

Catalog of Data Sources

A resource guide for finding relevant, accurate data and statistics



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Who Should Use This Catalog?

This data catalog has been developed for use by a wide range of audiences, including but not limited to policy-makers, community leaders, health and human services providers, and nonprofit professionals. It is meant to serve as a tool to assist in finding relevant and reliable data on a wide variety of topics. The geographic focus of this guide is Northeast Ohio, but many of the included sources have data for other geographic areas as well. It is meant to be useful for users with a wide range of experience levels when it comes to seeking data. To this end, each listing in the catalog includes a ease of use rating, ranging from one star for not at all easy to use and/or navigate to five stars for extremely easy to use and/or navigate

How Were These Sources Chosen?

Data sources for this catalog were selected based on the following criteria:

- Reliable data (see next page)
- Recent data
- Free access to at least some of the data (a few sources have paid content in addition to free content; this is noted in the description of the data source)
- Data available at a geographic unit smaller than the state—i.e. county, city, zip code, MSA, neighborhood, etc.

This list is by no means exhaustive, but is meant to provide options for data in a variety of categories important to the wellbeing of communities in Ohio.

Reliable Versus Unreliable Sources

One of the great things about the internet age is that huge amounts of useful data and statistics are right at our fingertips. Unfortunately, not all data sources are created equal. The Center for Community Solutions has created this Data Catalog as a resource for organizations and individuals to utilize in order to find useful and reliable data and statistics. This list is certainly not exhaustive, and a simple Google search will often provide all the information you need. However, there are some sources that seem deceptively reliable. It is important to use only reliable sources when presenting data.

[What Makes a Source Reliable?](#)

There are a few factors to consider when evaluating sources for reliability and credibility. First, consider the author of the information. If no author or source of the information is given, the source should not be considered credible. Likewise, if the author does not provide information on where, how, and when their information was obtained, the source is not credible. It also is a good idea to determine whether the author has any authority on the subject matter. Also pay attention to the age of the data. If no time period is given for the data, its credibility is very suspect. While there is no hard and fast rule for how old is too old when it comes to data, it is best to have the most up-to-date data available. While there is no definitive litmus test to determine the reliability of a source, considering the aforementioned concerns will help in deciding whether to utilize data from a given source.

[Margins of Error and Confidence Intervals](#)

Many data sources, particularly data coming from sample surveys, include information on margins of error and confidence intervals. These are statistical tools meant to take into account any error in the sampling method. A confidence interval is a range that is highly likely to include the actual number for the statistic being sought. The margin of error is half the confidence interval—the amount on either side of the estimation. So, if a poverty rate is listed as 15% with a .5% margin of error, it means that there is a high probability (usually 90% or 95% confidence level) that the actual poverty rate is between 14.5% and 15.5%. In this example, the confidence interval would be 14.5%-15.5%.

GENERAL SOURCES

360-Public

Created By: Public Insight Corp.

Website: www.360-public.com

Geographic Level of Data: City, School District, Zip Code

Ease of Use: ☆☆☆☆☆

360-Public is a new web-based public data platform that provides easily accessible public information including demographic, economic, social, crime, housing, and financial data. The web platform has a great deal of data and allows for easy comparison. Most of the data on the website is available free-of-charge; however, for some of the more complex analysis tools, there is a subscription fee. It is a strong source of data for local information and allows for convenient access to data from a variety of reliable sources.

American Factfinder

Created By: US Census Bureau

Website: <http://factfinder2.census.gov>

Geographic Level of data: National, State, Local

User Friendliness: ☆☆

By far the most utilized source of data due to its scope, depth, and variety of topics, American Factfinder is a website put forth by the US Census Bureau. Data sources covered by Factfinder include the Decennial Census, the American Community Survey, the Economic Census, the Population Estimates Program, Annual Economic Surveys, and many more. While the website can be overwhelming and confusing, there are available tutorials and training on the website. Factfinder is a great first step when seeking data on a variety of topics. Available statistical topics include demographics, disabilities, education, employment, income, insurance coverage, poverty, veterans, housing, the economy, and businesses.

