



# YEAR IN REVIEW 2023-2024





### From the Editor

This report is for the fiscal year ended January 31, 2024. Unless otherwise noted, service totals, statistics, and outcomes are for the period February 1, 2023, through January 31, 2024.

### Electronic Copies

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### Information

Visit our website at [www.swgacac.com](http://www.swgacac.com) or our facebook page for more information about Southwest Georgia Community Action Council, Inc. including informational brochures, current events, employment opportunities, electronic correspondence, and links to valuable resources.

### Member:

- Georgia Community Action Association [www.georgiacaa.org](http://www.georgiacaa.org)
- National Community Action Partnership [www.communityactionpartnership.com](http://www.communityactionpartnership.com)
- National Community Action Foundation [www.ncaf.org](http://www.ncaf.org)

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# HELPING PEOPLE HELP THEMSELVES . . .

On September 27, 1965, Southwest Georgia Community Action Council, Inc. (CAC) was chartered, making the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 a reality in Southwest Georgia by helping socially and economically disadvantaged persons help themselves through a variety of services.

Emerging from a group of concerned Colquitt County citizens acting as an interagency council, support was solicited from the local community while Dr. Adeline Barber investigated the possibilities of accessing President Lyndon Johnson's "Great Society" programs being made available to communities. Eventually Commander Robert J. Clinton, a retired naval officer, agreed to chair the group and seek funding from the newly created Office of Economic Opportunity.

Working through the then Area Planning and Development Commission (APDC) in Camilla that received the original funding, Commander Clinton was hired full-time during the summer of 1965. APDC eventually spun the program off, and CAC was chartered to serve the Southwest Georgia area with the corporate office in Moultrie and Commander Clinton serving as Executive Director.

The first program funded was an ongoing Child Care Program, with the first Child Care Center opening in January of 1966. June of that year saw the opening of the Agency's first Neighborhood Service Center.

Growing out of the dreams of a diverse group of visionary citizens with a sincere concern for the well-being of their community, CAC is a charitable private non-profit organization as designated by the IRS that now employs approximately 550 individuals and serves 21 counties through an annual budget in excess of \$40 million.

Core administrative funding for the Agency is the federally appropriated *Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)*. Additional funding comes from public and private grants acquired through competitive application submissions, contracts, local partnerships, fund-raisers, and donations. Services are provided through a network of 11 Neighborhood Service Centers and 21 Child Development Centers.

A Chief Executive Officer is employed by the Board of Directors and is responsible for securing and maintaining adequate funding streams, directing daily operations, and ensuring that accountability for services is maintained. Board oversight ensures that all counties in the service area have equal opportunity for their voice to be heard.

Three major service categories define the array of services provided by the Agency: Community Services, Housing and Energy, and Child Development. The Agency stands prepared to respond in a timely and effective manner to ongoing needs within the community and in crisis situations such as natural disasters. The combination of non-profit status, experience in administering a variety of service programs, long standing relations with federal and state funding sources, and ongoing community partnerships enables the Agency to quickly mobilize resources to help those most in need.

At Southwest Georgia Community Action Council, Helping People Help Themselves is more than a motto — for almost 60 years it has been a way of life!

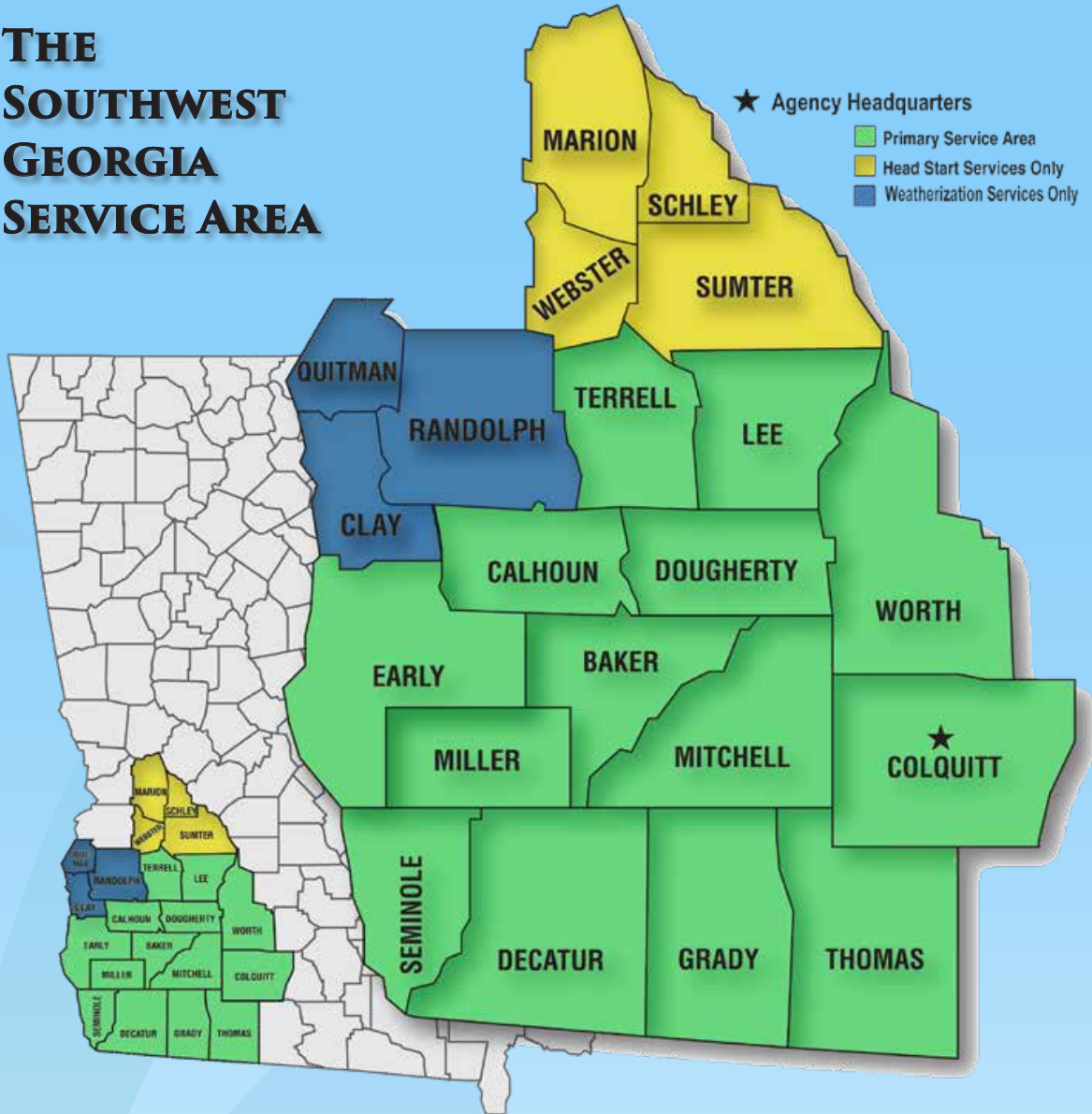
## OUR MISSION . . .

. . . to Collaborate with Community Partners to Provide Low-income Individuals Comprehensive Services that Promote Life-long Economic Security and Self-sufficiency.

## OUR VISION . . .

. . . for All Families in Southwest Georgia to be Self-sufficient.

# THE SOUTHWEST GEORGIA SERVICE AREA



Primary Service Area	14 Counties
Weatherization Service Area	17 Counties
Head Start Service Area	18 Counties
14 County Population	346,980
17 County Population	358,190
18 County Population	390,130

Corporate Headquarters	Moultrie, Georgia
Service Sites:	
Neighborhood Service Centers	11 Locations
Child Development Centers	21 Locations

**Did You Know?**  
An annual unduplicated total of approximately  
**30,000**  
**Southwest Georgians**  
**- 1 in 13 persons -**  
are provided direct services by the Agency.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Heritage .....	Inside Cover
Mission.....	Inside Cover
Vision .....	Inside Cover
Service Area .....	3
From The CEO.....	5
From The Chair .....	6
Board Of Directors.....	7
Executive Management Team .....	8
Organization Chart.....	9
Community Services .....	10
Housing & Energy .....	14
Head Start/Early Head Start.....	17
Funding Analysis.....	24
Directory of Service Sites (Neighborhood Service Centers).....	26
Directory of Service Sites (Child Development Centers).....	27

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## Remember . . .

