

Annual Impact Report 2022



Helping people. Changing lives.





VISION: A thriving community of neighbors that is free from poverty

MISSION: To provide comprehensive services that instill hope and share opportunities to eliminate the conditions of poverty and help neighbors achieve self-sufficiency.



THE CAA PROMISE:

Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities and makes America a better place to live. We care about the entire community, and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.



This project/program is funded 40% at \$5,750 with federal funds received from U.S. Department of Health and Senior Services provided by the Missouri Department of Social Services, Family Support Division.



From Our CEO

When I wrote my letter last year, I thought surely our Agency would be back to a new normal by the time I penned this 2021 report but was I ever wrong. Instead, we continued to struggle with the most serious virus in most of our lifetimes—its effects marked by sickness and death in virtually every country in the world.

The risks to CAAs throughout our nation have been evident during this time, whether they be inadequate funding of our anti-poverty programs, stretching the financial resources of our clients, providing programs to equip financially disadvantaged individuals and families to provide for their basic needs or helping train people to prepare to reenter the workforce. Additionally, we saw many workers leave their jobs and risk beginning new careers. For some, the decision paid off, while for others it did not.

WHAT OCCURRED

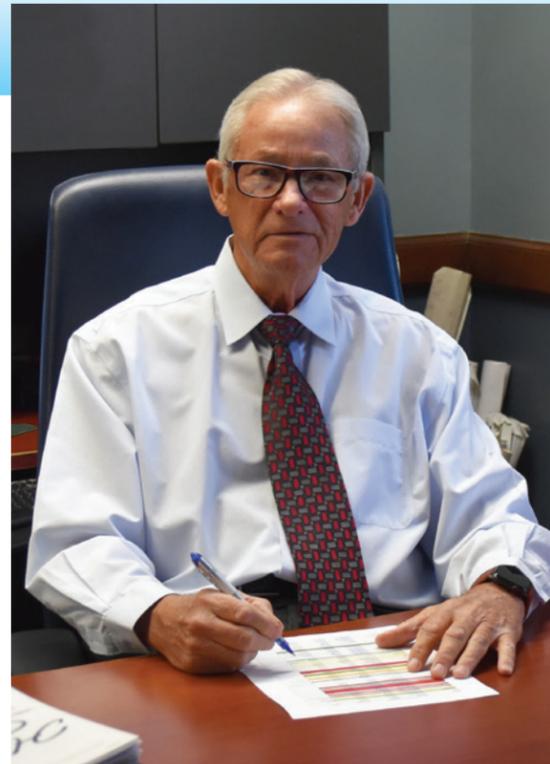
In 2021, we saw the stock market soar to new heights, minimum wages increase along with bonuses to fill open positions, and new and more attractive benefits packages also lured employees. We saw a reduction in the poverty level in 2021 mostly resulting from these new minimums and improved wage jobs; however, the higher wages resulted in some low-income individuals making too much money to qualify for the programs we offer. Now, we will need to work with our legislators to correct this situation. Additionally, the shortages in virtually all products have resulted in an increase in inflation to levels not seen since the 1990's.

Each time we saw an improvement in the number of COVID cases in the United States, a new and more infectious variant would arise. Unfortunately, this is partly the result of people refusing to get vaccinated for reasons of their own.

Congress unveiled a \$2.3 trillion spending package providing relief to a coronavirus-battered economy. The package includes a \$1.4 trillion omnibus bill based on a 2019 spending deal, which consists of \$740.5 billion in defense spending and \$664.5 billion for domestic programs.

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 provides funding for such programs as agriculture, nutrition, education, public health, testing, housing, public works, airlines, unemployment assistance and a slew of other issues.

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 is being followed by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, also known as the Build Back Better Act.



ESC'S RESPONSE

During the past eight months, it has become necessary to make significant modifications to our business model. I, with the help of the other Directors, composed a Pandemic Plan for ESC. The Plan was officially implemented on March 19, 2020. It consisted of adopting policies and procedures proposed by President Biden. There are multiple agencies responsible for the development and implementation of a mandated vaccine for all companies with more than 100 workers, employees and contractors of the United States Government, and yet another implementation procedure for schools, and in our case, Head Start and Early Head Start programs. Head Start had incorporated their policies within their organizational standards and set penalties for not adhering to them; whereas, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) policies have been stayed by the Federal judiciary system.

A RESTATEMENT OF OUR WORK

Beyond the issues this letter addresses, Community Action Agencies actively reach out to their communities to identify and connect people with needed services. CAAs are innovative, as demonstrated through community partnerships providing outreach at places like the Joplin Public Library, Missouri Southern State University and the Area Agency on Aging's senior nutrition centers to allow people to apply for the agency's various programs in their communities, where it is more convenient.

It is important to note that people in poverty face daunting challenges as they work toward recovery. A lack of available affordable housing, education, employment, reliable transportation and access to healthcare can undermine the best intentions and well-laid plans. Community Action Agencies identify causes and conditions of poverty and ensure that people have access to services that will help them gain control of these factors and lead productive and self-sufficient lives. We provided these services before and during the pandemic, and will continue to long after it ends.

CAAs are leaders in their communities as well as service providers. By design, CAAs reflect the population and circumstances of their individual communities.

Sincerely,

John Joines, CCAP
Chief Executive Officer





Who We Are

How do you know if a tree is healthy or not? What you see above ground might be an indicator of health. However, it is really what you can't see, the roots, where an unhealthy blight can hide. The same can be said of poverty. The root causes of the poverty cycle can include (but are not limited to) vulnerable children, utilities, gender inequality, education challenges, money difficulties, environmental deterioration and health challenges. The Economic Security Corporation of SW Area is part of a network of over 1,000 Community Action Agencies. We work with local communities who have the same purpose: the reduction of poverty, building low-income communities' resiliency and the empowerment of low-income families and individuals to become fully self-reliant.

We hope this report will help you see the impact on poverty a Community Action Agency has in Southwest Missouri.

Impacting Southwest Missouri Communities



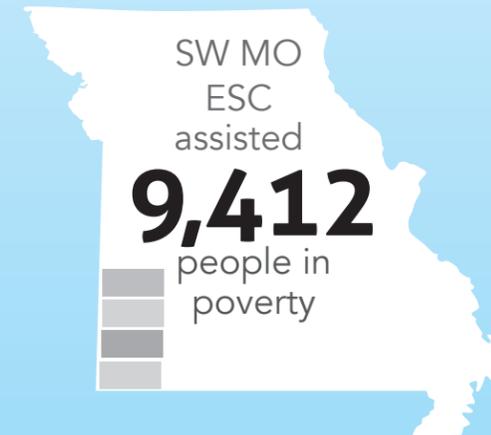
SW Missouri's Need

OVER 46 THOUSAND SW Missourians live in **POVERTY** (OR 22% OF THE TOTAL SWMO POPULATION)

OVER 12,000 CHILDREN AGES 0-17 (OR NEARLY 24%) are experiencing **POVERTY** in Southwest Missouri

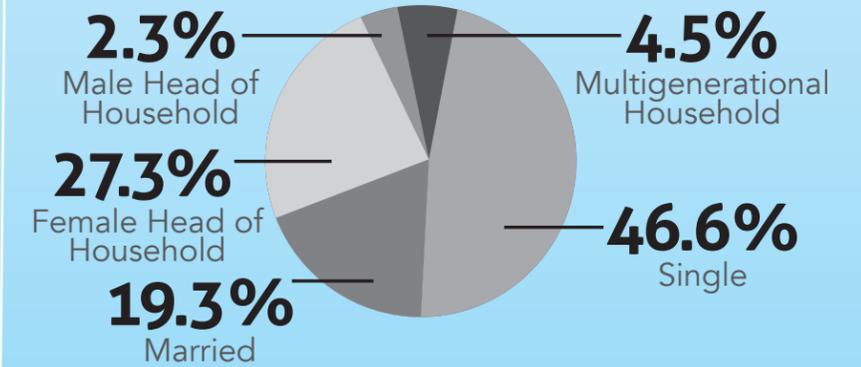
Median income for men in Missouri is **\$11,388**

HIGHER THAN FOR WOMEN

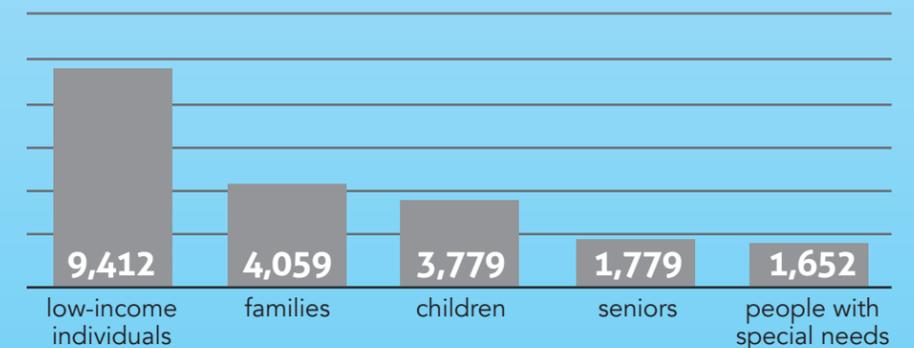


Our Reach

Poverty by Family Type in Southwest Missouri



Who Benefitted from ESC Services - 2021



Homelessness



Ending Chronic Homelessness in Southwest Missouri

According to the 2021 Point In Time count, an estimated 210 individuals of all ages spend their nights in an emergency shelter, transitional housing program or on the street in SW Missouri. This represents a 33% decrease from last year. This decrease can be attributed to an increase in rental assistance, COVID-19's State Assistance for Housing Relief (SAFHR), economic stimulus checks and an increase in contacts through The Homeless Coalition's street outreach program.

