

Central Nebraska Community Services

annual report 2014

choices

dreams



opportunities



*Mission
Statement*

Partnering with individuals
and families to end
poverty through
community-based
solutions.

Mission Statement

Partnering with individuals and families to end poverty through community-based solutions.



Agency Year in Review

Well, 2014 has meant change for Central Nebraska Community Services (CNCS). Along with staffing changes, every department is experiencing new or ongoing challenges.

On the positive side of things, CNCS had our annual audit completed by McDermott and Miller, which showed no areas of non-compliance. This continues to be a strong component of our agency and we commend the Fiscal Department for their support and steadfastness on the agency's strong financial health.

The Family Outreach Department has been working through challenges faced by the Hearth Act, enacted by Congress, that more narrowly defines the definition of homelessness. The changes affect how homeless persons are served in five of the homeless programs offered through the department, as well as a pilot currently being conducted throughout the state for coordinated assessment. Looking forward in 2015 and 2016, the department will be working on both the Community Services Block Grant Organizational Standards and ROMA Next Generation, so the agency is aligned with these mandates.

Head Start had a federal review in October 2013, with over 1,700 performance standards reviewed. CNCS was recently notified they will be transitioning to a five year grant cycle, which is exciting news! However, it also means additional changes such as a more in-depth peer review process and other changes to ensure that all requirements are being met. Early Childhood has also implemented a new intake called "Child Plus" that will be utilized to collect data throughout all the ECP programs.

In addition, Weatherization is going through some growing pains. To follow a DOE (Department of Energy) mandate, it is the intent of the Community Economic Development Department to have multiple staff trained for Quality Control Inspection (QPI) and Energy Auditor. This is a mandate through the Department of Energy that must be fulfilled by July 1, 2015.

As with many of the programs statewide, the Health and Nutrition Department continues to weave through budget reductions. In addition, one major change is the implementation of a new computer system in the Women, Infants and Children Program. However, the department continues to address each challenge and develops different strategies so quality services are continued.

As we continue our mission, Central Nebraska Community Services concedes there are stricter guidelines put on by the funding sources, thus, requiring additional reporting and monitoring with grantees to meet compliance. Some of us have been with the Community Action network for some time, and have seen the changes and obstacles encountered along the way, but as the years have passed, we have always adapted to those changes and requirements. It is through this adversity, in which we grow and learn to embrace new opportunities.

In a quote by Audrey Hepburn: "Nothing is impossible, the word itself says 'I'm possible'!"

Central Nebraska Community Services

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

CNCS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Central Nebraska Community Services is governed by a 27 member Board of Directors representing the service region of 21 counties. The area includes 6 core counties that formulated the organization in the early 1960's along with 3 districts added to bring in a broad range of experience and representation. The tripartite board includes representatives from the private sector, public sector and the low income sector. This has proven a successful formula for long term agency governance.

Roger Goldfish	President
Barb Wroblewski	Vice President
Doug Wrede	Secretary/Treasurer

Joan Barnes	Larry Griffith	
Ralph Metschke	Amber Veskerna	Jim Helgoth
Donna Garwood	Kathy Hirschman	Arizona Brooks
Ruth Boettcher	Mike Feeken	Nelva McNeff
Christy Wemhoff	Jay Meyer	Ran Varney
Robert Lloyd	Nancy Glesinger	Carol Krikac
Gary Quandt	Pam Harrington	Joan Birnie
Jeanne Webb	Kelly Phillips	Bob Thomas
Jim Johnson		

SENIOR MANAGEMENT

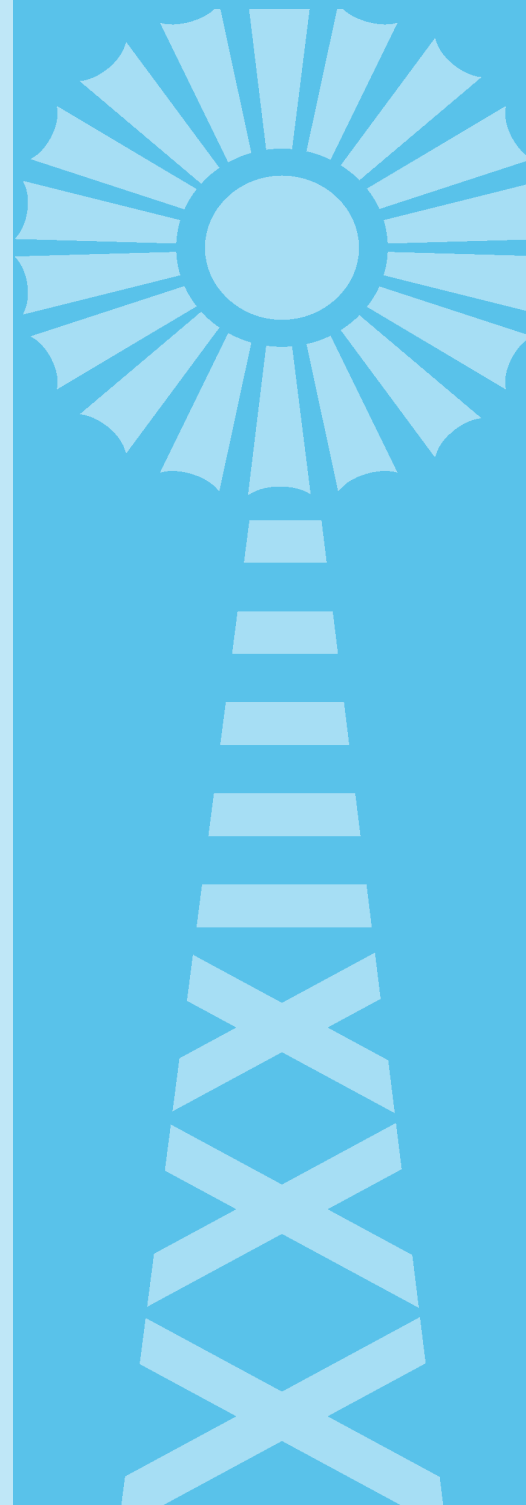
Cheryl Holcomb	Co-Interim Executive Director/Family Outreach Director
Donna Obermiller	Co-Interim Executive Director/Fiscal Director
Sue Obermiller	Early Childhood Programs Director
Samantha Kusek	Health & Nutrition Director
Judy Hughes	Community Economic Development Director

THE PROMISE OF COMMUNITY ACTION

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.