Kids Count Data Center

Created By: The Annie E. Casey Foundation

Website: www.datacenter.kidscount.org

Geographic Level of Data: National, State, County, Congressional District, City

Available Statistical Topics: Free and Reduced Lunch Programs, Demographics, Economy, Education, Health, Housing, and Poverty

User Friendliness: ☆☆☆☆☆

The Kids Count Data Center is a well-respected data source for all kinds of statistics related to the well-being of children. Kids Count puts out an annual report on the state of children nationally and state-wide that is available on the website or as a hard copy. The website is easy to navigate, and provides a great deal of information at the state and local levels. There are many interactive tools, as well as the ability to either make your own data tables or view premade tables on a variety of topics. The website also has special applications both for traditional use and on mobile phone browsers. All statistical topics are understood in the context of child wellbeing.

NEOCANDO 2010+

Created By: The Center on Urban Poverty and Community Development (CWRU)

Website: neocando.case.edu

Geographic level of data: Local (County, Zip Code, Ward, Neighborhood, Municipality, Census Tract, etc.)

User-Friendliness: ☆☆☆☆☆

NEOCANDO stands for Northeast Ohio Community and Neighborhood Data for Organizing. It provides data from the Census and other local sources to allow users to create their own data tables, maps, and graphs. This tool provides a great deal of local-level information on a variety of topics, making it valuable for organizations within the region. Users can look at one point in time or compare results over time. Pre-made reports, briefs, and community profiles are also available on the website. Available statistical topics include demographics, housing, poverty, income, public assistance, education, economy, employment, industry, transportation, disabilities, and crime.

NEORIO

Created By: The Center for Community Solutions

Website: www.communitysolutions.com/neorio

Geographic Level of Data: National, State, MSA, CSA, 16-County Region, County

User-Friendliness: ☆☆☆☆☆

The NEORIO initiative is a selection of indicator data focused on 16 counties in Northeast Ohio. Its goal is the improvement of quality of life for Northeast Ohio communities and their residents as indicated by positive movement in specific measures. The NEORIO indicators utilize data from many of the sources mentioned in this packet, including County Health Rankings and the Census. The NEORIO initiative includes two categories of indicators—health, and social/economic. Data is given for the region, as well as data for comparison’s sake at the national, state, and MSA/CSA level. In addition, selected “peer” MSA and CSAs from around the country are also included for the sake of comparison.

Opportunity Index

Created By: Opportunity Nation, Measure of America

Website: www.opportunityindex.org

Geographic Level of Data: National, State, County

Available Statistical Topics: Economy, Income, Employment, Poverty, Housing, Technology, Education, Civic Engagement, Crime, Food Availability, and Health Care Availability

User-Friendliness: ☆☆☆☆☆

The Opportunity Index was created as a means to look beyond simple economic indicators such as GDP and poverty levels, into complex variables that more accurately reflect economic opportunities. States and counties are ranked and given scores that are easily comparable, making it easy to see how one’s geographic area measures up. The data is easy to read, share, and compare. In addition, there are links to local advocacy groups working to improve the outcomes and ways to get involved.

United Way Common Good Forecaster

Created By: United Way, American Human Development Project

Website: <http://apps.unitedway.org/forecaster>

Geographic Level of Data: National, State, County

Available Statistical Topics: Health, Crime, Poverty, Income, Employment, Education, and Community Involvement.

User-Friendliness: ☆☆☆☆☆

This application's main focus is on the importance of education, but it provides data on many issues that overlap with education. The application allows for easy comparisons on state and local levels, and provides data in graphical and text formats. It also allows users to download data. Hypothetical projections based on changes in education levels in the community are also available. The application requires Adobe Flash. Overall, the Common Good Forecaster is a user-friendly visually appealing tool for educational and other statistical data.

CHARITABLE GIVING AND NONPROFITS

Foundation Center Stats

Created By: The Foundation Center

Website: <http://foundationcenter.org/findfunders/statistics>

Geographic Level of Data: National, State

User-Friendliness: ☆☆☆☆

This website provides statistics on both sides of the grant process—data about foundations that make grants, as well as data on grants that have been awarded and the recipients of grants. The Foundation Center also allows users to search for the 990 IRS forms of various nonprofits to find details about their funding. While there are no customizable data tools, the available reports give a great deal of information about grants, grant makers, and grant recipients on the national and state levels going back as far as 1997.

