GIS in Sociology

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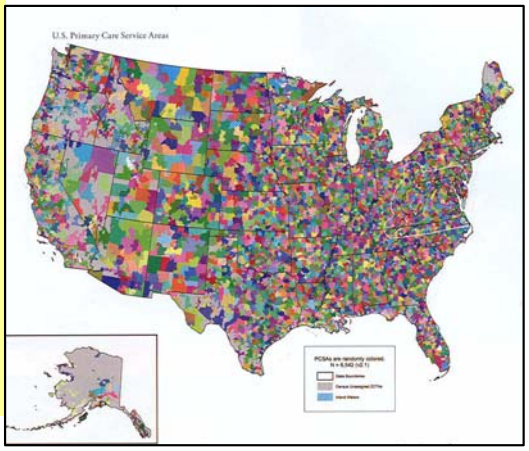
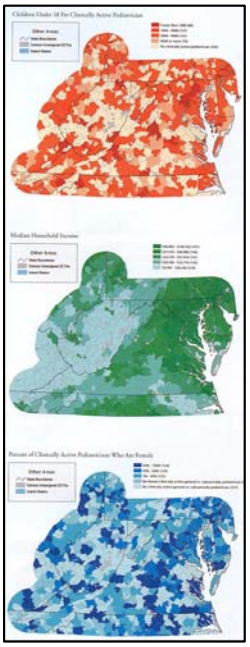
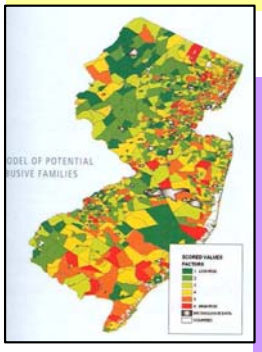
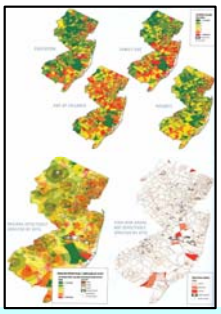
The Center for the Evaluative Clinical Sciences at Dartmouth Medical School used GIS to create a database of children's primary care throughout the US. This database could be accessed on an interactive website where demographics, socioeconomic status, and geographic distribution of the children and primary care providers could be compared. This database will help to identify the voids in the primary care available for children in the US and thus help to identify locations where federal funding may be necessary.

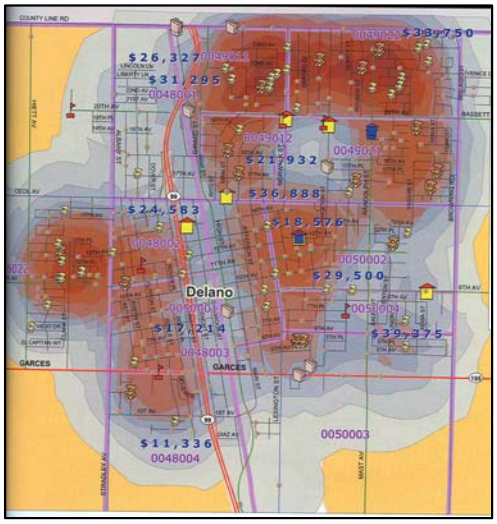








The Department of Youth and Family Services (DYFS) uses GIS and recent census data to locate their offices in areas throughout New Jersey that are at a high risk for child abuse. The organization believes that proper distribution of their social services offices can help eliminate location as a factor for increased incidences. Though there is already a wide swath of offices in New Jersey, there are underserved areas that need DYFS attention. With the help of GIS, they hope to locate more efficient office locations to better serve at-risk children.



A small nonprofit organization in Maine is using GIS technology to provide the elderly with a safer alternative to driving. Recent news stories indicate that many older drivers are a hazard on our roadways. Decreased eyesight, reaction times, hearing, and other natural responses to age can greatly affect other drivers on the road. The Independent Transportation Network (ITN) in Portland, Maine has a system where seniors create an ITN account and can call a driver at any time they wish to go somewhere. They choose the destination, whether or not they want to share the ride, and the route all at once. GIS is what makes this possible. The drivers are equipped with technology that keeps track of the destination, time frame, road routes and detours, and cost. The use of NetEngine, a geographically based program, helps to determine efficiency routes between two points using complex mathematical algorithms. Altogether, the combined use of GIS and general safety concerns provides a successful solution to the risky nature of elderly drivers.

The Community Connections for Child Care (CCCC) and the Local Investment in Child Care (LINCC) use GIS programs to effectively assess current child care service in Kern County, California. The goal was to locate areas in the county that had inadequate child care and suitably licensed child care providers. By using the needs densities at the census tract level, Kern County is able to prepare maps according to the age, location, child care capacity, waiting list, and vacancies. GIS technology will help locate and implement child care services to underserved communities.