The US is still dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, which causes additional challenges. Homeless Southwest Missourians continue to lack government issued identification, and that affects their access to affordable, decent and safe housing, which also limits their employment options. While this may seem overwhelming, when we tackle these issues together, our situation is brighter because

our community has banded together, resources are pooled and we collaborate through community partnerships.

The Homeless Coalition of Jasper and Newton County's continuous street outreach has led to ESC providing leadership by directing regular street outreach activities—helping more than 263 people in the past three years. ESC also set aside additional funds and helped pay for 28 Missouri-issued identifications and birth certificates for people experiencing homelessness—helping them obtain permanent housing and employment. Other housing activities include our Community Housing Development Organization status that has successfully worked with private housing developers. ESC's recent partners, Kodiak and O'Reilly, are creating more housing for working families, seniors and Veterans in 2022.



SW Missouri's Need

210
FAMILIES
are experiencing
homelessness
on any given night.



 People struggling with homelessness are often frequent users of emergency departments. On average, they visit the emergency room five times per year, with the highest users visiting weekly. Each visit costs \$3,700—that's \$18,500 spent per year for the average person.

We have seen a **58%**  DECREASE in homeless Veterans in Southwest Missouri from 2020 to 2021.

Our Reach

MORE THAN **14**
homeless programs

More than **20**  MEMBERS make up **The Homeless Coalition.**

In partnership with government private businesses, faith, communities and other non-profits, ESC works with **141** COMMUNITY PARTNERS to end chronic homelessness.

Our Annual Impact

More than **155** homeless individuals were housed.



Almost **\$1.5 MILLION** is being used to end chronic homelessness in Southwest Missouri.

Partnerships with over **647** private landlords.

 **\$436,751** leveraged dollars to end homelessness in Southwest Missouri.

Housed **14** homeless Veterans during **COVID-19 Pandemic.**



From a Park Bench to a Home: Ending Chronic Homelessness Where We Live

ESC met Monte Fitzjarrell during The Homeless Coalition's street outreach activities. He had been homeless for quite some time, living in one of our local community parks. In addition, he was dealing with several health issues. His trust in people was low and he had repeatedly said that he was just to the point of giving up.

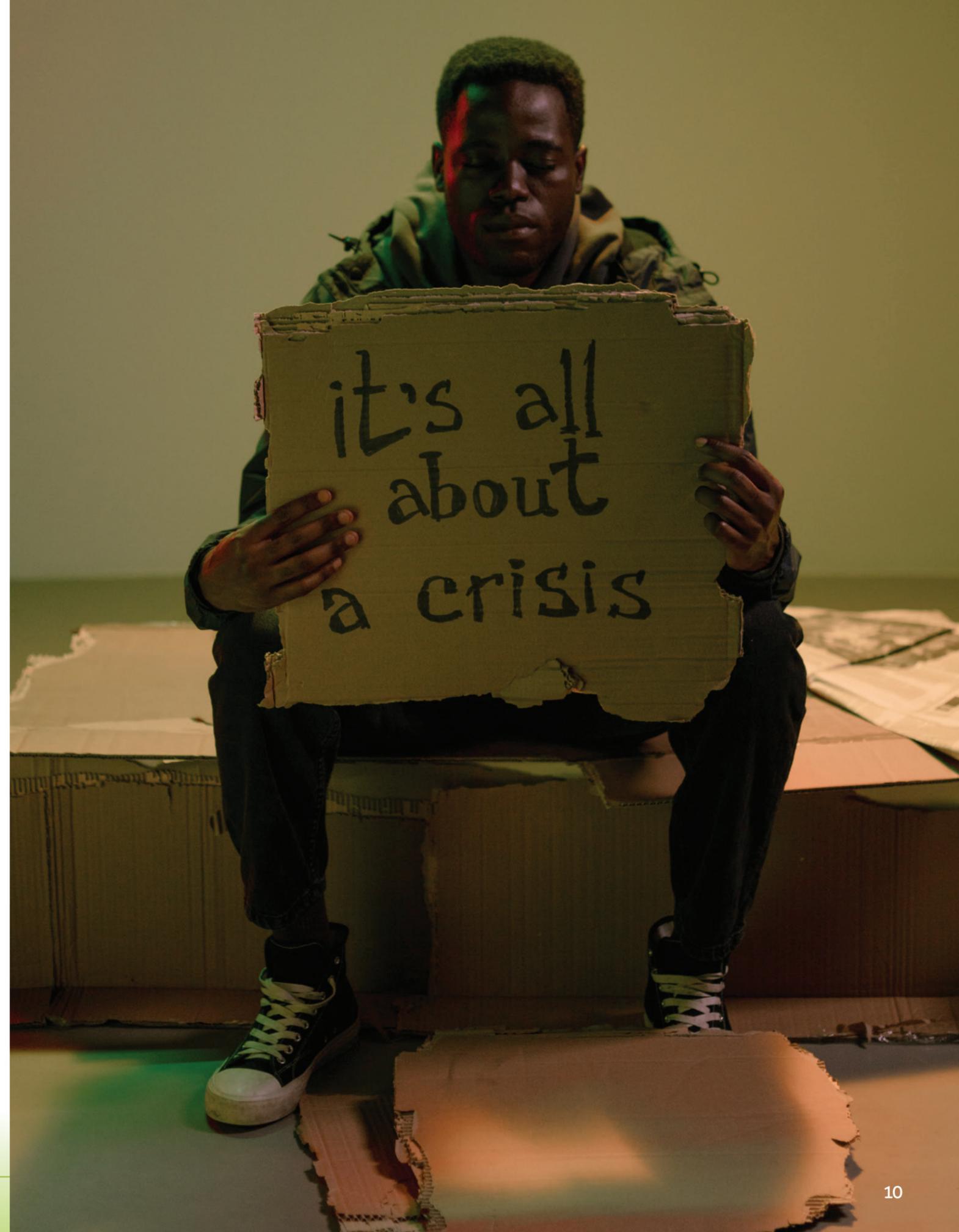
Mr. Fitzjarrell had no access to his monthly income and truly believed that his benefits had been stopped. ESC's case manager made several calls to the Social Security Administration, who was not seeing anyone in person during the Pandemic. We were able to verify that he was still receiving his monthly income, which was being direct deposited into a local bank. We were able to provide transportation to the bank, where he was able to retrieve a temporary replacement bankcard that gave him access to his money while the permanent bankcard was processed and mailed out. One of the important services that ESC provides is the use of our mailing address. We allow people who are experiencing homelessness to use our PO Box when they are working with Housing Connect or a Housing Case Manager for a physical mailing address.

Shortly after visiting the bank, bad luck struck. Mr. Fitzjarrell had everything stolen, which included his clothes, wallet, ID, medications, bankcard and even his Medicare card. He once again felt discouraged and fed up. ESC stepped up and helped him through the process by calling and canceling the temporary card, and it only took a week or so for him to receive his permanent bankcard. Once he had received it, we helped him figure out how to keep it safe.

He began applying to live in affordable housing apartments, such as Webb City Public Housing Authority and the Drake Hotel Apartments, which involves completing an application and having your name placed on a housing waiting list. Unfortunately, during this time Mr. Fitzjarrell's health became a major concern, and at one point he was taken to the emergency room by ESC. Another time an ambulance was dispatched to the park to transport him. Each time he went to the hospital a referral was made for continued medical care. ESC's case manager arranged for an appointment with Access Family Care, helping Mr. Fitzjarrell gain regular access to medical care. He received the medical attention he needed to stay healthy and was able to get his required medications.

