

CSA #5 – Bear Creek/West Little York Executive Summary

Demographics:

The Bear Creek/West Little York CSA is a predominantly Anglo area located on Houston's west side. 53% of the population is Anglo; just less than 30% is Hispanic, and the remainder of the population consists of roughly equal proportions of African Americans and Asians. The median household income almost mirrors exactly that of Greater Houston, and the median home value is slightly less than that of the city as a whole. The Bear Creek/West Little York area is slightly better educated than the city as a whole. About 16% of the adult population has no high school diploma (considerably lower than the 23% average for the city), and 26% of residents have a college degree. Most households consist of married couples with children; however, nearly 10% of families with children are headed by single mothers.

Satisfaction levels:

Compared to the rest of Houston, the residents of the Bear Creek/West Little York area reported levels of satisfaction consistent with the city as a whole. 43% of residents reported a great deal of satisfaction with their neighborhoods, roughly average among all CSAs. 79% reported high levels of satisfaction with their families, and 61% reported high levels of satisfaction with their friends. Only 29% of adults successfully manage the demands of their careers and families, and 48% of residents reported being happy with their lives as a whole.

Spiritual Condition:

Relative to the rest of Greater Houston, residents of Bear Creek/West Little York are much more spiritually receptive than other CSAs in the Greater Houston area; however, this increased spiritual receptivity does not translate into increased church attendance. Only 33% of residents attend church weekly, and 13% of residents never attend church. When having problems, 41% would be likely to see a religious counselor, and 31% would seek help in a place of worship. However, the community is much more spiritually aware than these statistics would indicate. Nearly 74% of residents are likely to read the Bible or other inspired literature when they have problems. Likewise, 88% of residents are likely to pray when they have problems, and 75% of residents have no doubts about the existence of God.

Interviews with Key Leaders in the Bear Creek/West Little York CSA:

Key leaders praised the area for its small, close-knit community, stability of economy, low violent crime rates, and diversity. The problems facing the area included drug use among youth, issues between parents and teenagers, and decaying marriages. Community leaders commented that congregations contribute to the strong community, and offer mentoring, tutoring, and ESL programs for those living in the area. Leaders also noted the contribution of Bear Creek Assistance Ministries to the community. However, the congregations were criticized for not reaching beyond their own socioeconomic groups and for looking to others to solve problems within the community. Interviewees encouraged the Church to continue to break down cultural barriers and reach out to Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists who are continuing to move to the area.