*As we express our gratitude, we must never forget  
that the highest appreciation is not to utter words,  
but to live by them.*

-John F. Kennedy

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# FROM THE CEO

Greetings:

It's my pleasure to present this report detailing our activities and accomplishments for the fiscal year ended January 31, 2024.

I'm always amazed at what our board, staff, and community partners are able to accomplish each year by working together to carry out our mission. This year was no different as we attained exemplary outcomes across all departments.

While we have struggled to reach full enrollment in Head Start and Early Head Start in the post-pandemic environment, we are extremely proud of the impressive gains that children in our program have demonstrated across all domains of measurement. We will continue to prepare children for success and work diligently to attain full enrollment.

We continue to make a significant impact on affordable housing. Funding through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law has provided a tremendous opportunity for us to make an even more significant impact with our weatherization efforts. As a result, our weatherization program weatherized almost 200 homes last year. These homes are now more energy efficient with lower utility bills and a higher level of comfort and safety for occupants.

Our Senior Nutrition lunch meal service in Colquitt County shifted exclusively to a home delivery program. While we no longer offer a congregate option, the shift to home delivery enabled us to increase service operation from four to five days per week. We are thankful for the supplemental funding support of United Way of Colquitt County to help maintain this vital service for the homebound in Colquitt County.

As you might imagine, these are challenging times in which to operate as a non-profit. Threats of government shutdowns and political bickering make for stressful times when most of our budget is dependent on federal grant funding. Moreover, like most businesses we have struggled to recruit and retain qualified employees. I'm thankful to our board for their support of our efforts to create more value for our employees by making salaries more competitive and enhancing what was already a very competitive fringe benefits package.

While our Agency has a rich tradition of excellence, we must keep looking forward and consider new and innovative approaches that keep pace with the changing needs of those who seek assistance in climbing out of poverty to a new life of economic security and self-sufficiency. To this end, our executive management team and board worked tirelessly throughout the year to develop a new strategic plan that was approved at our January 2024 board meeting. This plan is aggressive, yet realistic with the commitment of our board and staff and the support of our community.

I look forward to working further with our board, funders, and partners to expand our impact in Southwest Georgia. Please join with us as we fulfill the Community Action promise.

Sincerely,



Randy Weldon  
Chief Executive Officer



**Randy Weldon,**  
**Chief Executive**  
**Officer**

*In the middle of every difficulty,  
lies opportunity.*

-Albert Einstein

# FROM THE CHAIR



**Raimond Burley,  
Board Chair**

Dear Friends:

I'm proud to serve as the chair of this Agency's board of directors and am equally proud of the work we do and the accomplishments that are documented in this report.

The current environment in which we operate provides many challenges, but those challenges also offer opportunities for us to make a lasting difference in the lives of those who come to us seeking assistance in escaping poverty. While we have helped many escape the grip of poverty, many remain who need our help. We ask for your support as we strive to help those who are willing to help themselves.

As we work diligently to assist families who reach for a higher level of economic security and self-worth, the challenge of securing adequate funding resources is always before us. We accept this challenge and remain committed to acquiring adequate resources to provide crucial services for our clients.

The staff and board members of this Agency strive for excellence in all that we do. It is this commitment to excellence that provides the foundation for the impressive accomplishments outlined in this report. I extend my heartfelt thanks to each staff person and board member for a job well done.

I ask you to join with us to accept the challenge to make the coming year the most successful one yet in the history of this Agency.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Raimond Burley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Raimond Burley  
Chairman  
Board of Directors

*Diligence is the mother of good  
luck.*

-Benjamin Franklin

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

as of January 31, 2024

**Raimond Burley**  
Mitchell County (Chair)

**Brenda Scott**  
Calhoun County (Vice Chair)

**Sherrell Byrd**  
Dougherty County (Secretary)

**Richard Edwards**  
Colquitt County (Treasurer)

---

**Darrell Alexander**  
Early County

**Linda Burney-Henry**  
Decatur County

**LaFaye Copeland**  
Grady County

**Phillip Corker**  
Grady County

**Tyler Harris**  
Dougherty County

**Marybell Hernandez**  
Colquitt County

**Johnny Jackson**  
Mitchell County

**Patricia James**  
Lee County

**Rita James**  
Early County

**Fernando Johnson**  
Early County

**Ruth Lewis**  
Terrell County

**Ethel Lovett**  
Calhoun County

**Craig Moore\***  
Mitchell County

**Shelba Sellers**  
Thomas County

**Evelyn Severson**  
Decatur County

**Bernetta Sweet**  
Dougherty County

**Charlie Williams**  
Calhoun County

**Claven Williams\*\***  
Worth County

**Thawanna Woodson**  
Seminole County

**David Stone**  
Ex-Officio (Colquitt County)

**James R. Yates**  
Ex-Officio (Colquitt County)

**Danielle White**  
Ex-Officio (Policy Council)

\* Executive Committee Member At-Large

\*\* Policy Council Liaison

## Public, Private, Low-Income: Working Together to Make a Difference!

### The Tripartite Board

Agency bylaws dictate that a tripartite board of directors comprised of representation from the low-income, public, and private sectors of the 14-county primary service area provide oversight. Board oversight is crucial to maintaining the foundation for and focus on accountability -- both fiscal and programmatic. We are thankful for the dedicated service and diverse areas of expertise that the board provides to keep the Agency focused on meeting the most pertinent needs of the low-income population throughout the service area.

### Board Meetings

Board meetings are held at the Agency Headquarters in Moultrie at 6:30 p.m. on the fourth Tuesday in the months of January, March, May, July, September, and November.



Board members pose with CEO Randy Weldon holding their perfect attendance certificates awarded for attending all board meetings held during 2023. Those pictured include: (l-r) Weldon, Sherrell Byrd, Bernetta Sweet, Raimond Burley, Charlie Williams, Johnny Jackson, Claven Williams. Not pictured: LaFaye Copeland and Rita James.

# EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM



**Randy Weldon**  
Chief Executive Officer



**Beverly Holloway**  
Deputy Director/  
Comptroller



**Ann Hires**  
Planner



**Scott Smith**  
Human Resources Director



**India Williams**  
Community Services  
Director



**Lynn Zito**  
Assistant Comptroller



**Yolanda Daniels**  
Head Start/Early Head Start  
Director



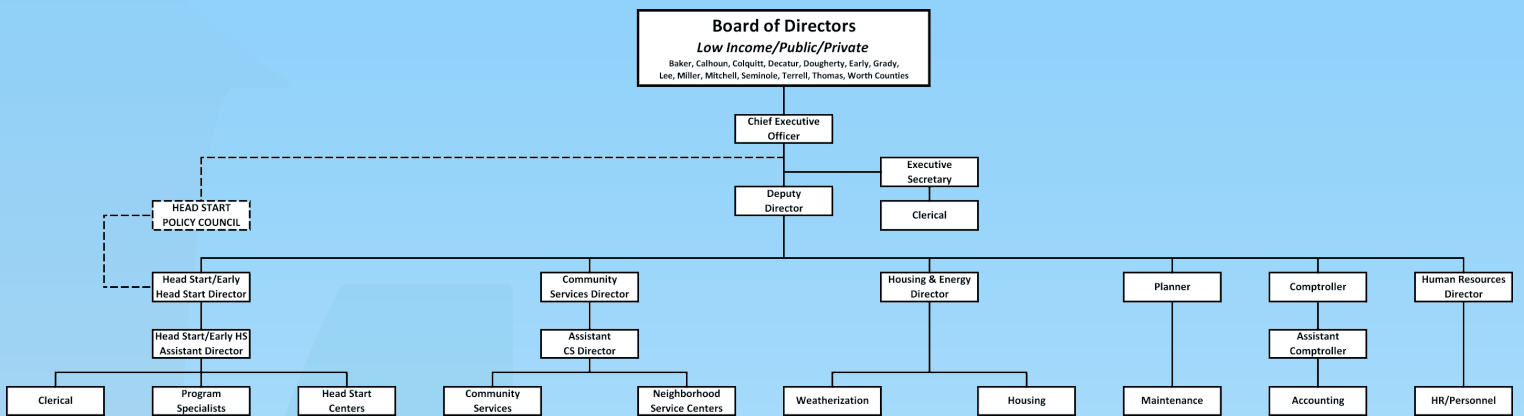
**Lykesa Bridges**  
Head Start/Early Head Start  
Assistant Director