What happened next was truly a blessing: We were notified that Mr. Fitzjarrell had been approved for Webb City's Public Housing. After viewing the property, he signed a lease and received the keys to his new home.

ESC's utility assistance was able to help him settle an old bill that he did not even know existed. Our Community Services Block Grant funding assisted with his rent, utility deposits and first month's rent. Through the help of community partnerships, volunteers and donations, Mr. Fitzjarrell was able to settle into his new place, cook a hot meal and take a hot shower before settling in to sleep in a warm bed instead of a park bench.



Children and Families



Even before the pandemic, children in Southwest Missouri were vulnerable to living in poverty. Working poor families struggle to meet basic needs, which include childcare, health care and rising costs of housing. Adverse Childhood Experiences (or ACEs) are stressful or traumatic events that nearly 14% of children living at or below the poverty level experience. Children that are living at twice the poverty rate have a 6% likelihood of experiencing three or more ACEs.

After emerging from a period of lockdowns, no classes or virtual services in 2020, The ESC Head Start and Early Head Start program was ready to “return to normal” in 2021. Unfortunately, we still found ourselves in the middle of the pandemic. Although classrooms reopened, they were at reduced capacity to facilitate social distancing. There were also many new procedures and safeguards in place to protect children and staff. Positive test results or exposures would ultimately lead to many temporary closures for quarantine purposes. Despite

these challenges, 2021 was noteworthy for three overarching themes:

- 1 Staff exhibited great resourcefulness and flexibility as they taught children how to wear masks and navigate their classrooms differently. The frequent starts and stops due to quarantines required teachers to think about continuity, repetition and pacing.
- 2 Parents were relied on more to provide evidence of their child’s school readiness skills. They did this through social media posts, videos and descriptive anecdotes.
- 3 Even though creative methods and practices were implemented, the results were the same. Children and families received caring, comprehensive, high-quality services that helped prepare them for school.



SW Missouri’s Need

27.9% of Southwest Missouri’s children live in poverty. 47.2% of African American children, 15.5% of Native American children and 54.08% of Latino children live in poverty.



Despite evidence that the **FIRST 1,000 DAYS OF A CHILD’S LIFE** represents the prime brain building opportunity,

63% of parents believe talking to children doesn’t matter until 6 months or older, 34% don’t think it matters until children are at least 1 year old. These parental beliefs create what is called

“THE MISSING FIRST YEAR”.

In ESC’s rural counties, more than **1/3** of children ages 0-4 live in poverty: Barton 33.3% and McDonald County 37.7%.

Our Reach

787 children were served through Head Start and Early Head Start.



The Economic Security Corporation of SW Area served

4,059 FAMILIES.



665 FAMILIES

participate in early childhood programs, literacy programs and other enrichment services.

Our Annual Impact

787 children and **665** families received comprehensive Head Start/Early Head Start services.

93% of HS/EHS children met school readiness expectations in Social/Emotional skills.

95% of HS/EHS children met school readiness expectations in Physical skills.

90% of children met school readiness expectations in Cognitive skills.

88% of children met school readiness expectations in Language skills.

86% of children met school readiness expectations in Math skills.



A Head Start Journey

Tiffany Lewis currently serves as a Family Resource Specialist at Anderson Head Start where she provides services and support for families just like herself. Tiffany began her Head Start journey as a parent in 2014 when she enrolled her oldest son into the Anderson Head Start. Tiffany’s son attended for 2 years, followed by his sister and later Tiffany’s youngest son attended Early Head Start and then transitioned to Head Start where he currently attends.

During the years while Tiffany was a Head Start parent, she faced some

struggles in her life and the staff at Head Start were willing and able to provide the same support and encouragement that Tiffany provides families today. Tiffany has made it her mission to give back to the program that invested in her! She has joined ESC’s Head Start team as a Family Resource Specialist. She does this while being a full-time mom and student currently working towards her college degree in social work. Tiffany is an example of what the Head Start program stands for! Our work does not end in the classroom, it ripples into the lives of everyone in the families that we serve.



Practiced Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) at ESC, Resulting in Head Start Putting Cameras in All Buses



Parents and their children depend on ESC's Head Start program and benefit from the valuable services provided. For many, the school bus is the gateway to the program. Without the school bus picking up children and bringing them back home, many families would be unable to participate.

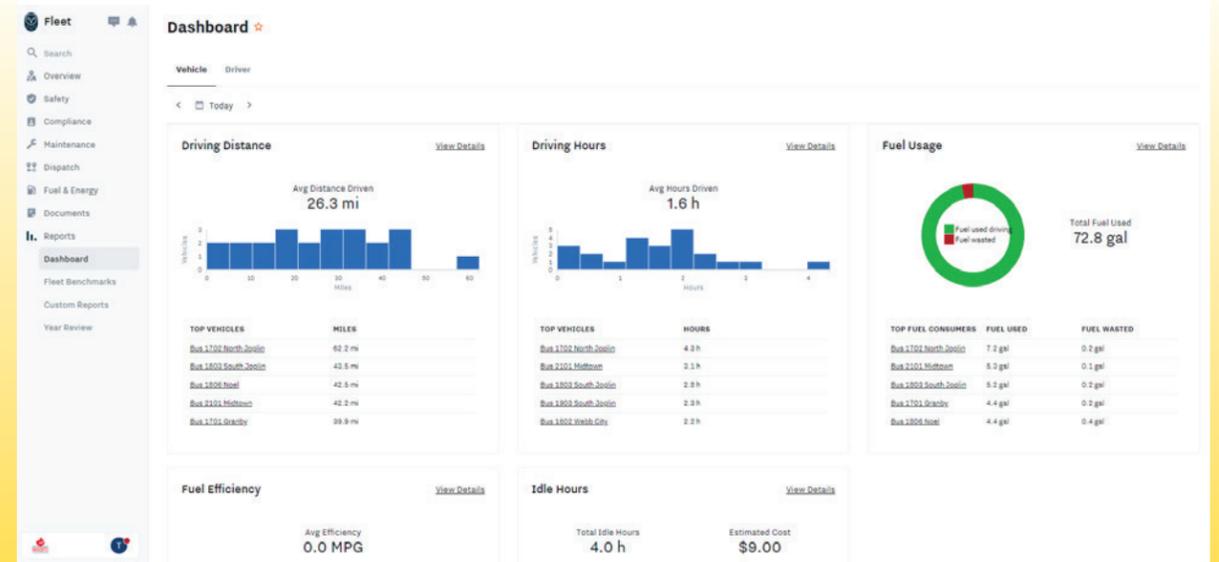
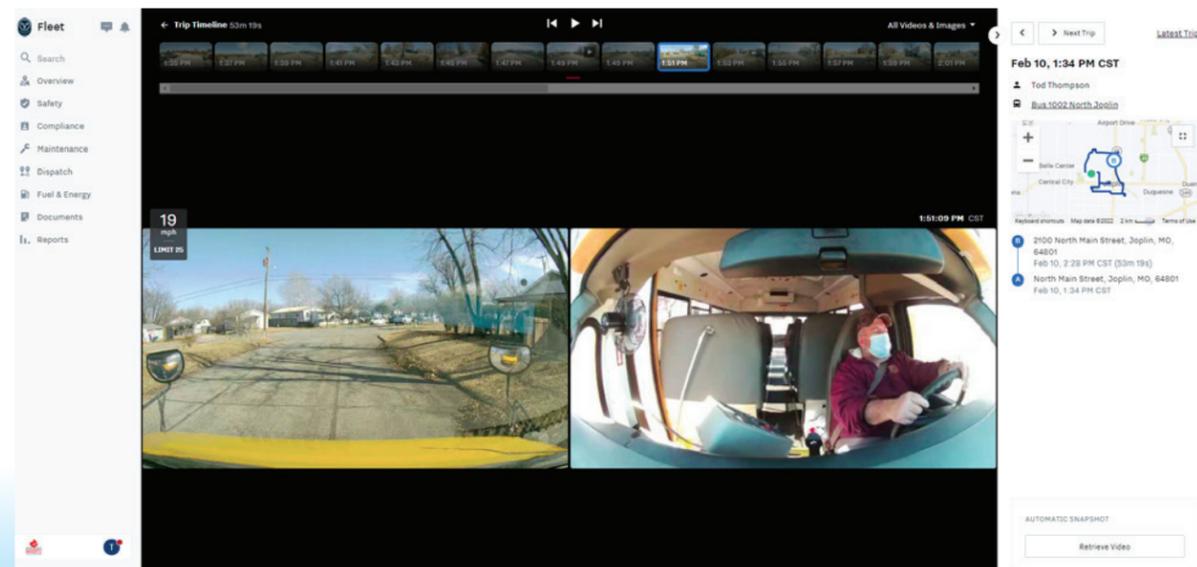
Managing a successful 30 bus fleet can be a challenging job. Because of the safety of the passengers, the cost of the vehicles and the operational costs involved, transportation is one of the most critical Head Start program components. ESC's Head Start is in a constant continuous quality improvement cycle. With all this operation still running on paper-based processes and struggling with data accessibility and accuracy, it means that having accurate, up-to-date information is a constant struggle. One of the main issues is the time spent completing administrative written tasks such as reviewing and acting on monthly bus reports for over 30 vehicles. In 2021, the Economic Security Corporation's Head Start program decided to change this based on the lack of timely data to make accurate decisions.