Mission Statement

Partnering with individuals
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Mission Statement

To foster the healthy lifestyles of central Nebraskans through health promotion, prevention, and education.

Health and Nutrition Department

The Health and Nutrition Department offers a variety of wellness, prevention, intervention, and community service programs to individuals and families through-out the entire service area.

NEBRASKA RESPITE NETWORK is a program which provides a statewide system for the coordination of respite resources that serves all ages (across the lifespan) and all disabilities.

COMMODITY SUPPLEMENTAL FOOD PROGRAM (CSFP) is a USDA program which provides income eligible persons 60 years of age and greater, with nutritious food packages. During 2014 CNCS provided 36,404 packages.

EARLY DEVELOPMENT NETWORK (EDN) is a program to assist families who have children with disabilities (age 0 to 3) access resources that help them meet their determined goals. In 2014, 647 children were served by CNCS' EDN Service Coordinators.

THE NEBRASKA WOMEN, INFANTS, AND CHILDREN NUTRITION PROGRAM (WIC) provides healthy food at no cost and breastfeeding and nutrition information to keep pregnant women, infants and children under five, healthy and strong. WIC can connect clients with other important programs and resources to help them improve their health and achieve self-sufficiency. During 2014 CNCS provided WIC services to 15,313 individuals.

SHERMAN COUNTY SENIOR CENTER offers a wide variety of energizing and enjoyable services designed for those who wish to maintain healthy and fulfilling lives. The center also has a nutrition program in which noon meals and home delivered meals are offered Monday through Friday. In 2014 approximately 10,330 meals were served.

NEBRASKA OFFICE OF HIGHWAY SAFETY SEAT BELT INITIATIVE/ CUSTER COUNTY CAMPAIGN BUCKLE-UP TRAFFIC SAFETY PROJECT focuses on reducing fatal and injury crashes by increasing occupant restraint use and education, safe driving and riding practices.

IMMUNIZATIONS are offered through public immunization clinics in 15 towns across our area. In 2014, 1,145 clients were served and 3,035 vaccines were administered. By providing immunizations at rural mobile clinics we help ensure children receive important immunizations.

WOMAN-TO-WOMAN/DE MUJER A MUJER BREAST CANCER PREVENTION PROGRAM seeks to save lives through early detection of the disease. Hispanic, rural and elderly women in Hall, Hamilton, Merrick, Platte, Colfax, Boone, and Nance counties will be educated on the Susan G. Komen for the Cure Breast Self-Awareness plan: know your risk, get screened, know what is normal for you, and make healthy lifestyle choices.

Health and Nutrition *Department*

Jaxon Rave is a student in Columbus 2 Head Start. As part of the program, nurses from the Health and Nutrition Department complete health screenings on all children within the first 45 days of the child's start date. A hearing evaluation using an otoacoustic emissions machine is one of the health screenings completed. When Nurse Laurie completed Jaxon's

he had profound hearing loss in his left ear and would need a hearing aid. Mom was shocked and so were the staff. Due to circumstances beyond her control, Jaxon's mom currently does not have insurance for him so the teaching staff has worked with student health to help pay for the appointments to the audiologist and ear nose and throat doctor. She

