

REPORT TO COMMUNITY

April 1, 2021 - March 31, 2022



*...helping people achieve self-sufficiency and
rise above issues of poverty.*





"Helping People. Changing Lives." through our Head Start Program

Amanda Good, who was a former Head Start child and also has a son who attends our Ontario classroom, purchased her first home in 2021. She also graduated from Kent State University with an Associate degree in Human Services. She has obtained a Chemical Dependency license and is now providing addiction recovery services at Community Counseling Center, where she recently received an "Employee Appreciation" award. She plans to return to Kent State to pursue a BA in Human Services in the fall.

My family moved to a new home and my Mom just started a new job!

Carlos

We worked hard for years to buy our own home and we finally did it and we moved in last spring!!



We welcomed a beautiful baby sister for me to our family.

My Mom just got a new job and she says it's "the best job ever!"

Avery

Elliott My Mom got a new job this year as a Classroom aid here at Head Start and she is doing an amazing job!

Aurora



Our Mission...

Our mission is to “help people achieve self-sufficiency and rise above issues of poverty.” Every day we work to achieve that mission by helping people to attain the supports they need. Supports that will empower them to live with less external assistance, provide them opportunities to overcome their barriers, and obtain the resources and skills that will enable them to be successful.

We do this through... our Head Start, WIC, Community Action Home Visiting, and Ohio Governor’s Imagination Library programs that help the parents and caregivers raising our littlest ones to ensure they have the best possible start in life.

We do this through... our emergency assistance programs of Home Energy Assistance- Winter and Summer Crisis, New Hope Homeless Assistance, and CARES Home Relief to ensure that those experiencing set-backs can get back on track and move forward.

We do this through... our Senior Nutrition, Homemaker, and Grocery Shopping programs to allow our older citizens to remain in their homes as long as possible.

We do this through... our supports to students and families through our Dragon Empowerment Center and CLC Projects of Ashtabula County, so that all can obtain the skills necessary to do well in school and in life.

We do this through... our 2-1-1 Information and Referral Program connecting people to the services and resources available to meet their needs.

And, we do this through... partnerships that continue the path to self-sufficiency beyond our assistance by working with local organizations to provide additional supports.

Throughout this report you will read stories about the specific ways we are fulfilling our mission and “Helping People. Changing Lives.”

Our Focus...

Our priority is always to provide vital supports during times of crisis, address issues of importance within the community, and empower individuals and families to make positive progress that creates a better quality of life. This year, similar to last year, a major focus has been to help people continue to recover and overcome the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Helping People. Changing Lives.”

All of our agency programs adapted how we meet the needs of our specific customers in the safest, most effective ways. In some cases the face-to-face requirement for services was suspended. In other instances, documentation required to complete the application process eased. Whenever we were able to, within the rules of our grants, we did our best to see that people had access to all of the assistance available. The agency received additional funding for various programs, as well as monies for new programs through the American Rescue Plan Act; allowing us to aid many more families experiencing difficulties that resulted from the unusual circumstances of the pandemic. The following section shows highlights of some of the major new programs.



The CARES Home Relief program initially provided rent, mortgage, and utility assistance to income eligible households impacted by COVID-19. Funding for mortgages ended but the program continues to offer assistance with past due rent amounts to help maintain housing stability for those who have been unable to pay for their basic household bills.

Assistance Provided

 **\$ 2,381,094**

| | |
|---------------------|------------|
| Rent assistance | 690 |
| Electric assistance | 278 |
| Water assistance | 195 |
| Gas assistance | 198 |
| Sewer assistance | 92 |
| Trash assistance | 43 |
| Mortgage assistance | 36 |
| Internet assistance | 10 |

*"Helping People. Changing Lives."
through our CARES Program*

"Client Jane had some health issues prior to the Pandemic. After getting COVID herself and having long term complications, she was no longer able to work in a factory setting, which is what she has been doing for years. Finding a new job in a different type of slower pace environment was hard to find. She started to get behind on bills and rent and before she knew it her car was one missed payment from getting repossessed.

After speaking to her landlord about options to stay in her home, her landlord referred her to the CARES program. She applied in hopes of getting her rent paid for the amount past due. When we were able to not only help with the past due amount, but also paid 3 months ahead, she broke down in tears on the phone and could not believe she was able to get all this help.

We have helped this client for a total of 15 months with her rent as she looked for new working opportunities. She stated that if it wasn't for us helping her, she would be homeless, without a car, and probably relapsing on drugs to try and cope with her unfortunate bad luck. This client has since then found a stable job, was able to pay her car up to date and is feeling so much more at ease.

Because of the CARES Program she was able to get back on her feet. The CARES Program took some of the stress off her shoulders and she was able to use that energy to find a job. Jane said we are her hero's and she cannot thank us enough for all our hard work and dedication to helping people. This type of program can really turn people's lives around, sometimes people just need that little extra help and it can change their whole life."