The National Center for Charitable Statistics

Created By: The Center on Nonprofits and Philanthropy, the Urban Institute

Website: <http://www.nccs.urban.org/>

Geographic Level of Data: National, State, County

User-Friendliness: ☆☆☆☆

This website has a great deal of useful data on the nonprofit sector in the United States. Users can make customized tables about nonprofits, public charities, private foundations, and charitable giving within a given geographic area. State and county profiles are also available, as well as a search function to find out about specific nonprofits and their financial information including their 990 IRS forms.

CRIME

Uniform Crime Reporting Data Tool- FBI

Created By: FBI, local agencies

Website: www.ucrdatatool.gov

Geographic Level of Data: National, State, Some Local

User-Friendliness: ☆☆

This data portal provides statistics on violent crimes and property crimes. Violent crimes include murder, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. Property crimes include burglary, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft. The website allows users to make customized tables in which date range, type of crime, and geographic area can be specified, but the customized table tool is not very intuitive. Data is updated annually. Local data is available for city law enforcement agencies serving 10,000 people or more, and for county agencies serving 25,000 people or more.

ECONOMY

Cleveland Federal Reserve Indicators and Data

Created By: The Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland

Website: <http://www.clevelandfed.org/research/data/index.cfm>

Geographic Level of Data: Local, Regional, State, National, International

User-Friendliness: ☆☆☆☆

The Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland has a wealth of information on the data portion of its website, all of which is clearly labeled with the date of the most recent data update. At the local level, the Fed maintains and reports on the Cleveland Financial Stress Index, which monitors financial stability in four major financial sectors: credit, equity, foreign exchange, and interbank markets. The CFSI has interactive charts to allow users to see how it has evolved over time. At the regional and state level, data on employment, unemployment, output, homeownership, and per capita personal income are available. The regional and state data is only available in a downloadable excel spreadsheet format. Also available on the website is information on national and international inflation, federal fund rate predictions, and yield curves.

Fund for Our Economic Future Research

Created By: Fund for Our Economic Future

Website: <http://www.futurefundneo.org/en/Research>

Geographic Level of Data: Northeast Ohio Region, County, some National for comparison

User-Friendliness: ☆☆☆☆☆

The Fund for Our Economic Future has a great deal of data available that pertains to the economy of Northeast Ohio. Mostly in report form, data on economic attitudes, the cost of local governments, and an annual dashboard of economic indicators include statistics that give a wide range of information regarding business, employment, and government spending. In addition, there is a useful annotated bibliography of economic research that has been conducted in and about the region. The bibliography is divided into the following topics: research sponsored by the Fund for Our Economic Future, business growth and attraction, entrepreneurship and innovation, talent development and education attainment, racial and economic inclusion, government collaboration and efficiency, and others. It is important to note that the bibliography has not been updated since 2009; however, much of the data it provides is still relevant.

Ohio Development Services Agency Office of Research

Created By: Ohio Development Services Agency Office of Research

Website: http://development.ohio.gov/reports/reports_research.htm

Geographic Level of Data: State, County, Local

User-Friendliness: ☆☆☆

This website contains a wide range of economic data for the state of Ohio as well as for individual counties and localities. While the included data is strong, it is somewhat difficult to find where each topic is available within the website. Their “county trend” profiles include statistics about taxes, demographics, employment, educational attainment, poverty, income, housing, and more. The website also include statistics about the GDP of Ohio, Per Capita Income, profiles of various industries within the state, information about Priority Investment areas, as well as information about tax rates for businesses as compared to other states.

EDUCATION

National Center for Education Statistics

Created By: the Federal Government, the Institute of Education Sciences

Website: <http://nces.ed.gov>

Geographic Level of Data: National, State, County, School District, City

User-Friendliness: ☆☆☆

This website is full of a wide range of statistics related to all aspects of education. While the main page of the website can be overwhelming due to the huge amounts of information, it is a useful resource for finding data related to school districts, school attendance, school crime and safety, state and district profiles, and many annual publications. In addition, there is an option to make customized data tables. Every school in the country has its own specific profile with useful demographic information. The website also includes results from surveys such as the National Assessment of Educational Progress, the National Assessment of Adult Literacy, the Schools and Staffing Survey, Career/Technical Education Statistics, the National Postsecondary Student Aid Study, and many more.