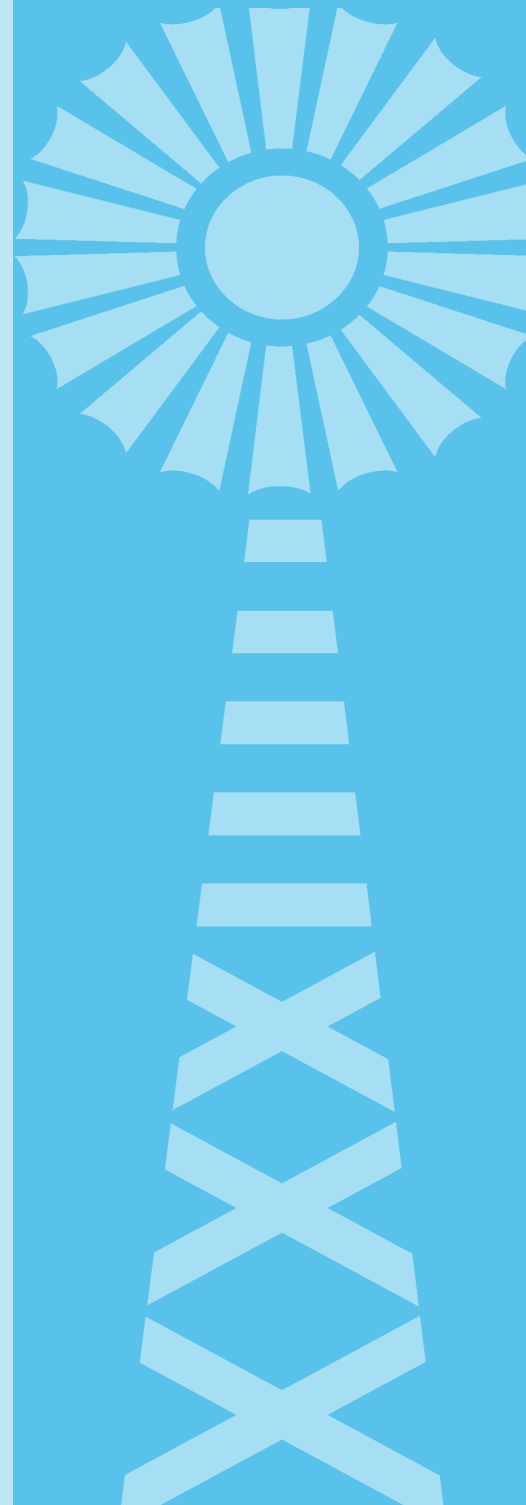
Mission Statement

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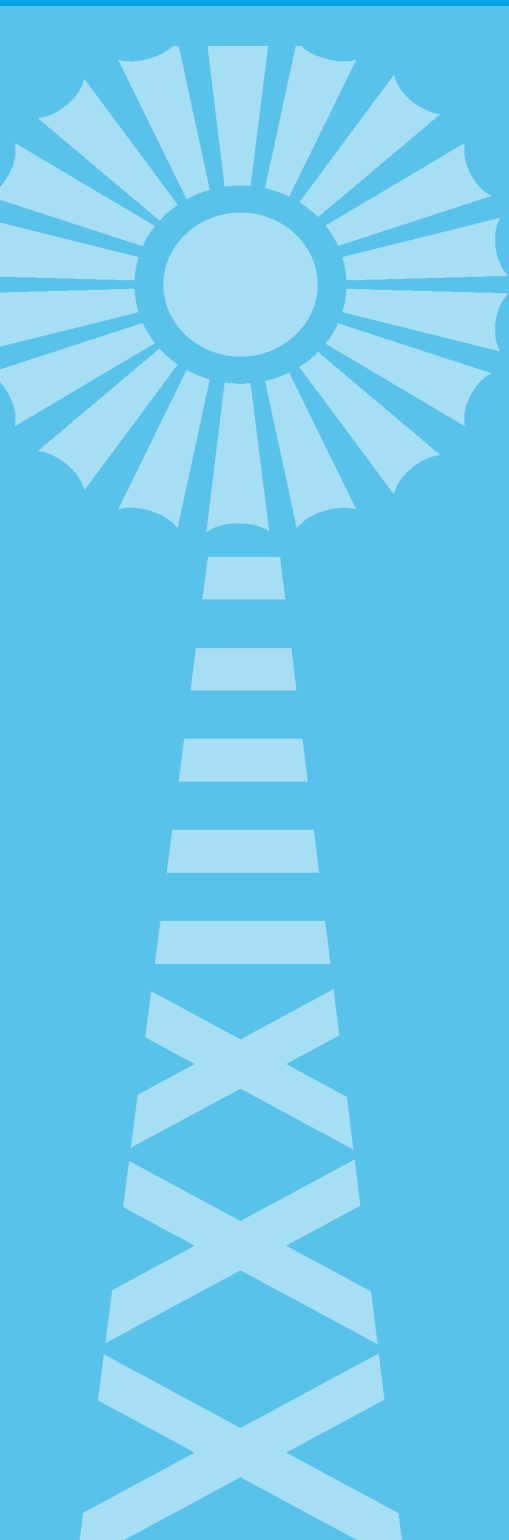
first hearing screening he failed and was referred to an audiologist. When the teacher talked to mom about him failing the screening she was not concerned, but after learning that at times when the teacher would talk to him he would not respond Jaxon's mom decided to have him evaluated by an audiologist. She informed the staff that she would let them know how the hearing evaluation went. The day after his appointment mom came in to the classroom and stated that the evaluation had shown that

was very appreciative. On Jaxon's last appointment he was fitted for his hearing aid. By working with the public school an audiologist is able to come in to the Head Start classroom and help the teaching staff and Jaxon utilize his hearing aid and be successful in the classroom. If he had not had his initial hearing evaluation by a Health and Nutrition nurse his hearing loss may not have been detected as soon. This is an example of how important these evaluations are for the children we serve!



Mission Statement

Building partnerships with people and communities to promote safer, healthier tomorrows.



Family Outreach Department

HOMELESS AND NEAR HOMELESS persons are offered services through:

STABILITY ASSISTANCE is provided to individuals/families to assist them with utility disconnects/deposits, past due rent, rent deposits or 1st month rent. Available: All 21 counties.

THRIVES (Traditional Housing for Rural Independence Viability and Economic Stability): Assists homeless individuals and families to obtain safe and stable housing. Participants must commit to participating in case management to enhance their skills and maintain their housing. Participants are linked to other resources to overcome challenges and help achieve stability. Available: All 21 counties.

HALL COUNTY RAPID RE-HOUSING Assists homeless individuals and families obtain safe and stable housing. Participants must commit to participating in case management to enhance their skills and maintain their housing. Participants are linked to other resources to overcome challenges and help achieve stability. Available: Hall County.

HOPE (HOPE OFFERS PEOPLE EMPOWERMENT) Case management provides opportunities for near-homeless/homeless families/individuals to neutralize the affects of their situation. Services help alleviate barriers in order for clients to reach their potential by stabilizing their household, building problem solving and life skills, and accessing resources to overcome barriers. (If a client doesn't meet criteria to participate in other programs they are encouraged to participate in the HOPE program.) Available: All 21 counties.

VETERANS PERMANENT HOUSING Assists homeless Veterans with securing housing. Participants must participate in case management to enhance their skills and maintain their housing. Participants are linked to other resources to help overcome challenges and help achieve stability. Services available: All 21 counties.