Jeff Goldammer, Director of Head Start explained, "In Head Start, we are expected to use data to drive our decision-making. But transportation was the one, really large part of our program where we were still using paper reports with no ability to compile and analyze data to make good decisions."

After seeking bids from multiple vendors, a company named Samsara was chosen. Samsara's mission is to digitize the world of operations to increase the safety, efficiency and sustainability of the operations that power our world. Samsara is an award winning company in the field of vehicle telematics, cloud tracking, sensors and artificial intelligence (AI).

An on-board video camera was installed on each bus combined with AI processors that interpret as well as record the road ahead. Vehicle tracking software provides a wealth of data from multiple touch points, including:

- Tracking devices
- Advanced sensors
- Computer-vision-enabled cameras
- On-board diagnostics systems



Some of the features of this system include:

1 REAL-TIME VEHICLE TRACKING

Instead of dots on a map, vehicles are identified as part of a "drone view" that shows the highways and neighborhoods they are traveling through. Drone view provides real-time position information so you can see the vehicle moving alongside trip and vehicle health details without lag. The transmitted data also includes additional information on vehicle parameters such as speed, driver distraction and fuel use.

2 INTEGRATED DASHBOARD CAMERA

Constant recording of the road ahead provides a wealth of information about the trip and an important record in the event of an accident or other incidents. Time-stamped with precision, it can help resolve many potentially expensive legal issues should they arise. Combined with modern analytics, high-definition video recordings are excellent training aids for:

- Tailgating
- Speeding
- Distracted driving
- Stop-sign violations
- Harsh acceleration and harsh braking
- And more

3 SIMPLIFIED ANALYTICS AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

The Samsara analytics engine provides a fleet-wide dashboard where any user can monitor the entire fleet of buses at once. The dashboard provides the right information at the right time, insights and instantly answers the biggest questions a transportation director might have such as safety warnings, which vehicles are moving, how fast and where are they located.

4 DIGITAL CHECKLISTS (DAILY PRE-TRIP AND POST-TRIP)

As drivers log on for the day a simple prompt to perform a Driver Vehicle Inspection Report (DVIR) can make a big difference. The DVIR serves as a digital pre- and post-trip checklist, eliminating paper reports. The ability for drivers to perform this task electronically not only eliminates thousands of sheets of paper per year, but is also faster for the driver and the results are immediately available to maintenance staff to alert them of items that need repair or attention.

So, what does all of this mean for Head Start? Leisa Harnar, Head Start Operations Director shared the following: "Initially, we were looking at improving safety and protecting us from liability issues. As we learned more about the system, we saw it would really be beneficial in improving driver performance. It allows us to recognize and reward high-performing drivers. The bottom line is that both the program and the children benefit!"



Community Building



Locally grown capacity is critical to our ability to thrive, and economics are vital to prosperity. Southwest Missouri has a soaring number of communities with a high or at-risk distress score. This distress score is based on the numbers of people who do not have a high school diploma, higher poverty rate, adults not working, housing vacancy rate, lower median household income, change in employment and change in the number of businesses.

ESC has developed over 55 years of social capital resulting in shared common trust, partnerships and ideals. ESC is the acknowledged leader when it comes to strengthening local capacity for eliminating poverty. Whether it means planning with others to address future community essentials or coordinating federal, state and local resources around an immediate identified need, ESC has been a partner.

The ability to expand partnerships is important. Here are some examples: Weatherization and Spire have created a flexible Weatherization tune-up program to assist older homes with outdated heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems or under weatherized homes. Rural healthcare community member, Access Care, partnered with ESC to streamline entry to rural health care services. Joplin Schools and ESC joined in a collaboration that provides a social worker within the school. ESC's Community Housing Development Organization has an effective framework with private housing developers, creating more than 70 affordable housing units for our most vulnerable citizens. The Early Head Start Child Care Partnership supports 62 infants and toddlers

and their families with high-quality, center-based services. Families who are working and/or going to school full-time are able to have year-round child care while pursuing their employment and education goals. The Child Care Partnership provides four privately owned small businesses with funds to support their business, as well as the educational goals of their teaching staff. All children within the child care partnership are positively impacted by the collaboration with ESC's Early Head Start program. These unions create an atmosphere for ESC to strengthen our communities' capacity.



SW Missouri's Need



Out of **29 ZIP CODES** in Southwest Missouri, **TEN** are distressed, which means almost 55% of our counties are considered at-risk or in distress.

More than **20 SOUTHWEST MISSOURI TOWNS** live in poverty, meaning over **46,000 RESIDENTS** continue to live in poverty.

22.8% of Southwest Missouri's children live in poverty, an increase of 4.8% over the last 9 years.

14.1% of adults have no high school diploma, an increase by 3%.

6.8% or **11,325** youth (16-19) are not working and not in school.

Our Reach

ESC partners with more than **—200—** community/business organizations, faith-based, Federal agencies, businesses, cities and locally elected officials.



161,365 donated volunteer hours to the Economic Security Corporation of SW Area.

Through maximum feasible participation, **12 COMMUNITIES** AND **37 LOW-INCOME MEMBERS** make decisions about ESC's Governance.

Our Annual Impact

\$357,929 was provided to community child care providers to help grow or sustain their business.

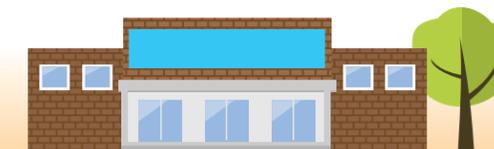


1,126 of people engaged in activities to move their communities toward thriving.

Total volunteer hours donated were valued at over **\$3,300,000**

Leverage dollars **\$3,776,931**

96.2% of Head Start/Early Head Start families reported increased awareness of services and agencies in the community.



Ramping Up Our Spire Partnership Provides Weatherization Flexibility and Improves Local Housing

Partnerships matter. They are the backbone of Community Action! Spire, a natural gas company and ESC partner wanted to discuss potential improvements to the delivery of Weatherization services. This was an opportunity to go through a quality improvement cycle with Spire and ESC to analyze areas that could improve the quality of the weatherized homes in Southwest Missouri. The goal was to target homes with older natural gas heating systems and replace them with energy efficient units. Spire wanted a chance to enhance the Weatherization tariff program to include opportunities for minor home repairs and re-weatherization. This newly re-imagined program improves, extends and enhances energy conservation services.

ESC's Weatherization services faced obstacles when a home could benefit from energy efficiency improvements but did not meet the federal Department of Energy's Weatherization requirements. Spire made available a percentage of ESC's allocated Weatherization funds to help us better serve the homes that low-to-moderate-income Southwest Missourians occupy.

While these may seem like small programmatic changes, they affected over 40% of our homes weatherized last year. ESC spent over \$150,000

of these specialized funds replacing 20+ year old furnaces in 44 homes with not only new furnaces but also highly efficient units, which save the residents on their natural gas bills an average of \$283 annually.

These residents can rest easier knowing they now have safe, reliable and affordable heating systems in their houses.

In addition, ESC was able to replace three natural gas water heaters, some exterior doors and add 6+ inches of insulation to homes that don't yet qualify to be re-weatherized. Why is this important? Some homes had been weatherized almost 15 years ago, energy efficiency techniques have improved, and this program allows us to add these improved techniques NOW to homes. ESC greatly appreciates the partnership we have with Spire and the flexibility they allow with these funds. ESC's Weatherization is part of larger nationwide U.S. Department of Energy Weatherization Assistance Program that supports over 8,500 jobs, weatherizes approximately 35,000 homes every year, and since 1976 has improved the lives of more than seven million families through Weatherization services.