**Dusniel Alvarez**  
Housing & Energy  
Director



# ORGANIZATION CHART

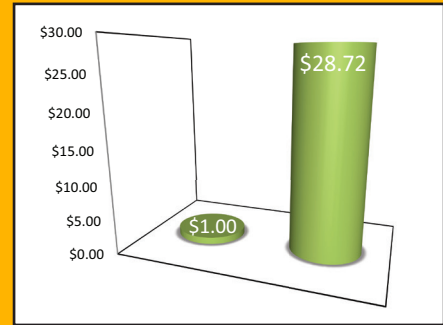


# COMMUNITY SERVICES

## CSBG Adds Resources to the Community

Per the National Association for State Community Services Programs (NASCSPP), the CSBG network leveraged \$3.83 from state, local, and private sources for every dollar of CSBG funding. Leverage included \$1.61 from state sources, \$0.86 from local sources, \$1.36 from private sources, and volunteer hours valued at \$0.12. Including all federal sources, the CSBG network leveraged \$13.70 for every dollar of CSBG funding. In comparison, the CSBG network in Georgia leveraged \$10.28 for every dollar of CSBG funding.

The results for SWGACAC were even more significant. Local CSBG funding of \$1,320,782 leveraged more than \$37.9 million! That equates to leverage of \$28.72 per dollar of CSBG funding.



**Community Partnerships** • We enjoy partnering with other community organizations and worthy causes to sponsor events and help people connect to the benefits and resources they need. Examples include our partnership with HEARTS for Families in their Teen Empowerment Expo and the Georgia Department of Labor in their job fairs for veterans.

## We're Ready in Times of Need

The Agency stands poised when needed to respond to natural disasters such as tornadoes, floods, and hurricanes. We take pride in being a part of the local disaster recovery network and work hand-in-hand with state and local relief organizers such as American Red Cross and GEMA to quickly secure resources, provide recovery assistance, disseminate information, and make appropriate referrals. In times of disaster we have provided assistance ranging from major home repairs to necessities such as utility and rent deposits, toiletries, food, and clothing vouchers.

**Emergency Services** • Emergency services are provided to assist with payment of rent, mortgage, utility bills, and deposits; purchase of food; and provision of shelter in situations that prevent cut-offs, minimize malnutrition, circumvent incidents of eviction, and re-house homeless families.

We utilize a variety of funding sources to provide as many service options as possible to meet the needs of those who find themselves in emergency situations due to circumstances beyond their control. Intake staff also conduct a comprehensive assessment on all clients and offer progressive case management services designed to assist clients in identifying and meeting goals to improve their level of self-sufficiency and minimize the likelihood of recurring emergency needs. The chart below provides a summary of services provided by funding source.

Funding Source	Benefits	Households Served	Clients Served
Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)	\$142,123.88	253	453
Emergency Food & Shelter (FEMA)	\$38,091.26	92	233
Emergency Food & Shelter (FEMA) American Rescue Plan Act	\$16,024.44	43	55
Emergency Relief Fund (Colquitt County)	\$71,935.59	284	639
Emergency Solutions Grant - Hotel/Motel Vouchers (HUD)	\$17,173.95	31	59
Project HOPE (City of Albany)	\$14,553.74	50	121
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$299,902.86</b>	<b>753</b>	<b>1,560</b>

# HELPING PEOPLE. CHANGING LIVES.

**LIHEAP** • The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) assists low-income families in offsetting the increased cost of energy for winter home heating. Families may receive assistance once each winter, and priority is given to households comprised entirely of those who are homebound or age 65 and above. Funding is also set aside for those with life threatening medical conditions. A portion of LIHEAP funding is designated for cooling assistance to offset the increase in utility bills due to the hot summer temperatures. The federal government also provided supplemental LIHEAP funding under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

LIHEAP provides the following benefits within our community:

- circumvents cut-off of heating and cooling utility sources for homebound, elderly, and low-income households
- reduces incidents of health problems attributable to winter cold/summer heat
- enables elderly and those with life threatening medical conditions to maintain independence, while preserving peace of mind
- stimulates the local economy through funds put into circulation for the payment of heating and cooling bills — *more than \$6.25 million last year!*
- helps keep heating and cooling costs for the general public from rising by reducing billing write-offs for heating and cooling utility providers



## Making an Impact . . .

**11,160**  
**Households**

(approximately 26,000 individuals) were assisted through the 2023-24 LIHEAP funding cycle.

More than three in four LIHEAP recipient households in Georgia have at least one vulnerable person. Two in three are elderly. More than one in three are disabled.

**LIHWAP** • The Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) provides financial assistance on behalf of low-income families to pay drinking and wastewater bills. Only clients of participating public home drinking/wastewater suppliers qualify for assistance. LIHWAP benefit amounts are based on household size and income and also cover arrearages and past due bills.

County	Heating Benefits Expended	Heating Households Served	ARPA/BIL Benefits Expended	ARPA/BIL Households Served	Cooling Benefits Expended	Cooling Households Served	LIHWAP Benefits Expended	LIHWAP Households Served
Baker	\$23,590	51	\$4,200	9	\$23,700	48	\$4,280	14
Calhoun	\$41,780	91	\$15,215	32	\$41,700	84	\$22,304	56
Colquitt	\$364,520	818	\$164,599	357	\$393,100	821	\$191,964	567
Decatur	\$196,660	437	\$79,579	172	\$213,350	439	\$96,709	274
Dougherty	\$825,777	1,796	\$302,921	660	\$777,350	1,609	\$336,481	987
Early	\$96,980	214	\$41,727	87	\$111,750	227	\$47,887	141
Grady	\$180,110	402	\$72,645	156	\$198,050	405	\$75,494	229
Lee	\$59,860	137	\$35,347	76	\$65,500	136	\$40,002	121
Miller	\$41,910	92	\$44,750	95	\$48,300	99	\$30,091	81
Mitchell	\$165,910	369	\$57,695	123	\$196,600	400	\$74,848	224
Seminole	\$66,640	149	\$23,677	52	\$64,750	133	\$34,678	106
Terrell	\$88,470	190	\$34,989	74	\$99,500	202	\$44,055	147
Thomas	\$283,610	645	\$115,694	253	\$301,900	630	\$145,026	426
Worth	\$112,840	244	\$39,369	85	\$143,100	292	\$57,577	178
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,548,657</b>	<b>5,635</b>	<b>\$1,032,407</b>	<b>2,231</b>	<b>\$2,678,650</b>	<b>5,525</b>	<b>\$1,201,396</b>	<b>3,551</b>

# COMMUNITY SERVICES

**Senior Nutrition Program** • This is a popular service that provides hot, nutritious lunches in Colquitt County to those who are eligible based on need and age. Primary funding is provided by the *Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)*. Supplemental funding provided by United Way of Colquitt County lends financial stability for the service. A significant change was made to the program in the fall of 2023 as the decision was made to purchase meals rather than prepare meals in-house and shift exclusively to a home delivery service targeting homebound individuals. This change also enabled us to add a day to the weekly service schedule. Lunches are now provided Monday - Friday.

