



Study: Florida residents struggling for basic needs

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FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (WSVN) -- According to a new study, almost half of the people living in Florida are barely getting by and struggling to simply pay for basic necessities.

For some, living in South Florida is paradise. However, looking beyond the beach will reveal how many people truly live. "I know a lot of people they're just paycheck to paycheck, barely make it," said resident Al Passinault.

According to a study just published by the United Way, there is a new struggling class. The report, entitled the ALICE Report, studied financial hardship in the sunshine state. The acronym ALICE stands for Asset, Limited, Income, Constrained and Employed. "In our area here in South Florida, approximately 45 percent of families are in that range, what we call 'ALICE Range,' where possibly dual incomes, but their cost of childcare is so high that they can't, at the end of a paycheck, might not be able to put food on their kid's table," said CEO of United Way Kathleen Cannon.

ALICE households pay taxes and live above the poverty line. However, they live paycheck to paycheck, and cannot save and are barely getting by. "You go in the grocery store, and you plan on spending \$30 - \$40," said Passinault. "Before you know it, the register tells you \$88, and now you gotta start putting food away because you got prescriptions to buy, rent to pay, phone to pay."

Resident Gregory Beary said paychecks are staying the same as the prices of everyday needs are rising. "Everything is going up," he said. "The pay is not going up. It's going down, it seems to be. It's real hard, a real struggle out here."

In Broward County, 300,000 families fall into the ALICE category. In Miami-Dade, it's more than 242,000 households. In Monroe County, closer to 11,000 or 36 percent of the population. "I don't know when this dilemma is going to end, and you know it started in 2008, and it's still here now," said Beary. "It's not getting better."

The United Way is asking those who fall into the ALICE category to reach out to them, so they may help and provide service.

For More Information:

<http://www.unitedwaymiami.org/>

<http://www.unitedwaybroward.org/>

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