**Office of Community Services
Low-Income Household
Water Assistance Program
(LIHWAP)**

The Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program or LIHWAP, was another new program created to help households with their in-home water and wastewater bills. Assistance can be provided when water service has been disconnected, they have a disconnection notice, need to establish new service, or need to pay to transfer service. Prior to the LIHWAP Program funding to assist with water and sewer bills were very limited.

Assistance Provided



\$ 28,429

Water assistance

113

SAVE THE DREAM OHIO

Save the Dream Ohio was a new program to provide assistance for homeowners impacted by COVID-19. It offers assistance with: Property Taxes, Homeowner Fee's (homeowner, flood and mortgage insurance, HOA fees or a lien, condo fees), and Utilities (water, sewer, trash, broadband internet service and disconnect and reconnect fees). Also known as the Utility Assistance Program or UAP, the Save the Dream Ohio program acknowledged that has higher eligibility guidelines which offers assistance to individuals and families who are ordinarily over-income to receive benefits.

Assistance Provided



\$ 181,893

| | |
|------------------------------|-----------|
| Property tax assistance | 68 |
| Court cost assistance | 1 |
| Gas/Fuel Oil assistance | 21 |
| Electric assistance | 45 |
| Water assistance | 19 |
| Water/Sewer/Trash assistance | 32 |
| Homeowner fees assistance | 3 |
| Internet assistance | 16 |



RISE ABOVE!
Assistance Program

Before the vaccines were available, many people who were diagnosed with COVID-19 had strict quarantine orders, or due to their health vulnerability had a physicians order to stay-at-home. The Rise Above Assistance Program delivered food, hygiene, and cleaning products for those who could not obtain their basic supplies.

Providing vital supports...

The report period represents another year dealing with a deadly public health crisis. Individuals with fewer economic resources or social supports suffered greater impacts and more negative concerns from the Coronavirus pandemic. In addition to the new funding and programs, our existing services continued working every day to address the ongoing needs of people who were struggling before COVID-19 hit. Sometimes this is emergency assistance, other times it involves longer-term assistance to help develop skills. Through their efforts we helped people to overcome barriers and improve their quality of life.

"Helping People. Changing Lives." through our Community Action Home Visiting Program

Mom began services with the home visiting program while pregnant and shared with the home visitor that she had been using Methamphetamine until she had learned of the pregnancy. Mom was using the substance for about the first month of the pregnancy. Mom quit using the substance on her own and began to receive regular home visits. Mom declined referrals for any counseling services or addiction supports at this time.



Mom faithfully kept her scheduled visits and developed a professional relationship with her home visitor. Mom also began receiving WIC services and made sure to keep all of her appointments. Mom discussed her past traumas with the home visitor and after some time became receptive to counseling services. Mom began seeing her counselor and case manager regularly and working on goals to help cope with her anxiety. Mom worked on growing her relationship with her family and on finding a job. Mom recently began working a part time job outside of cash assistance and is working toward a goal to get her driver's license. Mom was receptive to the program and worked hard to grow as a parent for her son and teen daughter. Mom continuously kept her scheduled visits until completing the program this year when her child turned three.

Upon completing the program, Mom was working on her transition plan to enroll her child in preschool. Mom also shared plans for a developmental evaluation to help her decide if her son needs speech therapy to help him succeed in school. Throughout her time in the program Mom has remained clean from Methamphetamine use. Mom thanked the home visitor of the support from the home visiting program and shared what a difference it made for her. Mom framed the celebration cards from the home visitor for each year and placed the frames in her living room so that she could be reminded. Mom shared her plans to continue to stay clean for her children.

"Helping People. Changing Lives." through our Energy Assistance Program

An older gentleman visited our office, not knowing what to ask about, where to start or what our agency actually helped individuals with. He furnished his household bills and explained he did not know what he was going to do. He had never navigated any house expenses on his own. The gentleman shared the events that led up to the sudden loss of his wife. He was also now caring for their only grandson on his own. He was rather distraught and discouraged about his ability to handle everything that was now his sole responsibility.



The Energy Assistance Specialist explained our agency could help with the utility bills and point him in the right direction for help managing the other financial, emotional, and personal obstacles he was facing. The gentleman visited our office on multiple occasions and called many times with questions about his situation over the next 7 weeks. Staff connected him to many programs to help him get on his feet while healing from his sudden loss.

The gentleman wore his late wife's wedding ring on his pinky finger and fidgeted with it every time he spoke. Except for the last time he came in to show the Specialist that his PIPP amount was showing on his bill. That was the first time the expression of discouragement was missing from his demeanor.

"Helping People. Changing Lives." through our Head Start Home Visiting Program

Our Head Start Home Visitor has been working with a little boy for the last 2 years. He is extremely delayed in his development. When he came into the program, he was like a new born. He is now about a 10-month-old developmentally. He is crawling when he wants to. He holds his bottle the whole time. He is also reaching for his toys and holding onto them for a few seconds at a time. He also is doing crafts with the help of the staff person. With the ongoing, dedicated support offered in his own home environment, he is making steady, positive progress.