## Senior Nutrition Highlights

- Service Method: Home Delivery
- Service is provided Monday through Friday

**97** Average Number of Meals Served Per Day  
**20,290** Total Meals Served

## Benefits of the Senior Nutrition Program

- Ensures that seniors receive at least one hot nutritious meal per day
- Provides social interaction to avoid isolation
- Helps seniors maintain their independence for peace of mind
- Provides the opportunity for trained delivery personnel to detect hazardous living conditions such as fire hazards and the need for hand rails, step repairs, etc.
- Provides the opportunity to visibly detect deteriorating health conditions requiring medical attention, ask if clients have been taking proper medication, see if a person has fallen, etc.



*For many clients who are no longer able to cook for themselves, this service allows them to remain living at home.*

—India Williams  
Community Services Director

**Calhoun County Food Distribution** • Food insecurity is a pervasive issue among the low-income population in Southwest Georgia. Our Calhoun County Neighborhood Service Center partners with Feeding the Valley Food Bank to serve as a food distribution site in Calhoun County. Distributions are held monthly and include USDA surplus food items as well as a variety of supplemental food and household items. Distributions typically serve 100 households.

**Toys for Tots** • Two Neighborhood Service Centers -- Colquitt and Mitchell/Baker -- participated in the Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots initiative. This was the second year for Colquitt and the seventh year that Mitchell/Baker helped bring the program to their counties. More than 4,000 new toys were distributed to 1,453 children in Mitchell County alone in 2023.

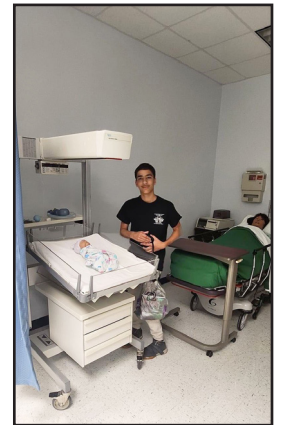
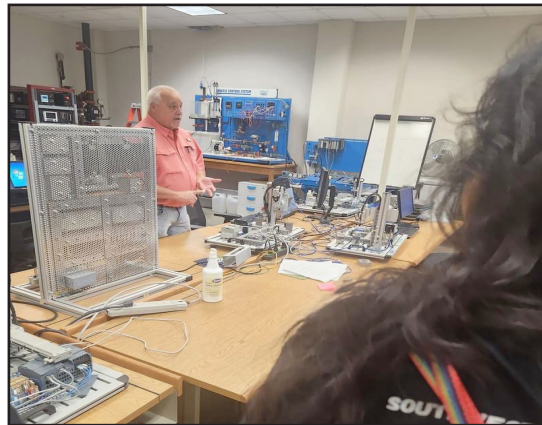
This is an initiative that we look forward to assisting with each year. We are proud to partner with Toys for Tots, Albany Marine Corps Logistics Base, and numerous businesses, civic organizations, and volunteers to distribute toys and bring joy to underprivileged children during the Christmas season. We look forward to expanding our involvement in the years ahead.



# HELPING PEOPLE. CHANGING LIVES.

**Robert J. Clinton Summer Youth Enrichment Summit (YES!)** • Named after the Agency's original CEO, the Robert J. Clinton Summer Youth Enrichment Summit (YES!) is a series of regional week-long summer enrichment camps targeted at youth ages 12-14. Youth who attend benefit from experiences made possible by public donations, local fundraisers, business community sponsorship, and competitive grant awards. Participants complete a pre- and post-survey to measure gains and demonstrate outcomes.

The purpose of YES! is to provide youth a summer day camp with the opportunity for experiences to enrich, empower, and inspire them to reach their full potential as students and citizens. YES! provides a well-rounded slate of hands-on activities, community service projects, and educational field trips based on the STEAM model that focuses on science, technology, engineering, art & agriculture, and math & money management. YES! sites for 2023 included Bainbridge, Blakely, Camilla, and Moultrie with participants coming from throughout the Agency's 14-county primary service area. We are extremely proud to offer this innovative summer experience and are equally proud of the 81 youth participants for 2023!



## You Can Help!

Tax-deductible contributions to benefit the Robert J. Clinton Youth Enrichment Summit are accepted year-round. The *Going for the Green Golf Tournament* is also held each spring. We encourage you to contact the Agency at 229-985-3610 or 800-642-3384 today to become a part of the team!



# HOUSING & ENERGY

**H**ousing and Energy (H&E) programs are designed to provide housing repairs with a focus on energy conservation. Reduced energy loss, which yields lower home fuel/utility costs, is achieved by preventing infiltration of the elements through measures such as insulation, sealing with two-part foam, caulking, and minor home repairs. Other programs are designed to assist with repair of deteriorating housing conditions, including major renovation of homes. All services are dependent on funding source guidelines such as various homeownership requirements and income eligibility.

**Weatherization** • Weatherization activities include housing renovation measures that reduce energy use for homeowners or renters. Our objective is to reduce home air leakage, thereby reducing energy loss and ultimately energy cost. Funding amounts are determined by *Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (GEFA)* and are based on population and income standards for the service area.

## Green is Our Favorite Color!

- Weatherization returns **\$4.50** to households and society for every dollar invested including **\$2.78** in non-energy benefits.
- The average annual home utility bill **savings is \$372** or more depending on the housing type, location, and fuel source.
- The average household's out of pocket medical expenses decrease by **\$514** per year after weatherization.
- Total **health & household related benefits** for each weatherized unit are **\$14,148**.
- Weatherization **benefits communities** by providing **safer** and more **energy efficient** housing stock and **increased economic activity**.

A Weatherization Auditor assesses each housing unit to determine the energy measures that will result in the greatest savings for each client. This technical assessment is a complete energy audit which serves as a guide for the weatherization field staff. Weatherization field staff are responsible for conducting diagnostic tests on each housing unit, utilizing what is referred to as "blower door" equipment to pinpoint air leakage and determine the total amount of air leakage that must be sealed to help reduce costs resulting from energy loss.

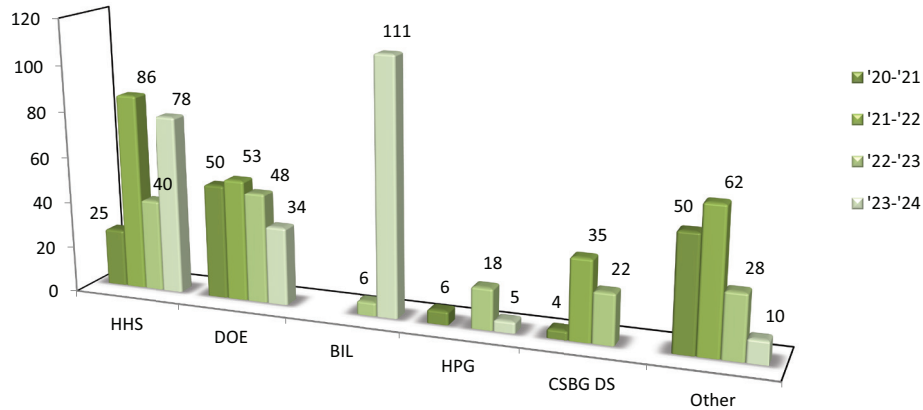
Indoor air quality that promotes a "healthy" home is also a weatherization focus. Air quality measures such as vented stove hoods, bathroom exhaust fans, and whole house energy recovery ventilators (ERVs) are now required. Health and safety measures are a top priority and include installation of smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.



U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) requires that all tasks performed on homes meet the specifications, objectives, and desired outcomes outlined in the Standard Work Specifications (SWS). We must meet technical requirements for field work including audits/testing, installation of energy conservation measures, health and safety, incidental repairs and final inspection. In order for a home to be reported as a completed unit it must receive a final inspection by a certified Quality Control Inspector (QCI) who ensures that all work meets the minimum specifications outlined by the SWS.