Ohio Department of Education Data

Created By: The Ohio Department of Education

Website: <http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Data>

Geographic Level of Data: State, School District

User-Friendliness: ☆☆☆☆☆

This recently updated website is now far easier to navigate than its clunky predecessor. Available data include financial information about school districts, staff data, building data, results of school climate surveys, and the interactive Local Report Card tool that provides information about each school district's graduation rates, test results, finances, and demographics.

GOVERNMENT SPENDING, CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS, LEGISLATION

Federal Election Commission Campaign Finance Disclosure Portal

Created By: Federal Election Commission

Website: <http://www.fec.gov/pindex.shtml>

Geographic Level of Data: National, State, Congressional District

User-Friendliness: ☆☆☆☆

Data related to federal campaign expenditures can be found on this website. Data is available in table, map, and chart form. There is a search function that allows users to search for particular individuals, organizations, PACs, and SuperPACs to determine their campaign expenditures. In addition, data on bundled contributions, individual candidate profiles, and lists of registered lobbyists are available. Data is updated regularly in accordance with federal campaign finance laws.

Govistics

Created By: Center for Governmental Research

Website: <http://www.govistics.com/>

Geographic Level of Data: State, County (Local available with paid subscription)

User-Friendliness: ☆☆☆☆☆

This user-friendly web portal provides data about state and county government spending, revenue, employees, and payroll, each broken down by categories. Data is available as a “snapshot” or as a graph of change over time. In addition, the “compare” tool allows for comparisons with other counties; one can choose to compare automatically generated “peer” areas with similar populations, median incomes, and land areas, or you can choose any county to compare. Demographic information is also available. The source for all data is clearly identified, and comes from reliable sources such as the Census. In addition, for a fee, one can purchase access to the same types of data for local entities including cities, towns, boroughs, and villages, as well as school districts.

Ohio Legislative Service Commission Budget Info

Created By: Ohio Legislative Service Commission

Website: <http://www.lsc.state.oh.us/budget/default.htm>

Geographic Level of Data: State

User-Friendliness: ☆☆☆

This website houses Ohio's state budget, including all appropriations for different programs and projects. Different aspects of the budget are available in full form, or in brief, and can be seen as introduced, as passed by the House or the Senate, or as enacted. The enacted version is the one that has become law. There is also a catalog of budget line items that shows how very specific programs within different departments of the government were funded, and how that funding has changed over time. While this website may be a bit difficult to comprehend for those not familiar with state budgets, it allows users to see how the state is spending its money and how programs are funded.

USA Spending

Created By: Federal Office of Management and Budget

Website: www.usaspending.gov

Geographic Level of Data: National, State

User-Friendliness: ☆☆

While not a particularly user-friendly website, the amount of information available makes this resource very valuable. USA Spending tracks all federal spending, and allows users to see lists of spending by agency, by year, by recipient, by type of spending, and more. There are options to do comparisons over time and to see how federal spending has shifted. In addition, summary reports and graphs, trend reports, and funding opportunities are all listed. Be aware that spending is categorized by location of recipient, so most state-wide programs are listed under Columbus, making true geographic analysis difficult.

HEALTH

Community Health Status Indicators

Created By: US Department of Health and Human Services

Website: www.communityhealth.hhs.gov

Geographic Level of Data: State, county with national level for comparison

User-Friendliness: ☆☆☆☆☆

This information portal through the US Department of Health and Human Services contains a variety of key health indicators at the state and county level. While the only years available are 2008 and 2009, the site provides over 200 measures for each US county. The data is divided into the following categories: summary measures of health, national leading causes of death, measures of birth and death, relative health importance, vulnerable populations, environmental health, preventative services use, risk factors for premature death, and access to care.

County Health Departments

Of the 16 counties in the Northeast Ohio Region, the following have an annual report including health statistics available on their health department or district website: Cuyahoga, Lake, Lorain, Mahoning, Medina, Portage, Richland, Stark, Summit, and Wayne. In addition, the following counties have other statistics available on their health department or district website: Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Mahoning, Medina, Stark, Summit, and Trumbull. Keep in mind that some health departments and health districts have websites that are separate from the official county government websites.