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES FOR VETERAN FAMILIES (SSVF) provides housing stability through temporary financial assistance and case management services to Veteran households who would otherwise become homeless as well as assistance to rapidly re-house those who are homeless. Available: All 21 counties, including Adams & Buffalo Counties.

FOOD PANTRIES Donated food, household and personal items are provided to low income families on an emergency basis. Available in Central City, Loup City and O'Neill.

THE COMMUNITY HELP CENTER (CHC) is designed to be the initial point to access services in the Hall County area. The CHC Coordinator will assess an individual's situation and link them to appropriate resources.

PARTICIPATION IN SERVICE POINT A statewide database system for tracking households and the services provided to them.

THE SOAR PROGRAM (SSI/SSDI OUTREACH, ACCESS, AND RECOVERY) will provide assistance to individuals wanting to apply for disability. The SOAR Program is designed to increase access to the disability income benefit programs administered by the Social Security Administration (SSA) for eligible adults who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and have a mental illness and/or a co-occurring substance use disorder.

Family Outreach Department

SSVF HELPS HOMELESS VETERAN

Doug and Susan entered the SSVF (Supportive Services for Veteran Families) program literally homeless. Doug had graduated from the VA treatment program and joined his wife, Susan and their dog that were living in their vehicle.

Upon entering the SSVF program, the couple was assisted in finding a rental, using donations for the rental application fee that allowed their pet. The case manager assisted in completing an application for a bed from Hope Harbor of which they were approved.

When Doug and Susan first entered the program, they were living on Doug's VA

income of \$1054 per month. The SSVF case manager assisted with the SNAP application and within a couple weeks, they became eligible for \$318 in benefits. While waiting to be approved for SNAP, the couple was referred to other resources such as Salvation Army, local food pantries, and Skagway food vouchers to help with their nutritional needs. They were also referred to receive gifts through the St. Nick Project, a collaboration with a church, for the Holiday season.

The SSVF program assisted with gasoline for employment search and also purchased employment clothing for Susan for interviews and attire for when hired. The couple was also referred to Peace Lutheran Church for a free oil change, in which they were served.

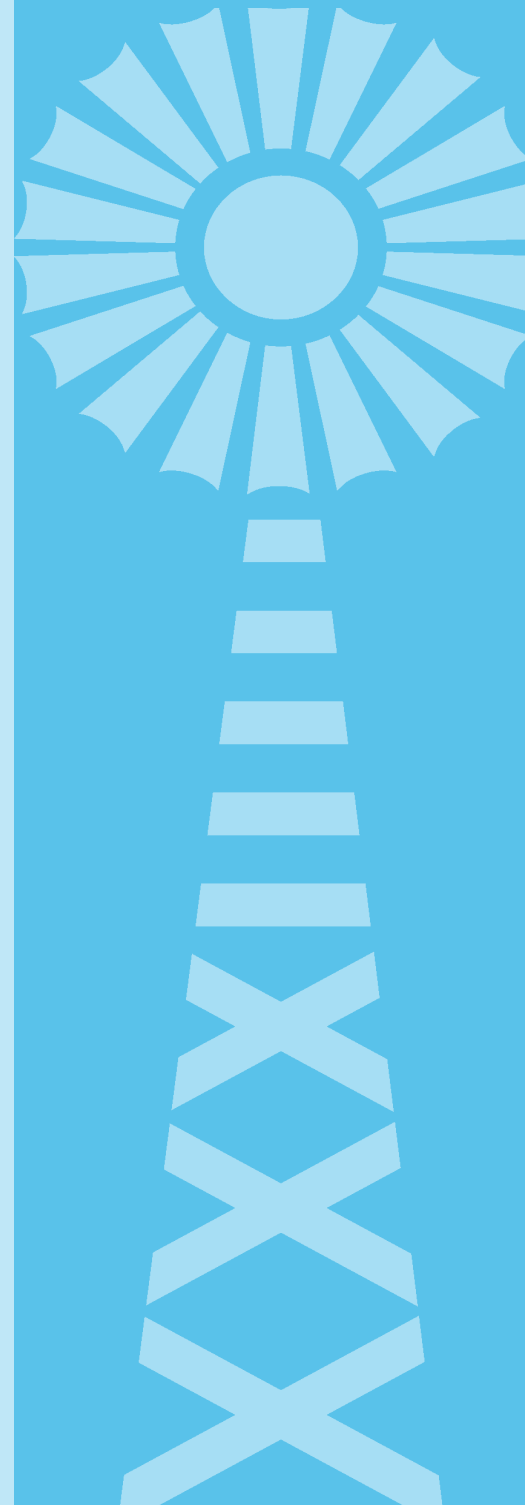
Throughout their time in the program, Susan gained employment and was hired for a part-time job making \$9.75 per hour and averaging 30-35 hours a week. With the assistance of the SSVF program, they were stabilized resulting in being able to pay \$1600 in debt, which included eliminating their car loan.

Doug and Susan successfully graduated the Supportive Services for Veteran Families program and are now maintaining their housing, food, and expenses on their own.



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Family Outreach Department

POSITIVE CHANGE

John is a twenty year old who came onto the THRIVES (Transitional Housing for Rural Independence) program a year and a half ago. John was kicked out of his home when he was 16 years old and told that he was a man now and had to find his way. John moved in with his Aunt who gave him a place to sleep but was told he had to drop out of school and get a job to help support the household as his Aunt had six kids of her own, and couldn't afford to keep him as well. John did drop out of school but due to his age and lack of experience obviously couldn't find work. John ended up getting involved with a gang and started living off the street.



While John admittedly did start doing some crime he was never caught, and knew that if he continued down the path he was on, he would end up in a bad way. John ended up meeting with a Marine recruiter and made the choice that he wanted to join the Marines. Unfortunately, he was not eligible because he did not have a high school diploma. The Marines advised John to go back to school and then he could sign up.