"Helping People. Changing Lives." through our Home Weatherization Program

A client in Geneva, Ohio needed some repairs completed on her home. She reached out to us for help. She had no heat and was very cold. She also had large gaps around her back door allowing cold air and snow to blow into her home. We sent her an application for Special Programs that cover our Elderly Program and United Way Home Repair Program.

After we received her application we had an inspector over there as quickly as possible because it was in the middle of winter. Upon inspection, we found that all of her duct work was separated from her furnace underneath her mobile home due to an opossum who had taken up residency in her heat runs. We also found that she needed her back door replaced. Not only was it allowing snow and cold air in the home, it was unsafe for her. Her home could have easily been broken in to.



With United Way funding we were able to leverage with our Directions Home of Eastern Ohio (DHEO elderly program) and replace all of her duct work and replace the back door making her home safe and comfortable again. Our client was so thankful and told the gentlemen working in her home that they saved her life. She sent in a card thanking everyone at Community Action and made a special note to the HVAC technicians. She calls every once in a while to seek help with other programs, but she always mentions how grateful she is for Community Action!

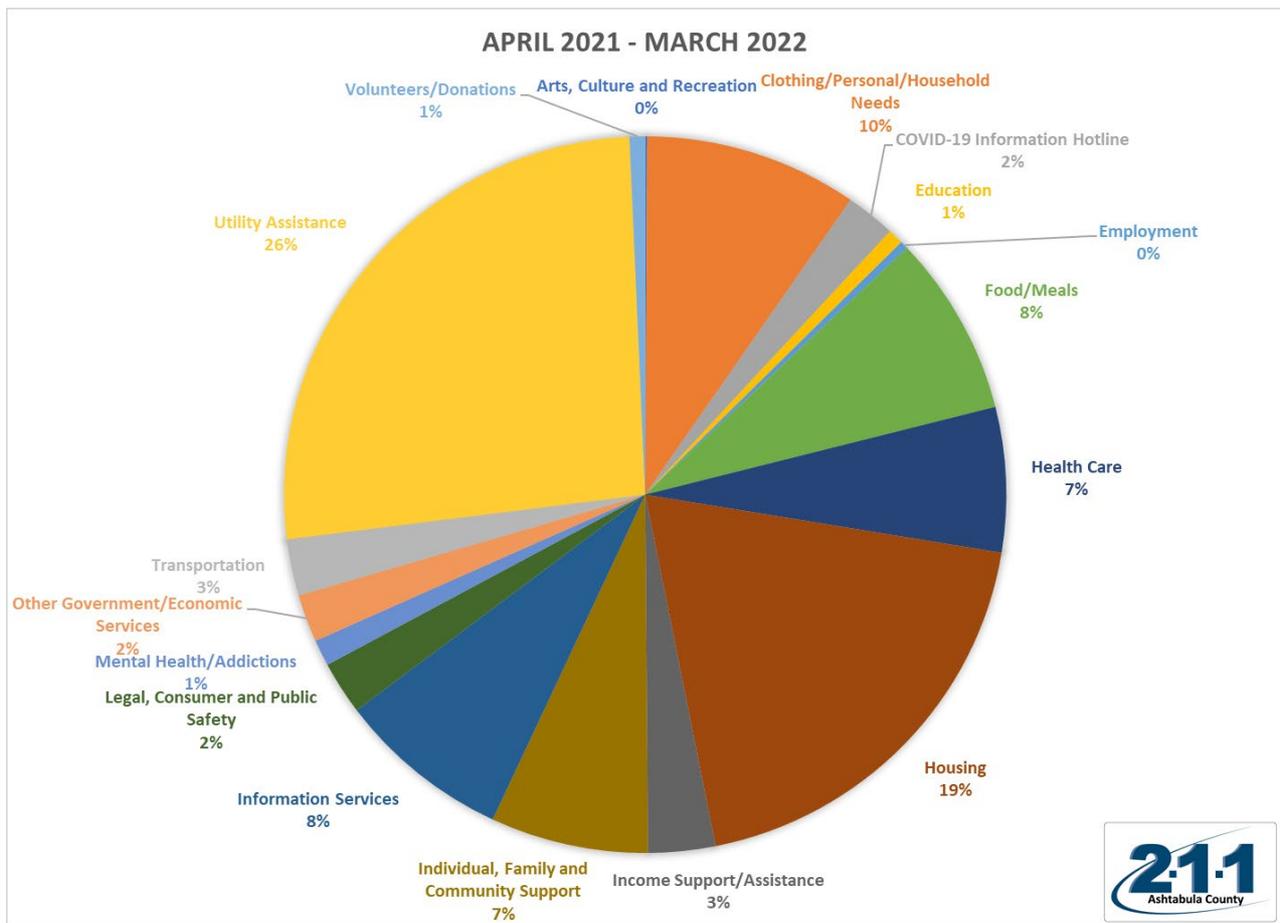
Community Needs Assessment...