Working Together to Improve Delivery System

Partnerships often involve important collaboration on issues such as "how do we deliver a service to a customer better?" This is how one partnership redefined how Southwest Missouri's homeless could access healthcare.

ACCESS Family Care Medical and Dental Clinics had reached out to ESC in early 2021 to discuss ways that they could be more involved in helping the homeless. Since ESC has several homeless housing programs and is a member of The Homeless Coalition, it was a natural connection. ESC's Assistant Community Development Director held Zoom calls with directors and some staff at ACCESS to discuss the needs we see most from the homeless population when it comes to health care and how they could be better served.

Nearly all homeless who live on the streets or in homeless shelters lack adequate medical and dental care for long periods. There are many barriers for the homeless to connect with health care. ESC and other members of The Homeless Coalition have been conducting street outreach for several months, reaching out to those living on the streets or in places not meant for habitation. This group

carried on discussions with ACCESS focused on being able to reach these folks who do not always seek out help for themselves. Street outreach can lead to a homeless person or family working with a case manager to help them connect with assistance. ACCESS wanted to make it easier and more efficient for them to get the help they needed by offering to send ESC their required paperwork. Then the case managers could help the customers fill out the forms and return them to ACCESS.

It is a great partnership: now ESC has a point of entry and ACCESS staff are available to help with any questions the case manager may have about the application process.

They take applications for medical, dental and mental health services and offer a pharmacy on-site for needed medications.

In early March, ACCESS drew up a Memorandum of Understanding between them and ESC outlining the process and agreements from both sides. This was signed on March 21, 2021.



Health and Well-Being



The bedrock of one's journey in life is access to healthy living. Whether you are a preschooler or a mature adult, if you have health problems, whether oral, behavioral health, physical health or nutrition concerns, nearly every aspect of your life will be affected. For the Head Start program, health has always been a focus of the program's "whole child philosophy." While program staff have many responsibilities to address health concerns, parents must be involved as much as possible to ensure

that the child's health gains in Head Start will stay with them forever. ESC reaches out to seniors and people who have disabilities by providing access to the Missouri Property Tax Credit and utility assistance services. These are critical for them to meet basic needs for things like health expenses, hot water, heat and healthy foods. This helps our community reduce the health gap and make healthy living accessible.

SW Missouri's Need

Almost **14%** of Southwest Missourians are uninsured.

819 infants born in SW MO are of low birth weight.



38.4% of renters are spending **30% or more** of their income on rent.

In the last **20 years**, SW Missouri has seen an **11.5% decrease** in homeownership.



9% (over 3,000) SW MO seniors live in poverty.

Our Reach

942 children have a health-care provider home.

More than **388 families** were provided a rental subsidy service.



ESC offers **5 programs** that help families with their energy bills.

ESC completed **228** Missouri Property Tax Credits Claims for SW Missouri seniors.



Our Annual Impact

843 children (88%) obtained professional medical exams.

533 (71%) of Children in Head Start received professional dental exams.

124 children (13%) received special education services for an identified disability.

97% of Head Start children and 52% of Early Head Start children are up-to-date on their immunizations.

930 (97%) of children had health insurance at the end of the school year.

The Missouri Property Tax Credit benefit is valued at **over \$150,479** returned to SW Missouri seniors.

7,886



SW Missourians kept warm through utility assistance.



When Rural Healthcare Access Can Mean Life or Death, this Is Why Medicaid Expansion is Important.

A person's access to health care should be a right, not a privilege in America. But before Missouri passed Medicaid expansion, Matt and Ann's family was not eligible for coverage. This situation could have been a death sentence, unbeknownst to this family. Thank goodness for Community Action and our partnerships! This is where ACCESS Family Care Medical and Dental Clinics, a Federally Qualified Healthcare Center stepped up. When Matt and Ann showed up at ESC's rural Barton County office, they were homeless and living in their car. Finding housing and a job were issues they both identified. Our staff immediately jumped in and started to help. At one visit, Matt confided when Ann was absent from a case management meeting that she was very sick but they didn't have health

insurance. As Matt described his wife's medical condition, our staff got very concerned and had Ann come back to the office the next day. We were able to contact ACCESS and get an appointment with the local nurse practitioner, who referred her immediately to the Joplin ACCESS, which led Ann to having surgery in Springfield, MO. Very scary, because she was diagnosed with cancer. The good news is the surgeon was able to remove everything successfully and Ann did not require chemo or radiation. Fortunately for us, ACCESS had reached out to us early this past year to help set up a more streamlined approach to rural health care access. What a great partnership! Together, we helped Ann and Matt. Our partners included ACCESS, who provided the healthcare, and the Missouri Housing Development Commission's Trust Fund rental assistance, who were able to house Matt and Ann. ESC's Community Services Block Grant and CARES funding provided the transportation to Joplin and Springfield to access emergency healthcare, including the surgery day transportation. Our staff helped Ann complete an online application for Medicaid, because Missouri had just passed Medicaid expansion. ESC CARES was able to purchase the after-surgery care prescriptions.

Having ACCESS in rural Barton County along with Medicaid expansion saved Ann's life.



We Don't Just Meet Basic Needs for our Most Vulnerable Citizens. We Improve Their Quality of Life.

A Community Action foundational block is outreach, assessment and referrals. ESC's outreach is busy year-round: identifying needs, assisting with applications and making referrals to community resources are critical needs, especially in our rural counties where resources are limited. We assist many people with varying degrees of literacy and disabilities. John had been referred to ESC by a friend to help with his electric bill. He had some trouble understanding written information. ESC assessed his situation and learned he had begged the electric company not to turn his service off. In addition, his water bill was three months in arrears. After gathering information about his current situation, ESC discovered there was \$50.00 being held out of John's disability check by the person in charge of his money. We were able to contact the Social Security office while John was there to find out why he was not receiving the full Social Security award letter amount. Apparently, his caretaker had requested \$50 of his Social Security to care for him before depositing his money into his account. We spoke with John and he felt he did not approve this withdrawal, so with our help he was able to explain on the phone what he wanted done. It did not appear this caretaker was actually helping him understand his basic needs and keeping his bills up to date.

During the assessment questionnaire, we were able to figure out missing critical basic needs that would help improve John's quality of life. ESC was able to pay his electric bill to get him back to a zero balance. The Neosho Salvation Army paid his water bill that was past due by three months. We helped him with SNAP benefits paperwork and an online Medicaid application. The last item was to complete paperwork to help him keep extra money being held out of his Social Security disability for health care insurance, which amounted to over \$2,000 extra income annually.

Several days later, John came back to us to help him understand and read letters he had received. The results were simply ensuring access to basic needs to live independently. He received his first SNAP on a \$200 benefit card, a Medicaid card and Social Security Disability direct deposit, which included \$170 in extra benefits.

The Medicaid card came just in time, because John fell on his concrete steps and hurt his head. Luckily, his neighbor saw him fall and called 911 and John was taken by ambulance to the hospital where he spent five days. Now John has someone who can assist him with understanding information that assists him in making an informed decision that improve his quality of life.





ESC Helps Employers (and Employees) in the Digital Age

This past year has been a huge challenge in our communities and across the nation. As an employer, we faced two huge challenges: securing employees and the great resignation. Being able to compete as a non-profit with the business community paying \$16 to \$18 an hour as a starting wage is definitely an obstacle.

ESC's data tells us that 1,118 working families live in poverty every day. That means about 28% of the families ESC sees each year are working and still live at or below poverty. So, what exactly does this mean? These working families are eligible for non-cash assistance, Medicaid, SNAP, child care assistance, Weatherization, utility assistance and free and reduced school lunches. Somehow this does not make a lot of sense. Working families are still eligible

to receive non-cash assistance! What happened to the American dream? If you work hard you are supposed to be able to be successful. As a Community Action Agency, ESC is devoted to helping change peoples' lives—especially working families.

Our response is to assist with better employment opportunities. We raised our wage scale to \$12/hour for our lowest paying positions. ESC prepares homeless individuals for the job market and reaches out to higher education who can produce a more educated/skilled employee. We have provided 19 educational training opportunities, resulting in three people getting living wage jobs while 16 people are still attending training.

What Community Action Does Best: Bundling Resources and Training = Career!