County Health Rankings

Created By: The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute

Website: www.countyhealthrankings.org

Geographic Level of Data: Mostly county, with some state and national level available for comparison

User-Friendliness: ☆☆☆☆☆

This website ranks counties on a number of health-related measures. The measures are divided into two categories: health outcomes, which measure how healthy a county is, and health factors, which measure factors that influence health within a community. Utilizing these two categories, the County Health Rankings offer statistics to measure and compare health statuses within counties. Multiple years of data are available. In addition to more typical health statistics such as mortality, number of uninsured, and obesity rates, the County Health Rankings also measure environmental factors such as air pollution and access to healthy foods, and social factors such as number of children in poverty and crime rates. Finally, in addition to their ranking information, there is also a tool called “Roadmaps” that allows users to explore ways to improve their rankings, look up initiatives that are already growing within the community, and share information about the rankings with others.

Hospital Council of Northwest Ohio (HCNO) Datalink

Created By: Hospital Council of Northwest Ohio

Website: <http://www.hcno.org/community/data-indicator.html>

Geographic Level of Data: National, State, County

User-Friendliness: ☆☆☆☆☆

This website contains data on a wide variety of health indicators dealing with access to preventative health care, diagnoses of various diseases, risky health behaviors, safety, and general health status. Data is available at the county level for 22 Northwest Ohio counties, as well as two peer counties. Unfortunately, not all counties have the same year of data available for each indicator, making comparisons difficult. Despite this, Datalink has a wealth of information about particular counties and has many health statistics that are not readily available elsewhere.

Ohio Department of Health Data & Statistics

Created By: Ohio Department of Health

Website: www.odh.ohio.gov/healthstats/datastats.aspx

Geographic Level of Data: State, Local

User-Friendliness: ☆☆☆☆

This is a clearinghouse of all Ohio Department of Health data. There is a hospital comparison tool, a map of healthcare facilities, along with a great deal of statistical information. Topics include vital statistics, diseases and conditions, health surveys, community profiles, and maternal and child health. Also included are environmental health factors such as lead poisoning data and information. In addition, the Data Warehouse option allows for customizable tables and graphs utilizing birth, death, and cancer data. Much of the information is already in highly readable report formats. The topic pages also include many outside links for further information.

The Ohio Medicaid Assessment Survey/ Ohio Family Health Survey

Created By: Ohio Department of Insurance, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, Ohio Department of Health, Ohio Department of Mental Health, and the Ohio Board of Regents

Website: <http://grc.osu.edu/omas/>

Geographic Level of Data: State, County

User-Friendliness: ☆☆☆☆

The Ohio Medicaid Assessment Survey (formerly the Ohio Family Health Survey) is conducted by the Ohio Colleges of Medicine Government Resource Center in Columbus. The OFHS survey was conducted every 4 years since 1998, with a shorter interim survey conducted in 2010 in order to assess the effect of the economic downturn on the health of Ohio families. In addition, in 2011, the Ohio Employer Health Benefits Survey was conducted to determine what sorts of employers do and do not offer health insurance benefits. Finally, in 2012, the survey was changed to the OMAS, to collect data on the health status of Ohio Medicaid and Medicaid-eligible populations. The OMAS has a link to a dashboard of the survey results, and a great deal of data the other surveys is available in map and report form. Overall, the website contains a great deal of data regarding Ohioans' health.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

Data Outcomes and Quality

Created By: SAMHSA

Website: www.samhsa.gov/data

Geographic Level of Data: National, State, and Some Local Metropolitan Data.

User-Friendliness: ☆☆☆☆

This website is a clearinghouse of data from a number of surveys and collection systems related to substance abuse and mental health. The data available on this site is either in a very raw format that would require familiarity with data software such as SPSS or SAS (no Excel format seems to be available), or is in report form—no customizable tables here. Nonetheless, the state-level and metropolitan area-level reports provide useful data such as prevalence of various drugs, demographics of drug users, treatment facilities, and much more. Thus, the most useful area of the website is the “State and Metro Reports” button on the left side.

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

Public Assistance Monthly Statistics (PAMS) Reports

Created By: Ohio Department of Job and Family Services

Website: <http://jfs.ohio.gov/pams>

Geographic Level of Data: State, County

User-Friendliness: ☆☆☆☆☆

This website provides statewide and county-specific reports on the number of individuals enrolled in public assistance programs managed by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. Also included are total expenditures on these programs, as well as the percent of population receiving public assistance. Programs that are addressed are as follows: Ohio Works First, Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, Disability Assistance, Food Stamps, Medicaid, and Child Care programs. Data are updated monthly, but are not customizable.