The comprehensive Community Needs Assessment (CNA) was conducted in spring of 2021, the final results were presented and approved by the agency Board in August, 2021. We use the results to identify the needs and gaps in our county and guide our program development. The report is shared with the public and with other entities to use as they plan their services. A listing of the top issues identified in the survey from this CNA compared to our last CNA are shown in the chart to the right. Overall, the issues seem to be the same from 2018 to 2021. A copy of the report is posted on our website, www.accaa.org.

| | 2021 Score* | 2018 Score |
|---------------------|-------------|------------|
| Drug or Alcohol Use | 7.55 | 8.14 |
| Poverty | 6.96 | 6.82 |
| Lack of jobs | 6.36 | 6.29 |
| Crime | 5.47 | 6.1 |
| Run down housing | 5.07 | 5.02 |
| Lack of activities | 4.57 | 4.06 |
| Education system | 3.73 | 3.94 |
| Transportation | 3.56 | 3.13 |
| Access to shopping | 2.97 | 2.78 |

2-1-1 Community Needs

The chart below represents the needs of our community as represented by callers to our 2-1-1 Ashtabula County Information & Referral Program.



"Helping People. Changing Lives." through 2-1-1 Information & Referral Program

Our 2-1-1 Ashtabula County operator took a call from a 36-year old man a week before Christmas 2021. The caller stated he was a single father who was "at his wits end." He had been working as an Uber driver the past few years but was in a recent accident and his car was severely damaged. The person who hit his car did not have automobile insurance and so he had to use a lot of his own resources to repair his car. As a result, this single father had to dip into his savings while he was out of work through his driving job. The father stated that he needed a lot of assistance, including utilities, rent, and did not have any money to provide a Christmas for his son. Through a range of questions, our 2-1-1 operator found out the caller was a veteran. The caller was given multiple referrals – to both our own Agency programs and other programs in the community. Even though the caller was a veteran, he shared that he was very hesitant to reach out for help through our local Veterans Service Commission. He had served in Afghanistan and stated that, due to recent events and the end of US involvement in that country, he did not feel right asking for help. Having a daughter of her own in the military, our 2-1-1 operator assured the caller that all the referrals she was providing were for the very purpose of assisting people like him and she encouraged him that everyone may need help occasionally.

When the 2-1-1 operator followed up a few days later, she was elated to learn that the caller did reach out to all the referrals that he was provided. He was able to get assistance with his car repairs, rent, food, and utilities. He even received a voucher for Christmas dinner for he and his son. He was so appreciative and told our operator that he finally put up his Christmas tree ahead of the holidays, after not doing so prior. It is connections like these that are made by our 2-1-1 Ashtabula County program that help people learn and empower towards assistance every day. While technology continues to expand, the real-life operators through 2-1-1 Ashtabula County, a CSBG-funded program, offer real people on the other end of the phone who provide real support. Especially in this case, our 2-1-1 operator shared a connection to a veteran because of her own daughter serving in the military and was able to assist that caller thanks to building rapport and a friendly relationship.

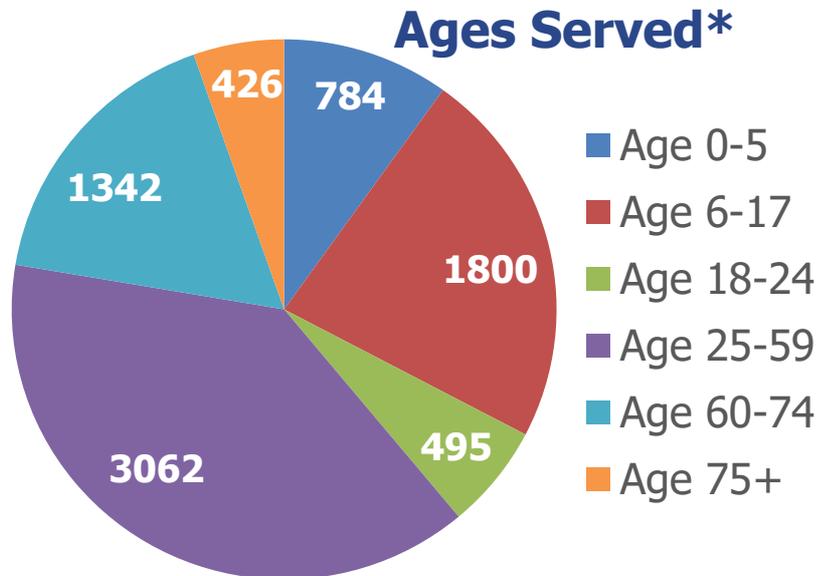
Summary of Those We Served

The information presented here shows the basic demographic characteristics of the customers we serve.