Josh is a DAD! He wanted to provide for his family and found himself without a job during the coronavirus pandemic. He was referred to ESC's Community Development in Anderson for educational training. ESC immediately helped him apply and enroll at Crowder College's Transport Training program in Neosho, MO. Josh obtained his CDL on May 17, 2021 and was offered a truck driving job on May 30, 2021, which was the day he started his truck driving career. Health insurance benefits began July 1, 2021. He reached 90 days on the job on August 28, 2021. Josh and his family are currently saving for a home, so they can achieve their American dream. This success had other partners, including ESC's utility assistance and Salvation Army of McDonald County, who assisted with a car payment that allowed him to get to



school each day, Abounding Grace provided items from the food pantry, and finally, Jesus Won Our Way Ministry supplied household necessities. It is the village that ultimately wraps their arms around families to help them be successful.

SW Missouri's Need

82% of Southwest Missourians drive alone to work, so transportation is a must.



Southwest Missouri unemployment rate is **2.6%**, less than Missouri and the US rates.

30% of working families with children under age 5 are considered low income.

25 homeless SW Missourians are Veterans.



Our Reach

54 individuals received work related support services.

ESC helped more than **306** working low-income people secure transportation.



24 jobs created to increase opportunities for people with low incomes.

23 people obtained job skills.



Our Annual Impact

179 individuals obtained a job.

81 individuals maintained a job for 90 days.

72 families had an increase in income.



60% of families who got jobs left non-cash assistance, which means fewer tax dollars are going to these families.

Of the **25** people who maintained their employment 180 days, all of them exited SNAP. At an average of \$194 per month. For a single person, that would amount to **\$4,850** per month. So, for the first six months, this is a savings of **\$29,100** for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

ESC Cares

Mr. Marvin Sherwood and his wife were referred by a community member to ESC for employment assistance. He had been recently laid off. During the assessment interview, ESC's staff described an educational opportunity with Crowder College's Transport Training program. Mr. Sherwood was interested, so ESC assisted him in applying and then enrolling online at Crowder College in Neosho. They contacted ESC to inform us he was approved and could start school on May 3, 2021. We were able to assist with mandatory fees associated with the DOT physical and CDL permit. Marvin completed the Transport Training program on June 2, 2021 and started working on June 16th. He is currently making \$1,500.00 weekly or \$78,000



annually. Our investment in the Sherwood family was \$4,712 from the Community Services Block Grant's CARES Act, which resulted in a 16:1 return on investment in the first year only. Estimating that he will be working for the next 15 years and is a tax-paying citizen, this is a \$248 to \$1 return!

This success would not have been possible without community partnerships that provided support to this family while Mr. Sherwood was attending school, allowing him to focus on his school training. The following are a list of community partnerships that helped meet this family's basic needs while he was attending his training: Salvation Army of McDonald County purchased groceries, Jesus Won Our Way Ministry provided household essentials, Abounding Grace provided items from their Food Pantry, Ozark Community Hospital (Rural Health Clinic) of Pineville made an instant appointment (same day and as soon as he could get there) for Marvin since it was related to an employment offer, and finally, ESC provided utility assistance. We are stronger together.



Housing



Housing is a Hot Mess!

What has changed in Southwest Missouri to exacerbate the scarcity of affordable housing and create a housing crisis? There is no affordable, decent and safe housing available for low-to-moderate-income families. As of this report, ESC had 111 eligible families with some type of rental assistance who were unable to locate a home to lease. Now let's look at another issue that has surfaced: increased wages. While this sounds great, the results are in Southwest Missouri, single moms with one child are no longer eligible for subsidized rental assistance. What has changed? Wages. They have a job that pays \$12 an hour and is full-time. Now they are over-income by \$700 annually and are no longer eligible for non-cash benefits. This is referred to as "the cliff-effect," which is when a pay raise at work triggers a disproportionate loss of government assistance. Wage gender inequality comes into play with single females who typically earn \$11,000 less annually than their male counterparts. The living wage for an adult and one child is \$28.75. This would mean our single parent would need to work two full-time jobs and still

would not be making a living wage. These are some of the challenges working low-to-moderate-income families face.

In the area of building and Weatherization, materials are another challenge. Costs of building materials have increased by 19.4%, during 2021. It is also harder to secure sub-contractors, due to the pandemic. Many homeowners are taking advantage of being home and rehabilitating their homes. The length of time it takes to procure building materials can be up to six months longer than before the pandemic.

ESC has a variety of solutions to combat the affordable housing problems in our communities. We are engaged with two private housing partnerships, resulting in 70 newly constructed homes in Newton County. We continue to weatherize homes and provide home rehabilitation to Southwest Missourians. Finally, ESC continues to offer housing case management and rental subsidies to help families access affordable housing.



SW Missouri's Need

A statewide shortage of **122,000** affordable rental homes available for extremely low income renters.

Extremely low-income households in Southwest Missouri typically spend **29% of their annual income** on energy costs.

Owner-occupied extremely low-income households spend **19% of their annual income** on energy costs.

On average, minimum wage workers would need to work **51 hours every week of the year** to afford rent for a modest, one-bedroom apartment.



Over **71%** of rental households are considered housing-cost burdened, spending more than **30% of their gross income toward housing costs.**

Our Reach

14 HOUSING programs 

133 homes were weatherized, preserved or otherwise improved. 

ESC helped more than **7,886 people obtain non-emergency energy assistance** such as home heating or insulation.

\$500,000 in home repair funds.

Over **529** Housing Subsidy Vouchers. 

Our Annual Impact

For every **\$1 invested** in Weatherization, **\$2.51 is returned** to the household and community.

140 pandemic-affected households received **eviction protection** through rental assistance.

More than **500 HOUSEHOLDS** obtained safe, affordable housing.

 **180** pandemic-affected households received **utility co-pay** assistance.

Over **\$400,000** leveraged private dollars invested in Weatherization.

22 homeowners obtain significant home repairs.
2 new housing construction projects will create **76** units in 2022.





Before



After

One Sustainable Housing Solution: Weatherization

Lora's furnace went out last winter, and this single mom was worried about how she was going to pay for the repairs. She saw one of our Facebook posts last summer and hoped we could help. She wasted no time submitting an application, which was approved last June. Through our partnership with Spire, we installed a new Heil 95% energy efficient natural gas furnace last fall.

Lora wrote us, saying, "I wanted to thank you for getting my heater fixed (replaced) before winter. I am really so grateful. I was very stressed worrying about heating."

Replacing her furnace was not the only improvement we made. We also installed three exterior doors, floor insulation, wrapped her water lines, patched some exterior holes and added R-19 (approximately 6 inches) of attic insulation to

what was already there, in addition to other energy conservation measures. Air infiltration into her home was reduced by 28% compared to when we first took air infiltration measures.

Our goal with Weatherization is to make our clients' homes safer, promote a healthier lifestyle, reduce energy costs and increase energy efficiency. We love helping people to change their lives, save money and live better. ESC achieves these goals by employing a variety of energy saving measures, such as replacing incandescent lighting with LED bulbs, adding insulation to attic and walls, adjusting or replacing exterior doors, weather-stripping, repairing windows, general air sealing, duct sealing, installing water heater jackets, pipe insulation and repairing or replacing furnaces and water heaters due to safety reasons. The homes are warmer in the winter and cooler in the summer. Our neighbors, such as Lora, enjoy a better quality of life because of our Weatherization overhaul.

Keeping Seniors in Their Own Home

As a single elderly and disabled homeowner, Joy had struggled physically and financially with the necessary maintenance and upkeep of her home—a home which she has owned and lived in for the past 54 years. As the years passed, Joy found that accessibility to her home had become so much more important than in years past. She could not even safely take a shower or exit through one of her exterior doors, which were major safety concerns for her.

Joy said, "I had no way to make any repairs to my home because I'm on a very limited income and disabled. My house was not safe. It was cold and very energy inefficient." With the assistance of Joy's daughter, Lisa, they decided to contact the Economic Security Corporation of SW Area (ESC) to see if they could get assistance with the repair of her home.

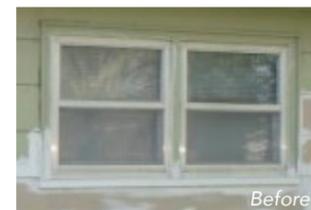
Joy was so excited and appreciative when she was approved for ESC's Home Repair Opportunity Program (HeRO), which is funded through Missouri Housing Development Commission (MHDC). This is what ESC was able to do for Joy's home: One of ESC's contractors replaced her exterior doors and windows, installed new aluminum soffit, fascia, and guttering. They also installed new vinyl siding, updated her electrical system, made much needed repairs to her floor joists, and added a landing and handrails to her porch. Repairs were also completed on the interior of her home, including the installation of a comfort height commode and a walk-in shower.