John made contact with his sister who had recently moved into the area and she agreed to let him stay with her so he could go to school as long as he didn't get into any trouble. John did re-enroll in high school and was taking classes most of which consisted of sitting at a computer and "teaching" himself so that he could get caught up. John was doing well and staying out of the gang life when he did make the mistake of going to a party and drinking. John chose to drive and was picked up and arrested for Minor in Possession and driving without a license. He was put on diversion, however, the Marines were still a possibility if he successfully completed his diversion. Unfortunately, John's sister didn't agree and kicked him out since he had gotten in trouble.

John's diversion officer contacted the Outreach Department to see if THRIVES would be an option for him. John was accepted onto the program. While on the program John has obtained part-time employment to coincide with his schooling, continued to go to school and has caught up to the graduating senior class and will be graduating in May 2015. He pre-enlisted in the Marine Corps and is scheduled to leave for basic training 3 days after graduation. John has also successfully completed the diversion program and no longer has the original charges on his record. With the assistance of the THRIVES program and his case manager he has learned basic life skills that he was never taught, such as, budgeting, doing laundry, keeping up with daily chores in his apartment, keeping a checkbook, and obtaining his driver's license. John was even able to save enough money to buy himself a car as well.

In John's recent accomplishments, he was recommended for Outstanding Youth Achievement Award by the Platte County Diversion Program.

Early Childhood Programs

Mission Statement

Promote family strengths by recognizing individual values, encouraging teamwork, and creating links in the community.

HEAD START

Head Start programs support the mental, social and emotional development of children from ages 3-5. In addition to education services, programs provide children and their families with information and resources pertaining to health, nutrition, social and other services. Every effort is made to meet the needs of all enrolled children. Ten percent of our enrollments are children with special needs or disabilities. Head Start services are responsive to each child and family's ethnic, cultural and linguistic heritage. More specifically, the program consists of: Dental/health exams; Vision/hearing/language tests; Lead Screenings; Immunizations; Nutritious meals; Comprehensive curriculum; Educational Activities; School Readiness Activities; Transition Activities; Screenings and assessment are completed on your child on an on-going basis and referrals may be made for future evaluations by you or by staff with your permission.

Head Start encourages the role of parents as their child's first and most important teachers. Programs build relationships with families that support positive parent-child relationships, family well-being and connections to peers and community.

EARLY HEAD START

Early Head Start provides early, continuous, intensive and comprehensive child development and family support services to low-income infants and toddlers and their families, and pregnant women and their families. Every effort is made to meet the needs of all enrolled children. Ten percent of our enrollments are children with special needs or disabilities. The Early Head Start Program also provides center-based and home-based services. Health and mental health services are also provided.

THE GOALS OF EARLY HEAD START CONSIST OF:

- Providing a safe and developmentally enriching care giving which promotes the physical, cognitive, social and emotional development of infants and toddlers, and prepares them for future growth and development.
- Supports parents, both mothers and fathers, in their role as primary caregivers and teachers of their children, and families in meeting personal goals and achieving self-sufficiency across a wide variety of domains.
- Mobilizing communities to provide the resources and environment necessary to ensure a comprehensive, integrated array of services and support for families.
- Ensuring the provision of high quality responsive services to family through the development of trained, caring staff.

Kylar Strong, a child in the O'Neill Head Start Program, needed massive dental work last school year. Staff were able to assist the family in getting the dental work completed. He came one day at the end of the school year with a huge smile and said his teeth were fixed and they didn't hurt anymore. This is a quote from mom: "When I told Kylar my teeth hurt he said, "if you went to my school mom, they wouldn't hurt." He is happy about his teeth and talks about taking care of them.



Mission Statement

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ACCORDING TO THE 2013-2014 PROGRAM INFORMATION REPORT

HEAD START

- 98% of children were up-to-date on a schedule of preventive and primary health care
- 4.4% of children diagnosed with a chronic condition needing medical treatment
- 100% of children diagnosed with a chronic condition received medical treatment
- 96.4% of children completed dental exams
- 19.2% needed dental treatment
- 95.9% of those needing dental treatment, percentage of those that received dental treatment
- 99.2% of children with a medical home (at the end of enrollment)

EARLY HEAD START

- 95% of children were up-to date on a schedule of preventive and primary health care
- 20.6% of children diagnosed with a chronic condition needing medical treatment
- 97.4% of children diagnosed with a chronic condition received medical treatment
- 98.5% of children with a medical home (at the end of enrollment)
- 100% of children with a dental home (at the end of enrollment)

Early Childhood Programs

PARTNERSHIPS

It is the intent of the Nebraska Department of Education to help school districts move away from service delivery models that segregate children based on income. School districts must make every attempt to serve otherwise un-served children and to partner with community programs such as Head Start, to provide the best experiences for each individual child and family.

- The Head Start Program has formal partnerships with 10 Public Schools (Ainsworth, Burwell, Central City, Centura, Columbus, Loup City, O'Neill, Ord, Schuyler and St. Paul).
- The Early Head Start Program also has a formal partnership with the Department of Education that funds the Sixpence Program which serves ages 0-3. (Aurora, Broken Bow, Central City, Loup City, Ord, Schuyler, and St. Paul).
- Formal partnerships with DHHS for the EHS Infant/Toddler Grant.

PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Parent and family engagement in Head Start/Early Head Start is about building relationships with families that support family well-being, strong relationships between parents and their children, and ongoing learning and development for both parents and children.