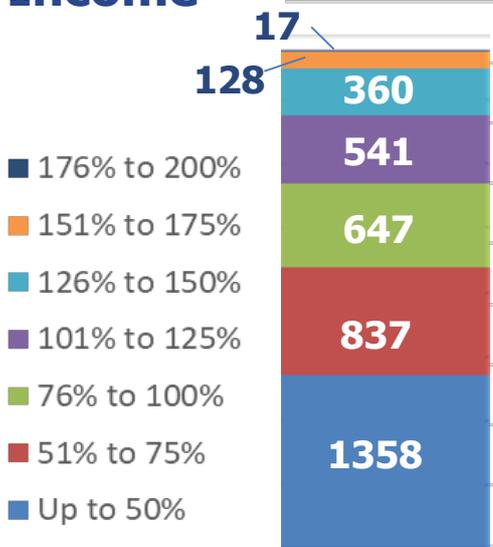


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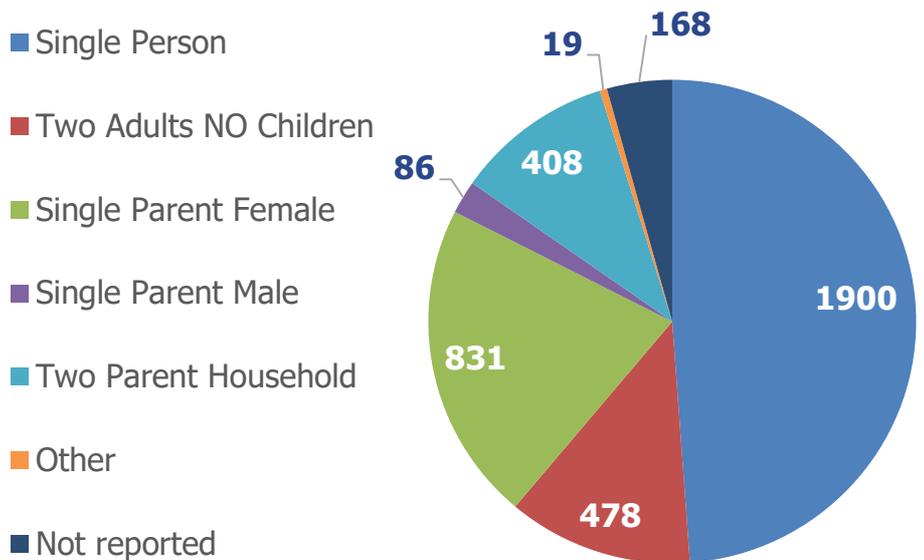
Total individuals about whom one or more characteristics was obtained.



Level of Household Income*

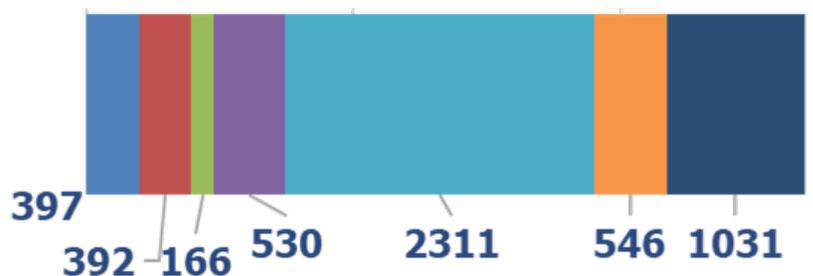


Household Type*



Work Status*

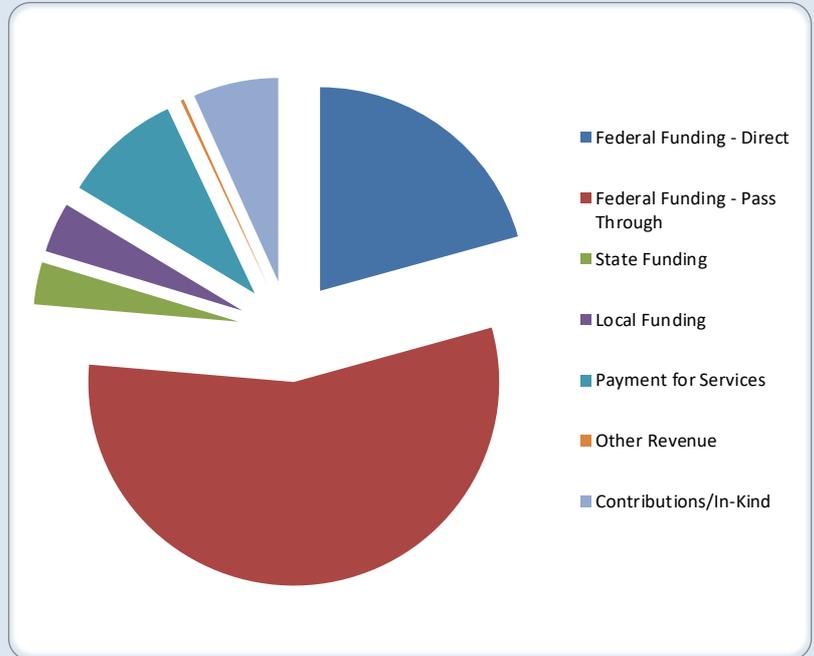
- Employed Full-Time
- Employed Part-Time
- Unemployed (6 mos or less)
- Unemployed (more than 6 mos)
- Unemployed (not in labor force)
- Retired (not in labor force)
- Not reported