Joy said, "I was very pleased with all of the work that was done to my home. Everyone was very friendly, efficient, and there was just an excellent group of men that worked on my house." Joy feels

like the biggest benefit of the program is the new windows that make such a difference in the warmth of her home, and that she can now take a shower safely in her new walk-in shower. She is also able to use her exterior door because of the addition of the new handrails and decking.

Joy said, "My house is 100% better. I have had so many compliments from the neighbors and I just love it. I just can't thank you enough."

Joy was such a pleasure to work with and we are so pleased we were able to serve her through our HeRO program. Thank you to our contractor, Borntreger Vinyl Products, for making this another successful project!



Before



After



Before



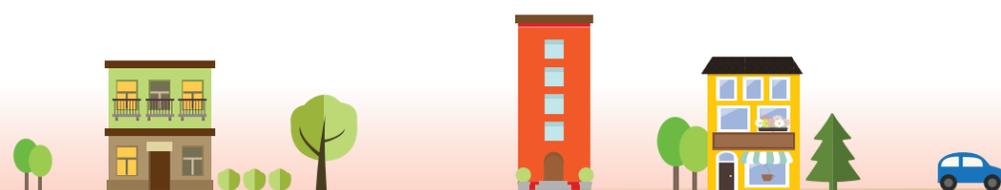
After



Before



After



Head Start and Early Head Start



An explanation of budgetary expenditures and proposed budget for the fiscal year.

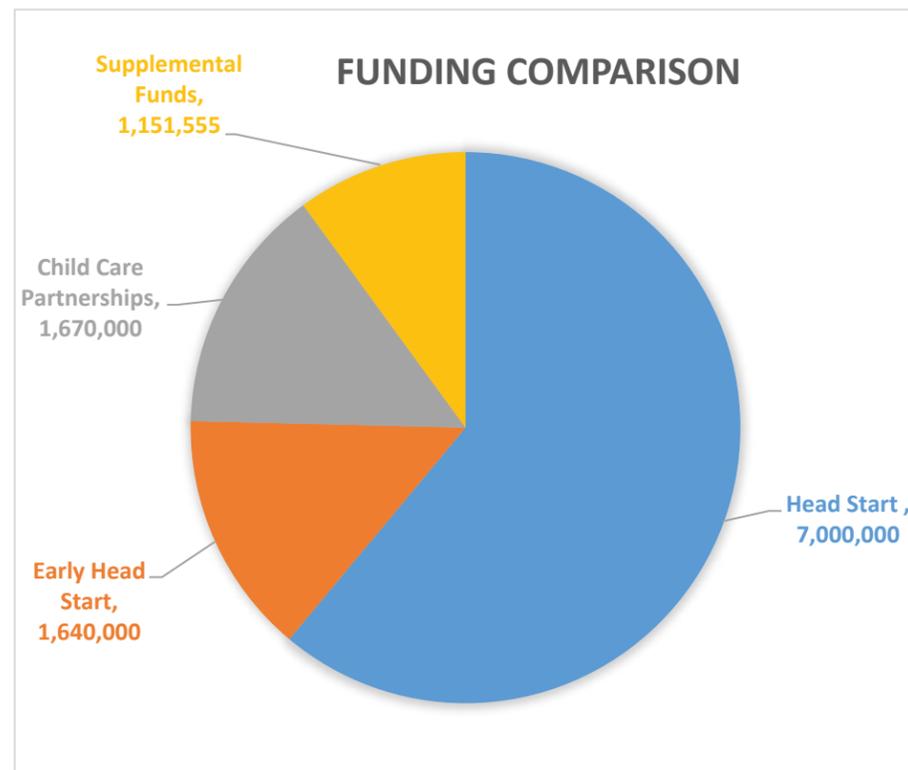
In 2021, Head Start had a budget of \$7 million, which includes \$75,130 in training and technical assistance funds. Federal regulations cap administrative costs at 15% of the total budget. ESC's administrative costs are less than 9%, leaving additional money available to be used toward child and family services. Staff salaries and fringe make up 80% of the expenses in the services category, supporting over 240 Head Start employees. The "Services" category also includes expenses such as facilities, transportation and child health services. The "Admin" category provides funding to support the human resources, fiscal and administrative aspects of the program. The budget is expected to be similar next year.

ESC receives just over \$1.64 million in federal funds for its Early Head Start program, which includes \$34,617 in training and technical assistance funds. Operating with low administrative costs means the program can devote most of its dollars to services for prenatal women, infants, toddlers and their families. The largest cost category in EHS is staff salaries and fringe, supporting approximately 35 employees. The next largest category is "Child Care." These funds represent money for ESC classrooms as well as funds paid directly to child-care facilities we contract with in the community to provide EHS child development services for infant/toddler

child care. No major changes are planned for the budget next year.

The Child Care Partnerships grant is similar to the Early Head Start program, with a greater emphasis on working with child-care partners in the community. As part of its \$1.67 million budget, \$37,000 is provided for training and technical assistance. Over \$275,000 is provided for child-care services throughout the 4 counties.

In 2021, ESC also received \$231,446 in COVID funds and \$920,109 in American Rescue Plan funds to help HS and EHS address expenses related to the coronavirus.



Enrollment

Over 1,000 children and families are normally served by the program each year in the four-county area. Unfortunately, the pandemic still affected the program in 2021. Classrooms were generally open, but class size was reduced in compliance with Center for Disease Control guidance.

The program normally maintains its full enrollment each month within the requirements of the program. A large waiting list of children is kept for any openings that may occur. Data from our Community Assessment indicates that ESC's Head Start and Early Head Start programs serve just under 50% of the estimated eligible population. The chart below shows the enrollment for each month of 2021.



HEAD START AND EARLY HEAD START ENROLLMENT

Month	Head Start	Early Head Start	Child Care Partnerships	Total Enrolled	Funded Slots	%
Jan-21	370	145	74	589	769	77%
Feb-21	354	145	74	573	769	75%
Mar-21	353	145	74	572	769	74%
Apr-21	356	145	74	575	769	75%
May-21	345	145	74	564	769	73%
Jun-21	Closed for summer	144	70	215	769	28%
Jul-21	Closed for summer	145	74	219	769	28%
Head Start begins ramp-up to full enrollment. EHS begins approved slot reduction.						
Aug-21	403	144	68	615	741	83%
Sep-21	454	140	68	662	741	89%
Oct-21	487	137	68	692	741	93%
Nov-21	505	130	62	703	741	95%

The results of the most recent review by the Office of Head Start and the financial audit.

ESC received the results of its Federal Focus Area Two Monitoring Review in January of 2020. ESC was fully compliant in all 21 areas reviewed. There were no deficiencies or non-compliances noted.

The annual agency audit was also completed with a result of no findings. As the largest federal program in the agency, the Head Start program receives additional scrutiny during the audit.



Parent involvement activities.

Families are ready to engage: Last year, over 1,000 parents/guardians/family members spent time volunteering in program activities. This commitment in time helps strengthen the link between school and home. Our parent survey reported the following information about family engagement:



QUESTIONS FROM 2021 PARENT SURVEY

QUESTIONS FROM 2021 PARENT SURVEY	RESULT
Do you feel valued and respected at your EHS/HS center?	100% yes
Do you feel the program offers a healthy and safe environment for children?	99.7% yes
Would you recommend Head Start or Early Head Start to other families?	100% yes

We assess families' progression in skills related to closing the achievement gap for their children. These skills are called Family Life Practices and are made up of 4 parts: Family Routines, Experience-rich Environment, Literacy Promotion and Positive Discipline.

Program data includes the following:

- 99% of parents reported their parenting skills and knowledge had improved.
- 99% of parents reported the program provided mental health, emotional support or stress reduction information.
- 99.1 % of parents reported the program gave them helpful info on getting their child ready for Head Start or kindergarten.
- 100% of parents reported that staff encouraged them as their child's first and best teacher.

Reaching out to parents is an important part of our program's impact. We have multiple goals related to parent engagement.

- **Actively engaged parents will help children be ready for school.**
 - 98.2% of HS/EHS parents reported that they were confident that their child was ready for their transition into Head Start or kindergarten.
- **Actively engaged parents will ensure that children have a lifelong love of learning.**
 - 99.7% of parents reported open communication with their child's teacher.
 - 99% of parents reported that they had improved their parenting skills and know more about what is appropriate for their child's age.
- **Actively engaged parents will be their child's advocate when dealing with community programs and organizations.**
 - 96.2% of parents reported increased awareness of services/agencies in the community
 - 85% of parents reported they used resources in the community after the program gave them a referral.