# HOUSING & ENERGY

## Housing Jobs Completed by Program Funding Source\*



\* Weatherization funding sources include U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). Additional weatherization funding is provided by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) funded through DOE. HPG is USDA Rural Development's Housing Preservation Grant. CSBG DS is Community Services Block Grant Disaster Supplemental (Hurricane Michael). *Other* includes weatherization, preservation, and repair funding provided through American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) in '21-'22 and '22-'23; CSBG CARES Act in '20-'21 and '21-'22; Truist Foundation in '20-'21; The Richard C. Munroe Foundation in '20-'21; and anonymous donations. HPG funding awarded for '21-'22 was delayed due to reorganization within USDA and the pandemic.



**Making an Impact . . .**

*Thank you . . . for assisting me . . . so (that) my home can stay cool for these very hot days.*

-Duncan Family  
Smithville, Georgia

A Weatherization Technician utilizes "Blower Door" equipment (top left) to pinpoint energy loss and identify where to focus weatherization efforts. Technicians seal attic areas using two-part foam to prevent energy loss (top middle). A technician installs baffles for soffit vents (top right). Attic sealing and duct sealing and repair have already taken place, while attic insulation is ready to be blown in (bottom left). Completed work is ready for final inspection (bottom right).

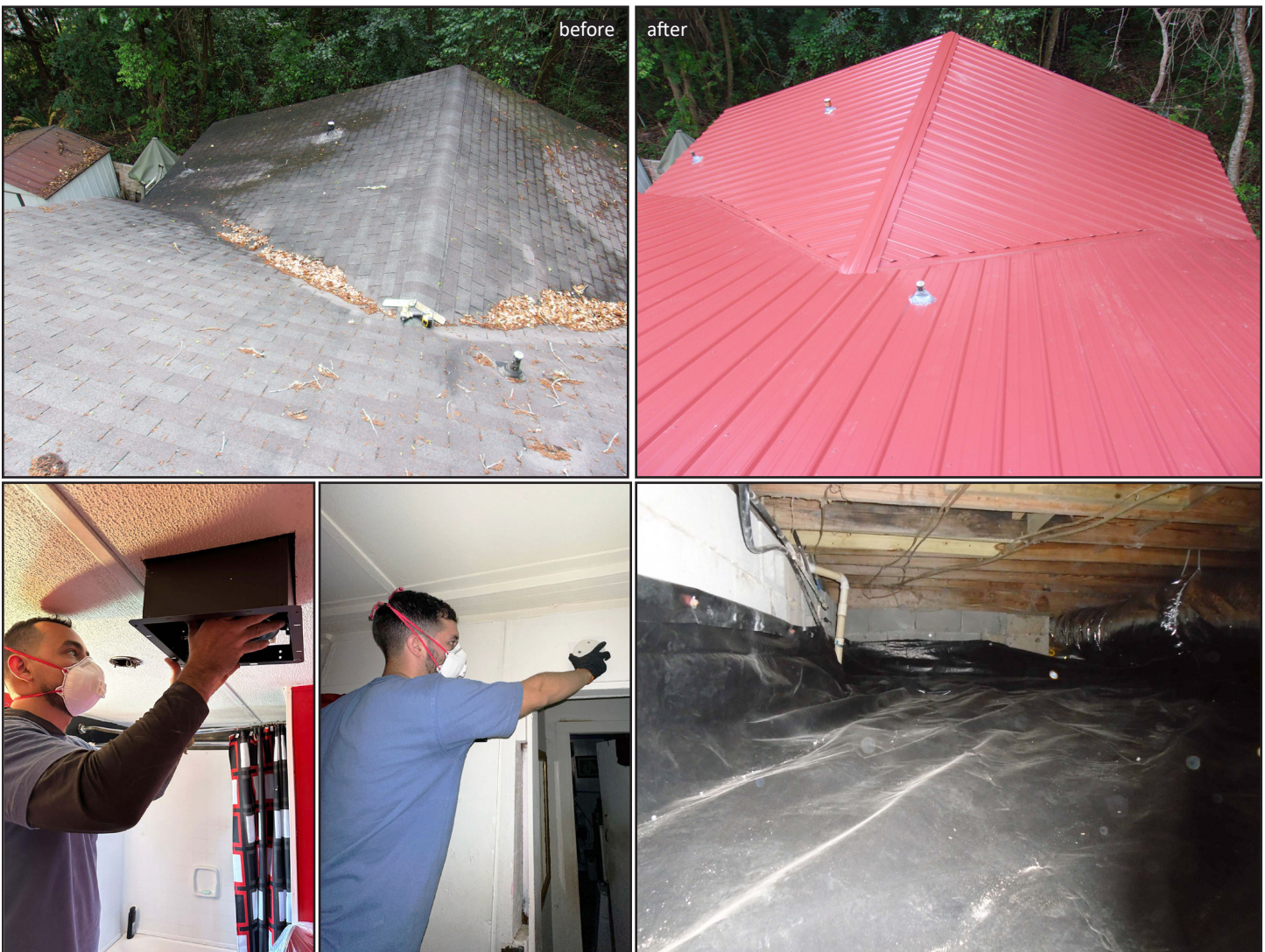
# HOUSING & ENERGY

**Preservation & Repair Services** • The Housing Preservation Grant (HPG) program, funded by *Rural Housing Service of the United States Department of Agriculture*, provides the Agency a perfect complement to weatherization services. The purpose of this program is to preserve existing housing by removing or repairing substandard conditions. Combining resources from HPG and weatherization programs strengthen our ability to provide needed assistance on the “whole” house, as HPG can provide services that go beyond weatherization measures to include upgrades to the structural integrity of homes.



**Collaborative Housing Ventures** • We partner with many social service organizations, government entities, and community-based groups to exchange referrals and leverage funding to expand our capacity to meet housing needs and increase housing options for the clients we serve. Examples include partnerships with Southwest Georgia Regional Commission, USDA Rural Development 504 Loan Program, Truist Foundation, Georgia Watch, and various local community foundations.

**Housing Preservation Grant**  
HPG provides funds to remove or repair substandard conditions in low-income owner occupied homes of primarily the elderly and handicapped.





# HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START

Head Start/Early Head Start is a comprehensive child development program designed for children prenatal to age five. Head Start is funded by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) through the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) Office of Head Start (OHS). The Agency first became a Head Start grantee in 1965. Now one of the largest grantees in Georgia, CAC is authorized to provide Head Start services for 18 counties to 1,601 preschool children and families. Early Head Start services are provided to 327 infants, toddlers, and pregnant women for a combined Head Start and Early Head Start authorization of 1,928 enrollment slots.

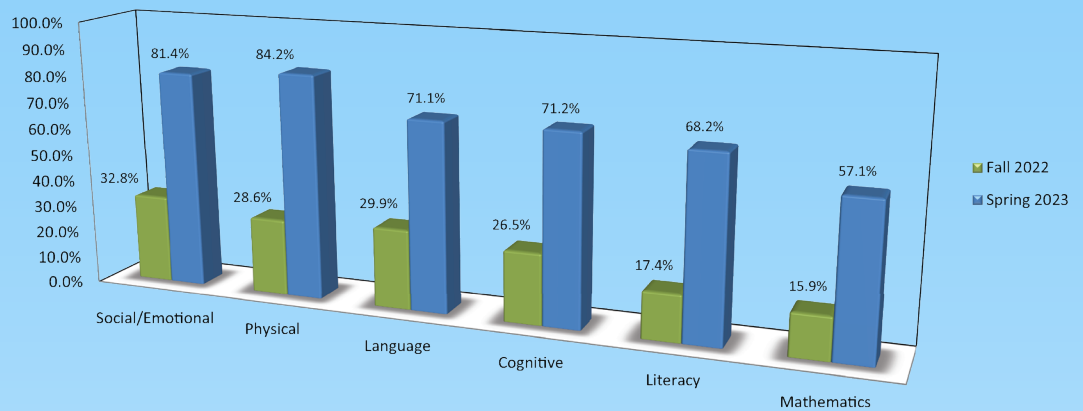


Head Start/Early Head Start services are provided through a network of 21 Child Development Centers (CDCs). (See page 27 for contact information.)