*Represents characteristics from OCEAN reporting data

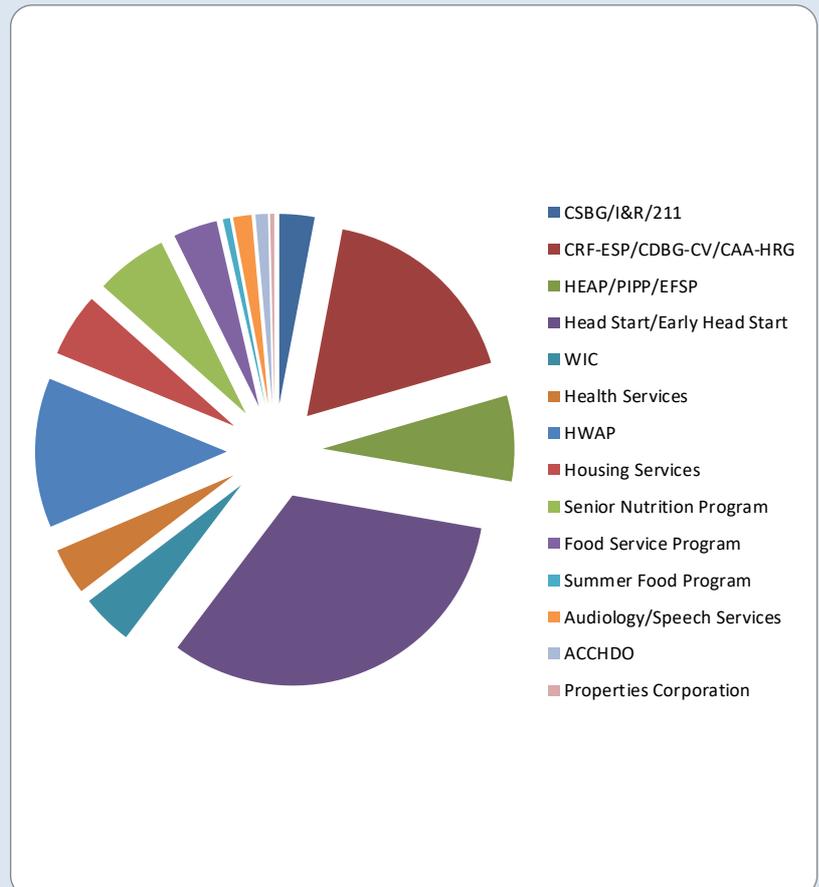
SOURCES OF FUNDS

| | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------|--------------------------|
| Federal Funding - Direct | \$ | 2,957,484 |
| Federal Funding - Pass Through | \$ | 7,959,444 |
| State Funding | \$ | 478,862 |
| Local Funding | \$ | 568,729 |
| Payment for Services | \$ | 1,336,471 |
| Other Revenue | \$ | 36,030 |
| Contributions/In-Kind | \$ | 958,726 |
| Total | \$ | <u>14,295,745</u> |



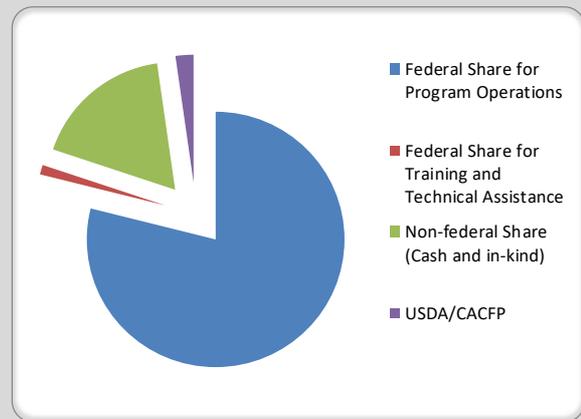
EXPENDITURES BY MAJOR PROGRAM

| | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------|--------------------------|
| CSBG/I&R/211 | \$ | 432,763 |
| CRF-ESP/CDBG-CV/CAA-HRG | \$ | 2,554,650 |
| HEAP/PIPP/EFSP | \$ | 1,064,470 |
| Head Start/Early Head Start | \$ | 4,739,223 |
| WIC | \$ | 631,643 |
| Health Services | \$ | 578,448 |
| HWAP | \$ | 1,857,259 |
| Housing Services | \$ | 787,321 |
| Senior Nutrition Program | \$ | 888,164 |
| Food Service Program | \$ | 542,301 |
| Summer Food Program | \$ | 86,640 |
| Audiology/Speech Services | \$ | 226,552 |
| ACCHDO | \$ | 152,257 |
| Properties Corporation | \$ | 51,402 |
| Total | \$ | <u>14,593,090</u> |