When we actively engage families all benefit: Children will be healthier and more ready for Kindergarten; Families will be more engaged in the program and in the public school; Programs will achieve higher levels of quality; Communities will provide stronger supports to the next generation

All parents have the opportunity to participate in the following activities: Parent Meetings; Socializations; Policy Council; Parent trainings; Male Engagement Activities; Annual Self-Assessment; Volunteer in the classroom; Bus monitors; Parent/Teacher Conferences.

Audit is results of our agency audit showed no areas of non-compliance.

Federal Review- over 1,700 Performance Standards were reviewed October 7-11, 2013. The final report showed no areas of non-compliance and we will be transitioning into the five year grant cycle.

Non-Federal Share- Through the help of parents, community members, and volunteers Head Start and Early Head Start was able to raise \$1,164,523 in non-federal share contributions for 2013-2014.

2013-2014 ACTUAL ENROLLMENT LEVELS:

Head Start: 394 actual children served
367 actual families served

Early Head Start: 261 actual prenatal women/children served
196 actual families served

2013-2014 FUNDED ENROLLMENT LEVELS:

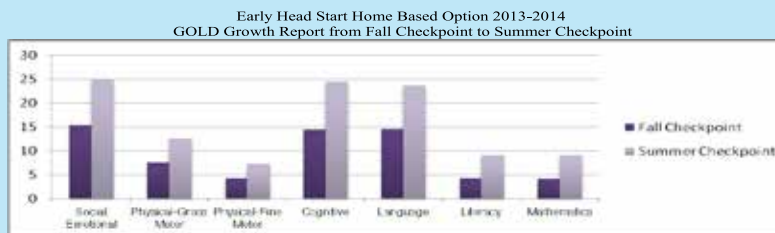
Head Start: 356
Early Head Start: 159

SCHOOL READINESS

The Head Start Approach to School Readiness means that children are ready for school, families are ready to support their children's learning, and schools are ready for children. Head Start and Early Head Start has a strong, clear, and comprehensive focus on all aspects of healthy development, including physical, cognitive, social and emotional development, all of which are essential to children getting ready for school. Early Childhood Programs has revised our school readiness goals which are defined as "the expectations of children's status and progress across domains of language and literacy development, cognition and general knowledge, approaches to learning, physical health and well-being and motor development, and social and emotional development that will improve readiness for kindergarten goals" and that "appropriately reflect the ages of children, birth to five, participating in the program." Head Start views school readiness as children possessing the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary for success in school and for later learning and life.

For parents and families, school readiness means they are engaged

in the long-term, lifelong success of their child. Our programs and schools work together to promote school readiness and to engage families as their children make the transition to kindergarten, schools will be ready for children. Our School Readiness Goals align with our curriculum (High-Scope and Parents as Teachers), Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines, Teaching Strategies Goal assessment, and the Head Start and Early Head Start Frameworks.



Early Head Start/Sixpence Home Based and Center Based programs serve over 200 children which we observe, assess, analyze and then plan to meet our School Readiness Goals. The 2013-2014 program year goals were to meet age expectations and to be able to demonstrate growth in all our objectives and dimensions on GOLD. We were able to show growth in all six domains as shown on the chart. Literacy and Math showed the greatest gains, although also the lower domains in children meeting

age expectations. To support lower domains of Literacy and Math, we had our Regional T/TA present 2 days of training, on High 5 Mathematize and also on Language and Literacy. Staff reviewed their individual data and made individualized goals for their children.

Head Start and our Pre K partnerships serve over 500 children throughout our service area. Our teaching staff observes these children and enters their observations into our online

GOLD program. Three times per year teaching staff as well as Education Coordinators analyze reports to assess how our children are performing. We make changes in the classroom and agency based on this data. We also

make individual plans for children to help them grow and reach our School Readiness goals. In the 2013-2014 school year we saw growth in all areas of development. Our greatest areas of growth were Cognitive, Literacy and Social Emotional. To continue the growth in the Social Emotional area we have purchased the Social Emotional Curriculum Second Step that we have begun to implement in the 2014-2015 school year. We look forward to seeing the results of that curriculum in our scores next year.

CLASS ASSESSMENT

Classroom assessment scoring system (CLASS) focuses on the quality of classroom interactional processes. This focus differs from other measurement tools that address the content of the physical environment, available materials, or a specific curriculum. For CLASS, the physical environment (including materials) and curriculum matter in the context of how all teachers in the classroom put them to use in their interactions with children. This reflects the children's interactions with all teachers in the classroom.

CLASS is organized to assess three broad domains of interactions among teachers and children: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization

and Instructional Support. Each domain includes several dimensions. Collectively the dimensions assess the extent to which teachers are effectively supporting children's development, both social and academic. Scoring is completed at the dimension level using a 7-point scale.

Research has shown that effective teacher-child interactions are an active and crucial ingredient for children's social and academic development. More effective Emotional Support and Classroom Organization equal stronger social and emotional development and stronger self regulation. Classrooms that have scores of at least 5 on the

CLASS assessment provide the level of support necessary to see gains in the children's development. More effective Instructional Support equals stronger early academic development in math, language, and literacy. Classrooms that have scores of at least 3 on the CLASS assessment foster academic and language skills for children.

In the program year 2013-2014, the CLASS assessment was completed on all CNCS Head Start/Pre-K classrooms. Below is a chart that shows what the national and CNCS averages were for that year.

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MEGAN AND ARIANNA



KATIE AND SOPHIA

2014/2015 SUCCESS STORY

MEGAN AND ARIANNA

Megan began her journey with Head Start back in the summer months of 2013 when her daughter Arianna, age 3 years, was accepted into the Aurora Head Start Program. Megan has been an active Head Start parent. She volunteers in the classroom whenever her work schedule allows it, and she makes it a priority to attend all parent meetings, parent teacher conferences, parent orientations, and preschool round-ups. Megan does an excellent job of keeping in contact with the Head Start staff to discuss Arianna's performance. Megan has been an active member of her parent group serving as policy council representative for 2 years in a row. This November, Megan received the book "Their Name is Today" at a policy council meeting she attended in Loup City. Megan reported to staff that she began reading the book right away and fell in love with its message. She felt that we needed to get a copy in the hands of all Head Start parents, so 20 more books are on their way!

