



Where the Money Goes

As with the rest of the population, seniors devote a large share of their overall spending to basics such as food, shelter, clothing, and transportation. In 1999 for example, 50% of all after tax expenditures by families headed by someone aged 65 and over went into these areas, about the same figure (47%) as families with head under age 65. That year, 17% of all senior family expenditures went to shelter costs, while 15% went to transportation costs, 14% was spent on food, and 4% to clothing. The majority of the after tax expenditures of unattached seniors (56%) also went to

these basic items although, in their case, 29% of the dollars were spent for shelter.

At the same time, both senior families and unattached seniors devoted close to 10% of their total after tax spending on recreation-related activities including reading, tobacco and alcohol, and lotteries. Household operation and furnishing also accounted for close to 10%, while health and personal care made up just over 5% of their spending.

Distribution of after-tax expenditures of seniors, 1999