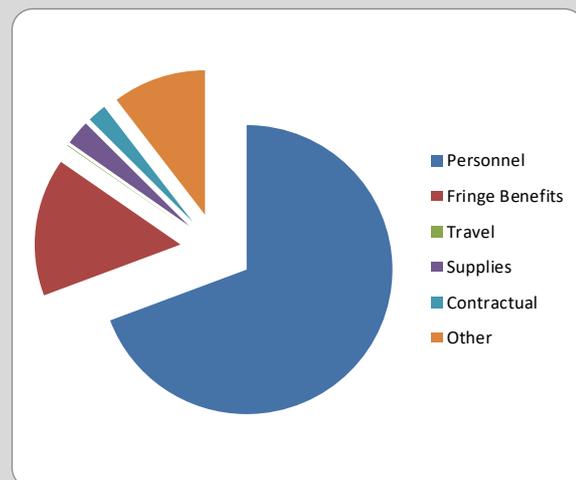
SOURCES OF FUNDS

| | |
|---|---------------------|
| Federal Share for Program Operations | \$ 3,795,451 |
| Federal Share for Training and Technical Assistance | \$ 58,226 |
| Non-federal Share (Cash and in-kind) | \$ 848,005 |
| USDA/CACFP | \$ 108,359 |
| Total | \$ 4,810,041 |



EXPENSES BY CATEGORY

| | |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| Personnel | \$ 3,217,040 |
| Fringe Benefits | \$ 715,691 |
| Travel | \$ 3,800 |
| Supplies | \$ 127,496 |
| Contractual | \$ 97,997 |
| Other | \$ 481,432 |
| Total | \$ 4,643,457 |



Personnel - includes wages paid to employees for their services in the Early Head Start and Head Start Programs. It also includes In-Kind wages for donated services.

Fringe Benefits - include the costs for FICA/Medicare, Workers Compensation, Unemployment Compensation, Health/Dental/Life Insurance and Retirement Benefits.

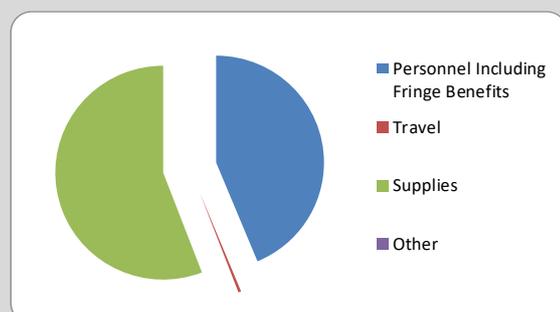
Travel - includes transportation and Hotel/Per Diem charges for out of service area travel.

Contractual - includes the costs for Training Consultants, Health/Disabilities/Mental Health Consultants, Employment related Consultants, Legal and Auditing services and for Computer/Copier/HVAC contracts.

Other - includes costs for all related costs for Buildings/Space, Telephones, Insurance, Vehicles, Staff Development, Postage, Advertising and Recruitment, Local Travel, and Membership Dues.

CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM BUDGET

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Personnel Including Fringe Benefits | \$ 46,290 |
| Travel | \$ 435 |
| Supplies | \$ 59,112 |
| Other | \$ - |
| Total | \$ 105,837 |



The USDA Nutrition Assistance Programs provide children and low-income individuals access to food, a healthful diet, and nutrition education. Through the provisions in the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007 (Public Law 110-134), any child enrolled in Head Start is now automatically eligible for free meals provided by the USDA Programs. We provide a Breakfast, lunch or afternoon snack while the child attends our Head Start program.

Locations

Our Services

2-1-1 Ashtabula County
Information & Referral

Head Start

Audiology & Speech Services

CARES Home Relief Program

Home Weatherization
Assistance Program

Home Energy Assistance
Program & PIPP

Home Repair Services

Low Income Household
Water Assistance Program

Community Action Home
Visiting Program

Homemaker Services

Senior Nutrition Program

Ohio Governor's
Imagination Library

Self-Sufficiency Programs

New Hope Homeless
Assistance Program

WIC

Community Learning &
Resource Center (AACCS)

Save The Dream Ohio

ACCHDO, Inc.
Properties Corporation
Administration & Fiscal

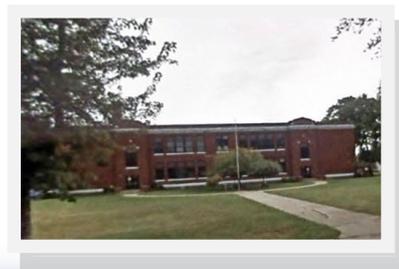
Administration,
Housing & Energy Services
6920 Austinburg Road



Head Start & Early Head Start
4510 Main Avenue



Audiology & Speech Services,
Health & Nutrition Services, Community
Development, & Head Start Classrooms
4200 State Road



Board of Directors

PRIVATE SECTOR

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Lori Lee
Lori Pawlowski
Preston Watkins
Greg Myers

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Nick Dunlap
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Sarah Bogardus
Dr. Debra Barrickman

LOW-INCOME SECTOR

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Mary Jo Tuttle
Janis Dorsten- Treasurer
Ron Loos- Vice Chair
David Speelman- Chair

Our Board of Directors is
composed of fifteen members.

