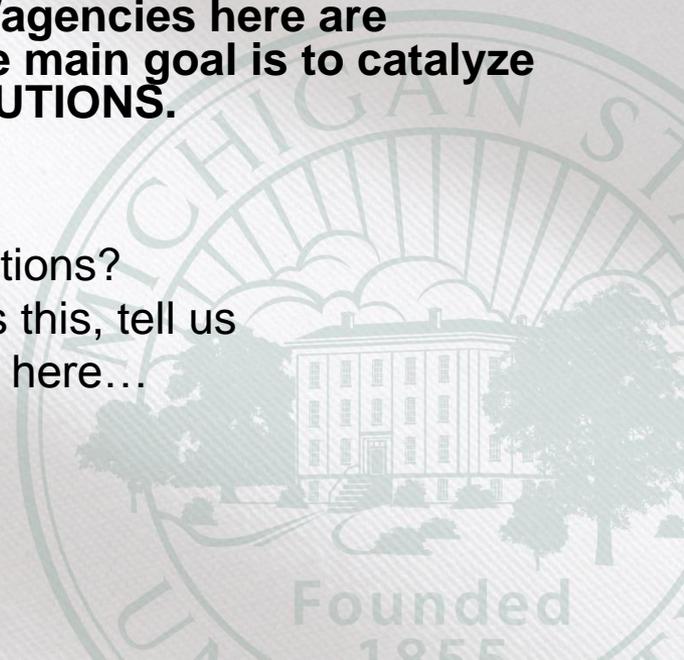
10:30-10:45 Discussion and questions as a large group

10:45-11:30 Breakout groups (2) to discuss potential responses and initiatives

11:30-11:50 Report back to the group, invite others to participate as needed

The goal is to leave with action items that people/agencies here are willing to take on. We can do some things, but the main goal is to catalyze all of you to help do what you can. GOAL IS SOLUTIONS.

- PAPAS: Pick a place and start... anything
- No one sector can do it all
- What can you do to empower women toward solutions?
- If you know a resource or program that addresses this, tell us
- Or, if you do things that aren't even addressed on here...



Discussions about Action

10:45-11:30 Breakout groups (2) to discuss potential responses and initiatives. 20 minutes each at a table (or stay at the table):

- Mentorship
- Jobs and job training
- Self-confidence/self-worth/a voice
- Keeping girls and women in school
- Childcare
- Preventing early pregnancy
- Safety/physical and sexual abuse
- Medical and physical healthcare
- Support and friendship/women's Center
- Parenting support
- Faith community
- Other

The goal is for each person to complete the green sheet of paper. What can YOU do and offer to your community? What can we all do together to create solutions?

11:30-11:50 Report back to the group, invite others to participate as needed

- Meet back in 3-6 months to report
- WE have much more information in all of these areas – THIS IS 1% OF WHAT WE HAVE– reach out for more detail: Jennifer.Johnson@hc.msu.edu, Maji.Hailemariam@hc.msu.edu, Kent.Key@hc.msu.edu.