In her personal life, Megan has excelled as well. She has now held her current job at the Hamilton Manor in Aurora since November of 2008. She started her job there in the laundry department. She worked hard and later attained her CNA certification in December of 2013. In the future, she hopes to obtain her Associates Degree in Business.

Megan values family just like she does education. Although Arianna's father is not actively involved in her life, Megan believes in being open and honest with her daughter about him. She talks openly with her and answers any questions she may have. She also allows her to call him anytime she wants. Megan does make sure that Arianna has a positive male figure in her life by having a close relationship with her father, Arianna's grandfather. He has been a positive male figure in Arianna's life since birth and enjoyed attending our male engagement fishing activity last year with her. Megan is a perfect example of a "successful" Head Start Parent!

KATIE AND SOPHIA

Katie Schambach entered the Loup City Sixpence Early Childhood Program in the spring of 2012. Katie is an extraordinary young woman and mom. Katie found out at the age of 15 that she was going to become a mother and decided, along with her family, to keep the baby. That baby was soon born and given the name Sophia. Stacy Paitz, Katie's home visitor, stated that she has seen many examples of Katie's dedication and attentiveness to her daughter and to her education. Stacy is impressed by Katie's strong work ethic and her belief that you can go nowhere without an education. Katie has made it clear that her ultimate goal was to graduate high school and attend college.

With her parents support, Katie has made sure everything she does is in Sophia's best interest and that her love and commitment is at a level that is much more than most parents that are older than her. Katie is the one that makes all the decisions when it comes to raising Sophia. As a student, Katie has always been hard-working and highly committed to her education. Katie graduated 5th in her class and received numerous scholarships. She was involved in many extra-curricular activities along with being involved in many school sponsored organizations. As a result of her high academics, she is currently in the Honor's Program at UNK and has finished her first semester of college with a GPA of 3.91. She was recently honored this fall with the Nebraska Head Start Scholarship.

It is important to note that Katie began working at the age of 11 for a local business and continues to work three days a week while attending college. As a young mom, she has also taken on the role of being a friend and a positive example for another teen mom in the Sixpence Early Childhood Program. When you look at all the activities Katie was involved in, you would wonder how she did it all- school activities, work, volunteering, and parenting. With the support of her parents, Katie's priority has always been Sophia. Katie isn't rich and doesn't live in a new home, drive a new car, or have a new wardrobe, but what she does have is a wonderful and "rich" relationship with her daughter.

Community Economic *Development*

OWNER-OCCUPIED REHABILITATION

The Community Economic Development Department administers funds for owner-occupied rehabilitation in numerous counties, cities, and villages. To be eligible for these funds the applicants have to income qualify and own the home they are residing in. When the rehabilitation work is completed the home must be brought up to the standards set by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development.

WEATHERIZATION

Income eligible applicants receive repairs and efficiency measures that result in saving energy. This program helps reduce the ever increasing costs to heat and cool the homes of Nebraska's low-income residents. This program is a grant to income eligible owners and renters and is available throughout the 21-county service area.

SECTION 8 RENT SUBSIDY

This program provides rent subsidy assistance through the issuance of vouchers to individuals and families. Income guidelines must be met and the landlord must be willing to participate in the program. Currently there are 48 entities that form the Central Nebraska Joint Housing Authority (CNJHA).

FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY PROGRAM (FSS)

This case management program supplies support services to Section 8 clients. FSS assists clients with long-term goals to overcome barriers and achieve economic self-sufficiency.

CNCS AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The CED Department manages rental units in Loup City, Central City, Ainsworth, Greeley, O'Neill, Cairo, Alda and Bassett. Income guidelines are attached to the rental units, plus the applicant must provide landlord and utility references and show ability to pay rent.

Weatherization staff have been diligently working in preparation of The Department of Energy's (DOE) Quality Control Mandate. Part of this process is to bring standardization and consistency between all sub-grantees within NeWAP (Nebraska Weatherization Assistance Program) system. In 2014, training has been much of the focus as field staff trainings became required certification. Energy Auditor and Crew Chief were two key points of 2014, with the final QCI (Quality Control Inspection) required by July 2015. The Nebraska Energy Office also created the NEO (Nebraska Energy Office) Weatherization portal. This website has allowed WAP (Weatherization Assistance Program) to become more streamlined with enhanced communication and real time information, using a cost efficient "greener" approach. Collaboration has also been a huge priority in the past year. Both field and office staff attended the Annual WAP (Weatherization Assistance Program) Director's meeting in Kearney. From those discussions a technical working group was established in Lincoln, bringing WAP (Weatherization Assistance Program) conversations full circle through the entire Community Action Network.

Mission Statement

Taking a family's dream
and making it a reality
through housing
opportunities.



Mission Statement

Taking a family's dream and making it a reality through housing opportunities.

Community Economic Development

Dear Sharon,

I wanted to take this opportunity to wish you and your staff a very Merry Christmas as well as to say how much your program means to us. Words can't express just how much we appreciate having been chosen for your weatherization program and service other than to say, Thank You so much, we are forever grateful.

You gave us hope for a better winter financially to pay for our energy bills, as well as adding warmth to the atmosphere in this house. The largest escape of heat is in our windows but, I am in prayer that God will provide us with the ways and means to eventually make this possible.