161,365
VOLUNTEER HOURS

1,126 VOLUNTEERS

\$357,929 EHS-CCP

46 PARTNERSHIPS

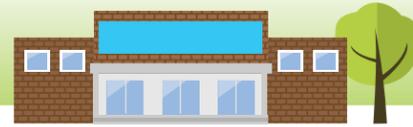
\$13,848,301
IN FUNDING

\$3,353,000
VALUE OF VOLUNTEER HOURS

96.2%
OF HEAD STARTS REPORTED
INCREASED AWARENESS OF
SERVICES



Financial Resources



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT	3,965,910
CoC Planning Grant / US Department of Housing and Urban Development	17,285
Community Services Block Grant / MO Department of Social Services	1,418,338
Coordinated Entry / City of Joplin	14,248
Coordinated Entry / MO Housing Development Commission	15,820
Disaster Relief Grant / MO Housing Development Commission	48,956
Emergency Solutions Grant / MO Housing Development Commission	20,946
Energy Assistance / MO Department of Social Services	2,206,147
Housing Assistance Grant / MO Housing Development Commission	96,316
Rapid ReHousing / US Department of Housing and Urban Development	121,663
Transitional Housing / Client Payments	2,989
Miscellaneous Income / Private Donations	2,750
Client Payments	291
Donations	161
HEAD START / EARLY HEAD START	14,193,665
Child Care Food Program / MO Department of Health	356,685
Early Head Start / US Department of Health and Human Services	1,595,447
Early Head Start Expansion Grant / US Department of Health and Human Services	1,630,736
Early Head Start-State / MO Department of Social Services	166,642
Head Start / US Department of Health and Human Services	7,218,515
In Kind / Private Donations	3,185,024
Miscellaneous Income / Private Donations	22,700
Client Payments	15,638
Miscellaneous Income	4
Other Grants Applied	2,274
HOME REPAIR	539,350
New Home Construction / US Department of Housing and Urban Development	-503
Donations	350
HOME Repair Opportunity / MO Housing Development Commission	466,025
Home Repair / City of Joplin	73,478
HOUSING	2,731,140
Chronically Homeless / US Department of Housing and Urban Development	37,884
ESCDC Rental Units / Client Payments	37,017
Family Self Sufficiency / US Department of Housing and Urban Development	48,215
Housing Assistance Operating Grant / MO Housing Development Commission	43,955
Housing Choice Voucher / US Department of Housing and Urban Development	1,652,001
Interest	328
Rental Assistance Program / MO Department of Mental Health	147,636
Rental Assistance Program / US Department of Housing and Urban Development	76,019
Shelter Plus Care / MO Department of Mental Health	198,414
Shelter Plus Care / US Department of Housing and Urban Development	68,008
Mainstream Vouchers / US Department of Housing and Urban Development	374,683
Miscellaneous Income / Private Donations	16,033
Miscellaneous Income	5,499
Chronically Homeless / MO Department of Mental Health	200
VASH / US Department of Veteran's Affairs	25,248
OTHER	234,829
Interest	164
Miscellaneous Income / Private Donations	100,180
Joplin Bungalows	1,200
Joplin Bungalows Operations	133,285
WEATHERIZATION	1,067,430
Weatherization Assistance Program / Empire District Electric	257,276
Weatherization Assistance Program / US Department of Energy	663,993
Miscellaneous Income / Private Donations	583
Corporate Grant / Spire	145,578
Grand Total	22,732,324

ESC is a private non-profit 501c3 corporation. The total expenditures for the October 2020 through September 2021 fiscal year were \$22,732,324. There were no findings for any program in the most current completed audit. Jasper County Public Housing Agency's A-133 Audit also resulted no area of deficiency or non-compliance. Roberts, McKenzie, Mangan, and Cummings, a Certified Public Accounting firm from Springfield, MO performed both audits.

Acknowledgements

This report would not be possible without the leadership team: John Joines, Jeff Goldammer, Leisa Harnar, Travis Mitchell, Cathy Meiseler, Tammy Walker, Tony Wright, Curtis Scott, Staci Bingham, Ryan Peterson and Debbie Markman.

These stories illustrate just a sampling of results that Community Action is trusted to do every day in Southwest Missouri. We are thankful to the contributions of ESC's staff: Tammy Walker, Mary Beth Yeakey, Margarite Stever, Ryan Peterson, Curtis Scott, Gail Callahan, Pam Judd, Shonna Greninger, Valorie Crites, Robyn Walker, Misty Shafer, Robin Smith, Leisa Harnar, Travis Mitchell, Jeff Goldammer and Debbie Markman.

We want to thank Economic Security Corporation of Southwest Area's Board of Directors for their support and guidance throughout the development of this report: President Sarah Alumbaugh, Vice President David Holloway, Treasurer Paula Carsel, Secretary Doris Fast, Barton County, Jasper County, McDonald County and Newton County Board Members.

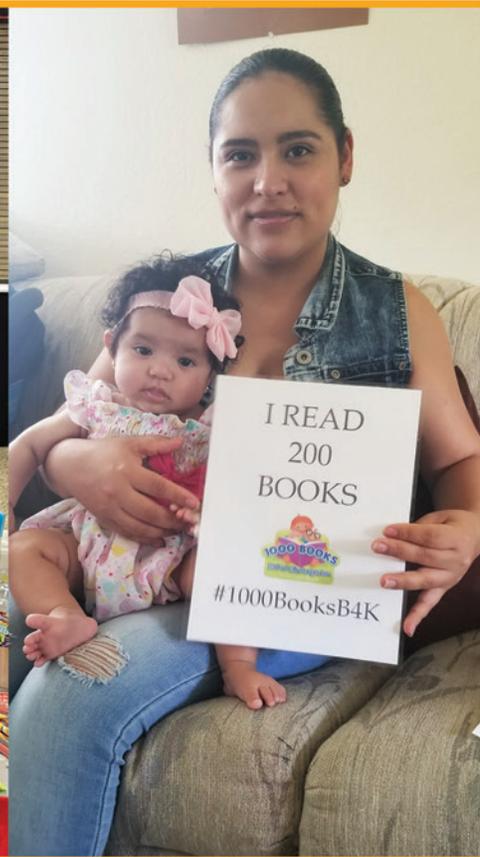
We would like to thank all our partnership agencies: State of Missouri's Community Services Block Grant, Missouri Department of Natural Resources, Missouri Housing Development Commission, Missouri Energy Assistance, Region VII Office of Head Start, US Department of Housing and Urban Development, National Community Action Partnership, National Community Action Foundation, National Association for State Community Services Programs, Association of Nationally Certified ROMA Trainers and Implementers, Missouri Community Action Network, Missouri Department of Mental Health, The Homeless Coalition, City of Joplin, Spire, Liberty Utilities and Lowe's Home Improvement.



Finally, we want to acknowledge **Jeff Goldammer – a Community Action Pioneer retired this past December after almost 35 Years!** Saying goodbye to a good employee is always hard but saying goodbye to an employee like Jeff Goldammer has been like losing a family member. Jeff was an Economic Security Corporation of Southwest Area's employee for over 34 years and the Head Start/ Early Head Start Director for 32 of those years. He started his career with ESC as the Employment and Training Director in 1987, working with the Job Training Partnership Act that included the Summer Youth Employment Programs. Helping people get in the job force was his first assignment with ESC. After 2 years, he turned his attention to ESC's Head Start program. During his leadership, the program grew from an enrollment of 100 children to over 1,000 children. Jeff oversaw a staff of 260 and a variety of grants totaling over \$10.5 million. He served and continues to serve on a variety of community organizations and local Boards of Directors. Jeff was named "Region VII Head Start Administrator of the Year" in 2003. Jeff has been a Certified Community Action Professional for most

of his time at ESC and is certified by the Community Development Institute as a mentor for new Head Start and Early Head Start Directors. Jeff is the epitome of a high-quality Director and Supervisor. His staff were devoted to the mission and goals he set for the program. Jeff loved working with the parents in the program and many of them have returned to ESC to thank him for his guidance. Jeff retired on December 31, 2021, and has plans to spend time with his wife, Judy, and their two dogs, Gypsy and Panda. The Economic Security Corporation of Southwest Area and its staff wish nothing but the absolute best for Jeff and his family and look forward to hearing about their adventures!





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