Unless noted otherwise, information provided is for the 2022-2023 school year.



Percentage of Four-Year-Olds Meeting Readiness Benchmark



Growth reports for children served by the Agency's Head Start/Early Head Start Program indicate that children made significant progress among the six domains of measurement. Children are usually assessed in the fall, winter, and spring of the school year. The graph above shows the gains from the fall assessment to the spring assessment by indicating the percentage of four-year-olds who met the readiness benchmark for each domain. These gains provide proof that Head Start is a worthwhile investment in Southwest Georgia!

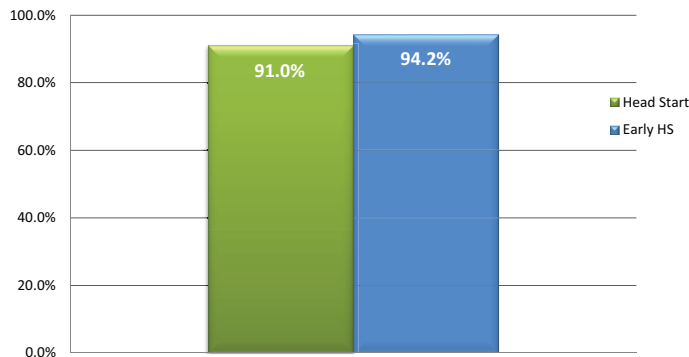
**Program Operation** • CAC operates a full year, full day, center based option in which Head Start children attend the program 6.5 hours per day for a minimum of 1,020 hours annually while Early Head Start children attend 7 hours per day for a minimum of 1,380 hours annually as required by Federal Head Start Program Performance Standards. CDC calendars are based on local public school system calendars as much as possible.

**Performance Standards and Accountability** • Extensive accountability measures continuously track our success in meeting Program Performance Standards. Financial and narrative progress reports are submitted to ACF throughout the year, while a Performance Information Report (PIR) is submitted annually and covers multiple measures of performance required by the Performance Standards. We also conduct an annual Self Assessment to review outcomes for the year. Furthermore, our program undergoes regularly scheduled intensive on-site federal reviews where a team of specialists validates compliance with the Performance Standards.

**Day Care Licensing** • Day care licensing is not required for traditional Head Start services. However, we maintain licensing for all CDCs. Licensing affords us the option of one day providing after-school and extended day services among other benefits. Additionally, each center participates in State rating through Quality Rated Child Care. Licensing and Quality Rating validate the quality of services provided at each site. As of January 31, 2024, seventeen (17) centers are rated with two (2) or three (3) star ratings, and three (3) centers are at various points in the ratings process. One center must complete the licensing process due to relocation to a new facility before the Quality Rating process can be initiated.

# HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START

**Average Monthly Enrollment**  
(As a Percentage of Funded Enrollment)



## Total Number of Children and Families Served: 2,298

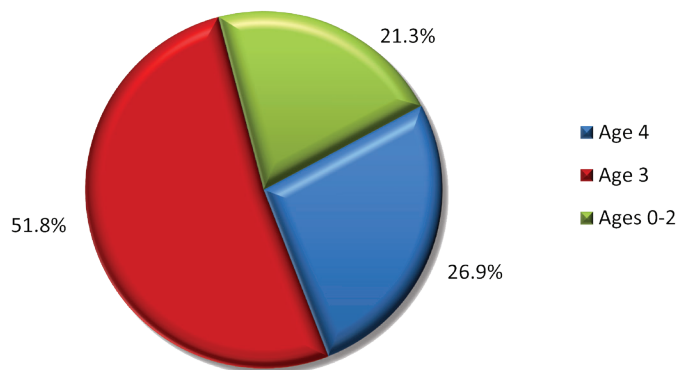
*This total includes 12 pregnant women and includes children and families that entered and exited the program prior to the end of the school year.*

**Percentage of Eligible Children Served:** The Agency's community assessment indicates that there are approximately **3,290** children ages three and four and **4,652** children under age three who reside in the Head Start service area and are **income eligible** for Head Start/Early Head Start.

Head Start served **1,840** eligible children (**55.9%**) and Early Head Start served **420** eligible children (**9.0%**) for a combined percentage of **28.5%**.

*Another 38 children whose family incomes fall between 100% and 130% of the federal poverty line were served in accordance with Head Start guidelines.*

## Percentage of Cumulative Enrollment by Age\*



*\* does not include the enrollment of 12 pregnant women*

**Head Start is . . .** a federally funded comprehensive child development program that has served low-income children and their families since 1965. Head Start programs serve children in families earning income at or below the federal poverty level.

Head Start actually consists of two programs: Head Start (serving families with children ages three and four) and Early Head Start (serving infants and toddlers under the age of three, pregnant women, and their families).

Funding goes directly from the federal government to local grantees. The federal government provides 80 percent of the annual cost to operate the program, and the remaining 20 percent must be generated locally. This non-federal share may be in the form of monetary contributions, donations of goods or services, or volunteer hours.

Go to [www.nhsa.org](http://www.nhsa.org) to find out more about the impressive benefits of Head Start and Early Head Start services.

**The Role of the Policy Council . . .** In accordance with Head Start requirements, we maintain a formal structure of shared governance through which parents of children enrolled in the program participate in policy-making and decisions about our program. The Policy Council works in partnership with key management staff of the Agency and is comprised of 51% parents and 49% community representatives.

# HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START

**Education** • We provide children with activities that help them develop cognitively, socially, emotionally and physically. The preschool (Head Start) and infant/toddler (Early Head Start) programs use *Learn Every Day*, *The Preschool Curriculum* which is enhanced with *Imagine It!*, *Second Step* social/emotional curriculum materials, and *Rhyme-A-Week* phonological awareness program. Services provided to expecting families include prenatal and postnatal education home visits and group socialization activities. All families have the opportunity to participate in monthly workshops and a *Nurturing Parenting* program curriculum.

Preschool children are screened upon entry into the program in the areas of motor skills, language and concepts. The *Brigance Head Start Screen III* instrument is used for this purpose. Infants and toddlers are screened annually using the *Brigance Early Head Start Screen*. Ongoing assessment of each child continues throughout the year using checklists and the *Teaching Strategies GOLD* assessment instrument.

Our goal from birth to age five is to introduce the children to age appropriate skill sets and experiences that will prepare them to succeed in public school. We provide transition activities for children and parents that include field trips to kindergarten, workshops on requirements for kindergarten registration and kindergarten expectations, and a transition packet of activities for each child and parent.

## **School Readiness Goals**

*We have developed a set of school readiness goals that are aligned with Teaching Strategies GOLD, the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (HSELOF) Birth to Five, and the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS). These include objectives for language development and literacy, cognition and general knowledge, well-being and motor development, social and emotional development, and approaches toward learning.*

### **Language Development & Literacy**

- Children will comprehend and use increasingly complex and varied vocabulary for conversation and communication.
- Children will develop age appropriate literacy knowledge and skills through experiences with phonological awareness, letter knowledge, book and print knowledge, and early writing concepts.
- Children will maintain proficiency in their primary language while making progress in understanding and using English.

### **Cognition & General Knowledge**

- Children will develop age appropriate math awareness through experiences with number and quantity, geometry and spatial thinking, measurement and comparison, and algebraic thinking concepts.
- Children will develop problem solving skills through observation, discovery, and the exploration of their natural world.