I don't know that we were deserving more than others, but sitting in this big cold house sure makes me glad we were. I am told that one never knows the good until they experience the bad which is what compels me to write this note of thanks.

I can never repay the men you sent for such hard work they put into making everything as air tight as they could. But hope this message gets passed on to them, letting them know just how grateful we are for all the difficult and hard labor they endured. They really worked hard and looked so worn out and tired at the end of the day, I could only imagine how they felt.

I know my disabilities don't show in physical appearance, but if anyone could live in my body for 10 minutes there would be no question to the pain I bare. When seeing these men (Tom, Tim,

and Larry) crawling in and out of attics, crawl spaces, and other areas of difficulty, I felt awful that they had to work so hard while I sat in my easy chair. If possible would you PLEASE! Let them know how much they are appreciated? I told them when they were here, but could tell they are humble men and take their jobs as for what they are, difficult but manageable.

Maybe this letter will let them know just how much they meant to us, if you could pass it on to them.

Thank You! And God Bless You All As You Have Blessed Us.



Community Economic *Development*

Some CNCS rental properties received much needed upgrades last summer! In 2014 the Community Economic Development Department, was awarded a \$377,628 grant through the Nebraska Department of Economic Development. Central Nebraska Community Services maintains approximately 36 rental units throughout eight communities within the CNCS service area. This grant allowed for 24 of the rental properties to receive maintenance and repairs vital to protecting these valuable assets within our local communities.

This was the first rehab that many of these homes have received since being built in 1994. The improvements include: New windows, roofs, and water heaters. The upgrading and any necessary dirt work for new central heating and cooling systems and two homes also were provided new driveways.

The reaction of current occupants has been nothing less than humbled gratitude. Many of the families, who live in CNCS rental properties, have done so for many years. The upgrades which were performed have the same value as if these families owned the houses themselves. The homes have also increased in energy efficiency with energy star rated materials being installed. Not only do the homes look better but they also function better for the families by reducing the burden of heating & cooling costs.



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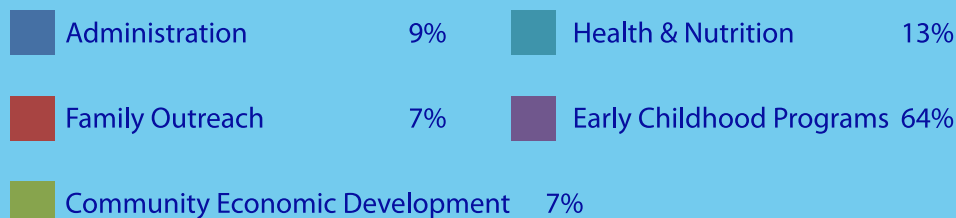
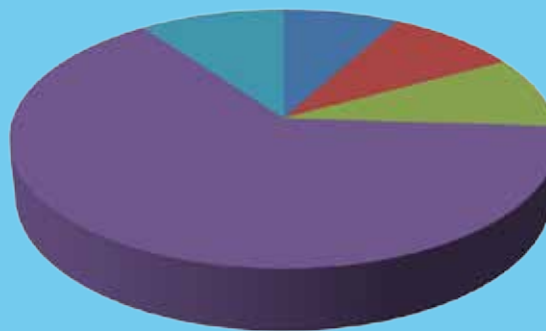
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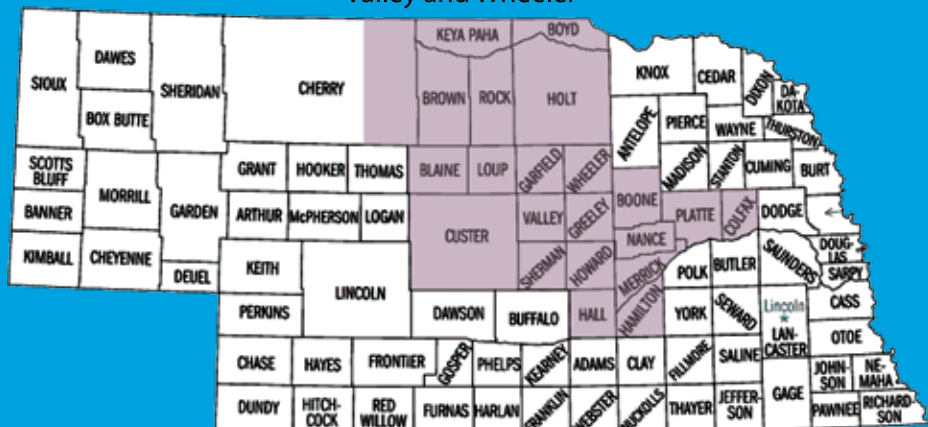
CORE PROGRAMS AND FUNDING AMOUNTS



TOTAL AGENCY FUNDING FOR 2014 \$11,378,633

CNCS SERVES 21 COUNTIES IN NORTH CENTRAL NEBRASKA:

Blaine, Boone, Boyd, Brown, Colfax, Custer, Garfield, Greeley, Hall, Hamilton, Holt, Howard, Keya Paha, Loup, Merrick, Nance, Platte, Rock, Sherman, Valley and Wheeler



CNCS ADMINISTERS 49 PUBLIC & PRIVATE GRANT CONTRACTS THAT SUPPORTS 60 VARIOUS PROGRAMS.

CNCS TAKES PRIDE IN ITS PROGRAMMATIC & FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY OF MULTIPLE AND DIVERSE FEDERAL, STATE, LOCAL AND PRIVATE DOLLARS.

SINCE OUR INCEPTION IN 1965, THE AGENCY'S BUDGET HAS GROWN FROM \$23,000 TO NEARLY \$12 MILLION PRESENTLY, EMPLOYING 220+ EMPLOYEES.