-One third of the members are
representing public officials,

-One third represent the
private sector, and

-One third represent the
low-income sector.

*The Board also has a seat for
the appointee from ACCHDO,
Inc.

It also includes an advisory
position for legal expertise
with Head Start regulations.

Michael Meaney- Advisor

More Info

For phone numbers, hours, and
program details just dial...



Or visit our website...
www.accaa.org

Head Start

Annual Report Supplement
2021-2022
(Compiled May 2022)



Ashtabula County Head Start will empower children, families, and our community by providing support, education, and advocacy.

Who We Serve

Head Start is funded to serve 400 children (ages 0-5), expectant mothers, and their families in Ashtabula County.

We service families that have children with disabilities, are low-income or homeless, or any family who meets the income qualifications.

A family with an age eligible child becomes categorically eligible if they are receiving Ohio Works First, Supplemental Security Income, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP), is experiencing homelessness, or if a child is in foster care.

Program Summary

Over the past nine months, Head Start has served 353 children and 4 pregnant women from 310 families. Of those served, 268 were preschool age and 89 infants, toddlers and pregnant women.

The percentage of enrolled preschool children that acquired medical exams is 93% and 62% received dental exams. 66% of infant and toddlers also had medical and dental screenings.

Program Options

The list below identifies the Head Start sites throughout Ashtabula County. The Program also provides services to children and families through a home visiting option.



Ashtabula

Main Avenue
4510 Main Avenue

Collins
104 W. 45th Street

Edgewood High School
2428 Blake Road

Ontario Elementary School
2304 Wade Avenue

State Road
4200 State Road

Andover

Pymatuning Valley Primary School
5571 State Route 6 West

Conneaut

Lake Shore Primary School
755 Chestnut Street

Geneva

Cork Elementary School
341 State Route 534 South

Jefferson

ATech – Building B
1565 State Route 167

Orwell

Grand Valley Elementary School
111 Grand Valley Ave. West



ABOUT OUR STAFF

Head Start has 71 total staff members.

Qualifications of Staff include...

12 Preschool Teachers

- 1 with a Master degree
- 6 with a Bachelor degree
- 5 with an Associate degree

4 Infant/Toddler Teachers

- 4 with a CDA

12 Assistant Teachers

- 12 with a CDA

5 Home Visitors

- 2 with an Associate degree
- 3 with a CDA

2 Family Advocates

- 2 with an Associate degree

6 Site Supervisors

- 1 with a Master degree
- 2 with a Bachelor degree
- 1 with an Associate degree
- 2 with a CDA

2 Trauma Support Specialists

- Both with an Associate degree

1 Health Specialist

- An RN with a Bachelor degree

4 Program Managers

- 3 with a Bachelor degree
- 1 with a Specialized Certification

3 Coordinators

- All with a Bachelor degree

1 Director

- With a Bachelor degree

How We Prepare Children for Kindergarten

- School readiness goals are established and aligned with Creative Curriculum, DRDP (Desired Results Developmental Profile) Assessments, the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework, as well as, Ohio Learning and Development Standards.
- Home visits and parent conferences are conducted with families to assist children with school readiness skills by discussing children's developmental strengths, as well as areas to strengthen for kindergarten entry.
- Monthly Parent Meetings are offered at each site, as well as virtually, presenting a host of parent chosen topics, such as "Preparing Your Child for Kindergarten" and "Developmental Milestones".
- Head Start classrooms are designed to provide developmentally appropriate activities and instruction that will enhance each child's developmental needs.
- Classroom staff continually observe each child, document observations and provide activities to assist each child with specific skills needed to further their development.
- Head Start assists children and families with the transition from Head Start to Kindergarten.
- All children receive developmental, speech, vision and hearing screenings within forty-five (45) days of enrollment. These screenings allow timely referrals to the Local Education Agency (LEA) if necessary.

Family Engagement Within Our Program

Engaging families in their child's learning process is a critical piece of Head Start. From being a part of everyday successes in the classroom to having a say in how the Program is run, families play a huge role in the Program.

Informal and planned communication happens every day! Staff and families discuss children's progress, classroom happenings, changes in a family's life including setting and reaching goals, and various resources available. This is done via home visits, conferences, parenting workshops, informal conversations and group socializations.

Behavioral Specialists can be available to help facilitate conversations.

Parent Meetings and Policy Council provide families an opportunity to voice concerns regarding policies and programming as well as helping to plan family events.

Activities to promote male engagement are offered throughout the year. Getting men involved in a child's education as early as possible has many positive effects. Events like the *Cardboard Challenge*, *Men of the Year Awards*, and *Father Engagement Swim Classes* allow children and the men in their lives time to enjoy special activities together and to welcome men into early education.