### **Well-Being & Motor Development**

- Children will practice safe habits and healthy behaviors.
- Children will develop control, strength, and physical coordination through age appropriate fine motor and gross motor activities.

### **Social & Emotional Development**

- Children will develop positive relationships with adults and peers.
- Children will develop positive self-awareness and self-confidence.
- Children will develop the ability to manage behavior and emotions with increasing independence within the context of daily routines and group experiences.
- Children will develop an understanding of self related to family and community.

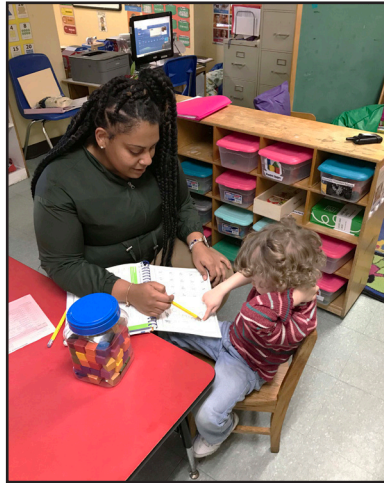
### **Approaches Toward Learning**

- Children will develop creativity and imagination through music, movement, drama, and art.
- Children will engage in a variety of experiences in order to promote curiosity, initiative, and a love of learning.
- Children will develop the ability to show self-direction, persistence and flexibility in actions and behavior, and be able to sustain focus and attention in completing tasks.

**Emergent & Family Literacy** • Emergent and family literacy is a priority for Head Start. Programs and special events such as *Let's Read!*, *Okie Dokie Book Day*, *Read Across America*, *Literacy for Georgia (LAG)*, *Get Georgia Reading Campaign*, library card sign-up, literacy workshops, and others reinforce the need to read aloud to children and to increase children's vocabulary.

# HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START

**Family & Community Partnerships** • Head Start encourages strong communication and cooperation within communities to improve the delivery of services to children and their families. A team of Family Service Workers, Parent Involvement Assistants, and Family/Community Partnership Specialists works to build collaborative relationships with families and other resource agencies to address a variety of needs in Head Start families. These services are provided to strengthen and stabilize family units and sustain an environment that fosters school success.



**Parent, Family, & Community Engagement** • Parent Engagement has long been a cornerstone of Head Start/Early Head Start and is an ongoing process that focuses on the changing interests of today's parents and families. We establish a partnership and collaboration with all Head Start parents because we believe that parents play a crucial role in the success of our program and are their child's most important educators.

Parents are encouraged to volunteer in all aspects of the program. They assist our program with self-assessment, program planning, curriculum planning, center activities, parent trainings, budget development, and other functions that enhance program outcomes. Opportunities for parental engagement provided during the past year include:

- Parent Orientations (July & January)
- Monthly Workshops
- Monthly Parent Meetings
- Parent/Community Service Projects
- Volunteer Orientation (October)
- Center Volunteers
- *Monday Morning Mom* Support Groups
- *Strong Fathers, Strong Families* Male Involvement/Fatherhood Initiative
- Bi-monthly Policy Council Meetings and Trainings
- Parent Educational Activities of the Parents' Interest (October & March)
- Home Visits for Dialogue About Ways Parents Can Contribute to Their Child's Development at Home
- School Readiness Advisory Meetings
- Health Services Advisory Committee Meetings (October & April)
- Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, & Attendance (ERSEA) Committee
- Parent Health and Community Resource Fair

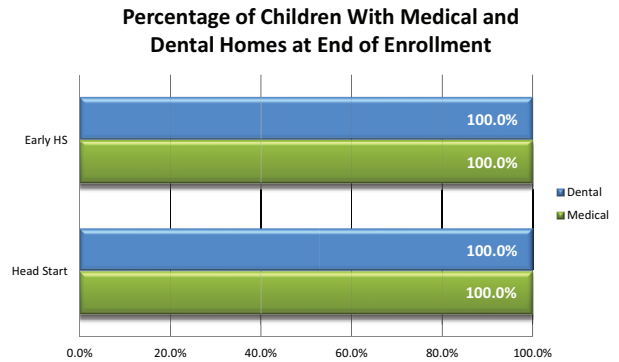
## Head Start Parent & Family Engagement Outcomes

Our program focuses on achieving positive family outcomes that support positive child outcomes such as enhancing school readiness skills, sustained learning, and developmental gains into elementary school. We incorporate the Head Start Parent and Family Engagement Outcomes into our daily family engagement activities, planning activities, and program policies and procedures. The seven outcomes that we focus on are:

1. family well-being
2. positive parent-child relationships
3. families as lifelong educators
4. families as learners
5. family engagement in transitions
6. family connections to peers and community
7. families as advocates and leaders

# HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START

**Health Services** • Head Start takes a holistic approach in addressing the needs of families and distinguishes itself from other childcare and preschool alternatives by ensuring that each child has accessible health care. These services include professional health screenings and examinations and follow-up medical treatment, dental exams and resulting dental work, mental health assessments and referral, nutrition assessments and treatment, immunization, and safety education just to name a few.



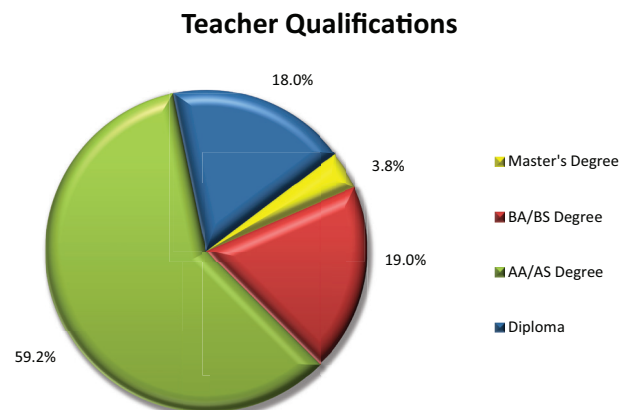
Head Start is a program inclusive of all children and families. It is well known for its non-discriminatory practices, especially in its commitment to serving children with disabilities. CAC promotes inclusion by actively recruiting children with disabilities in collaboration with Local Education Agencies (LEA) and State Education Agencies (SEA) to maintain compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Also, a collaborative agreement is maintained with Babies Can't Wait for the provision of disability services for infants and toddlers. Furthermore, children needing behavior modification services are served through contractual agreements with local mental health service providers.

**Transportation** • Reliable and safe transportation is always a priority in meeting the needs of the families in our rural service area. A fleet in excess of 30 buses provides limited transportation service for children to and from the CDCs and for medical appointments when necessary.

**Professional Development** • Ongoing training and professional development opportunities are provided for all staff members. Our administrative staff is highly qualified to provide many types of staff training. We have two Heartsaver First Aid/CPR AED trainers certified through American Heart Association, seven Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) reliable observers, one National Child Passenger Safety (CPS) certified technician, one certified AAA Driver Improvement Program instructor, and many others who are very knowledgeable in their fields and hold various specialized certifications.

Each staff member has an individualized professional development plan that is tailored to his/her needs. Throughout the school year, trainings are provided at the local level on staff development days. All staff in the centers must obtain 10 hours of DECAL training, while teachers must have 15 hours of early childhood training annually. Everyone receives training annually on Child Abuse and Neglect and Bloodborne Pathogens, and all staff are certified in First Aid and CPR. Moreover, during the month of July a Pre-Service Conference is provided over several days for our entire Head Start staff. Twenty to thirty workshops are presented during this time.

All Head Start lead teachers hold at least an associate college degree, with approximately one-quarter holding a bachelor's degree or higher. The majority of our Early Head Start caregivers hold an associate degree or higher as well, although not required by the Head Start Act or Program Performance Standards. All assistant teachers also meet or exceed education requirements. All of our nutrition service managers have the ServSafe Food Managers certification. All CDC supervisors, nutrition service workers, teachers and assistant teachers have the ServSafe Food Handlers certification.



# HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START



## The Head Start/Early Head Start Advantage

Decades of research have documented that children who participate in Head Start receive countless benefits. Impacts appear immediately, last a lifetime, and even benefit the subsequent generation. Here are just a few examples.

- Head Start children significantly reduce their vocabulary gap during the program year.
- Head Start children are more likely to graduate high school.
- Head Start children are more likely to attend college and earn some form of post-secondary degree.
- Head Start children are less likely to be incarcerated.
- Head Start children are less likely to use drugs or have hypertension through their mid-30s.
- Head Start children are less likely to smoke as adults.
- Parents of 3-year-old Head Start children advance their own education more by the time the child is 6.

## CLASS

The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), an observation instrument developed to assess classroom quality, is used in our preschool classrooms to provide professional development, program planning, and accountability. The three major domains of the CLASS include Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support. CLASS observations provide important feedback that confirms strengths and pinpoints areas where improvement can be made.

*Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn.*

-Benjamin Franklin



# HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START

**Child Development Program Mission** • To provide a strong foundation through resources and services for children, families, and staff so they can become self-sufficient, healthy, and well-rounded individuals.

**Vision** • To provide quality services to all eligible children and families in our communities.

**Motto** • Where children come first and families matter.

## Head Start/Early Head Start Budget and Expenditures for the Fiscal Year Ended January 31, 2024

	BUDGET	EXPENDITURES	
<b>U.S. DHHS, ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN &amp; FAMILIES</b>			
Salaries	\$13,226,713	\$12,118,345	
Fringe Benefits	4,039,366	4,233,773	
Travel	88,000	112,432	
Supplies	524,691	1,258,663	
Contractual	158,250	120,431	
Equipment	406,591	257,439	
Other (utilities, building/vehicle maintenance, fuel, training, etc.)	2,945,152	3,299,621	
Indirect (federally approved rate)	<u>2,414,450</u>	<u>2,100,382</u>	
<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>	<b>23,803,213</b>		<b>23,501,086</b>
<b>BRIGHT FROM THE START</b>			
Child & Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)	No Budget, Reimbursable		<u>1,916,487</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$25,417,573</b>
<b>OTHER</b>			
In-kind Donations (required minimum 20% local match waiver granted)			<u>4,308,739</u>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>			<b>\$29,726,312</b>

**Monitoring & Review** • The annual Head Start/Early Head Start program self-assessment was completed in May of 2023. The review found the program to be in compliance with Federal Head Start Program Performance Standards and confirmed that strong management systems are in place with a solid organizational structure.

OHS utilizes five year grant periods for all Head Start/Early Head Start grantees. This report covers the fourth year of our current five year grant cycle. On-site monitoring reviews are typically conducted annually. However, our program was not scheduled for an on-site review this year. The most recent review of our program was a *Focus Area Two* review that offered an opportunity to discuss our program design, management, and governance structure. We also explained our staffing structure and described in detail our approaches to program design, education, health services, family services, fiscal infrastructure, and program governance. We also were selected for a *CLASS Video Pilot* review where 46 of our Head Start classrooms were recorded while in session. The videos were then scored by Teachstone using the CLASS observation system. Scores far exceeded the competitive threshold in each of the three scoring domains.

The most recent Agency audit was conducted by Clausell and Associates, CPAs, P.C. The auditors issued an unmodified (clean) opinion with all funds received and expended being fully accounted for. A copy of the audit report is available for review at the Agency Headquarters in Moultrie.

# FUNDING ANALYSIS

Unaudited as of January 31, 2024

## GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES (DHS)

Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)	\$ 924,592	
Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)	4,553,033	
LIHEAP - American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)/Infrastructure	1,102,523	
Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP)	<u>1,281,973</u>	
SUB-TOTAL		\$7,862,121

## U.S. DHHS, ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES

Head Start Federal/Federal Training & Technical Assistance	18,826,625	
Head Start Non-Federal/Non-Federal T&TA	4,522,381	
Early Head Start Federal/Federal T&TA	4,976,588	
Early Head Start Non-Federal/Non-Federal T&TA	<u>1,244,148</u>	
SUB-TOTAL		29,569,742

## BRIGHT FROM THE START

Child & Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)		1,916,487
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## GEORGIA ENVIRONMENTAL FINANCE AUTHORITY (GEFA)

HHS Weatherization	513,961	
DOE Weatherization	279,173	
DOE Bipartisan Infrastructure Law	<u>866,800</u>	
SUB-TOTAL		1,659,934

## USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT, RURAL HOUSING SERVICE

Housing Preservation Grant		60,519
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## PRIVATE HOUSING GRANT

Anonymous Donation		25,000
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## GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Program		25,000
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## FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (FEMA)

Emergency Food & Shelter Grant	39,395	
Emergency Food & Shelter Grant ARPA	<u>17,339</u>	
SUB-TOTAL		56,734

## PROJECT H.O.P.E.

City of Albany		121,667
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## UNITED WAY (some funding is shown elsewhere)

Colquitt County: Senior Nutrition	32,000	
Colquitt County: YES!	3,000	
Decatur County: YES!	<u>3,043</u>	
SUB-TOTAL		38,043

## COLQUITT COUNTY EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND

Colquitt County United Way	45,000	
Colquitt County Board of Commissioners	10,000	
City of Moultrie Utility Check Off	1,967	
Donations by Religious Organizations	<u>10,130</u>	
SUB-TOTAL		67,097

## ROBERT J. CLINTON SUMMER YOUTH ENRICHMENT SUMMIT (YES!)

		<u>26,394</u>
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## GRAND TOTAL

**\$41,428,738**



# FUNDING ANALYSIS

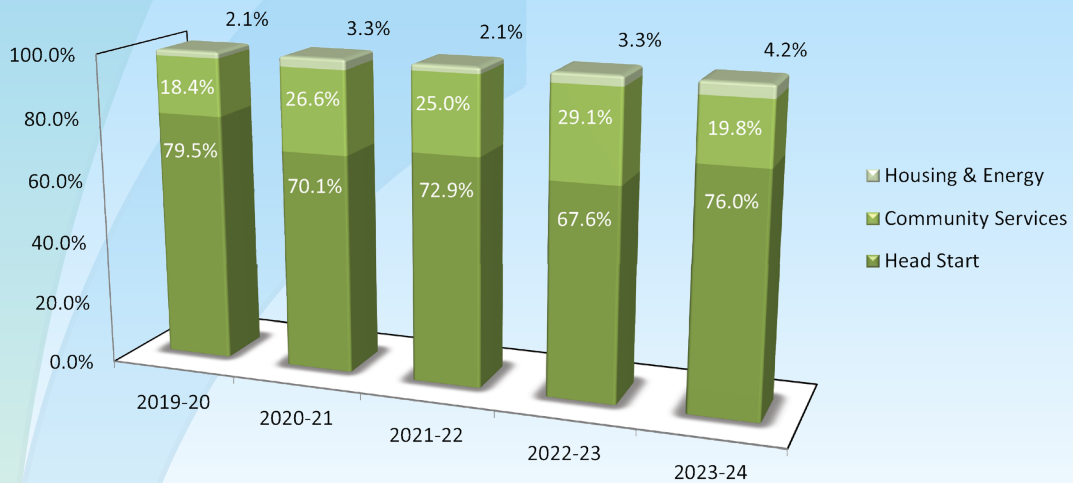
## Source of Funding



■ A ■ B ■ C ■ D ■ E

- A.** Georgia Department of Human Services **19.0%**
- B.** U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children & Families **71.4%**
- C.** Bright From the Start (State of Georgia) **4.6%**
- D.** Georgia Environmental Finance Authority **4.0%**
- E.** USDA Rural Development, Rural Housing Service; Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA); Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA); United Way (various counties); and Other State, Local, and Private Funding **1.0%**

## Use of Funding



# NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICE CENTERS

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A network of 11 Neighborhood Service Centers (NSCs) is maintained by the Agency. These offices are located throughout the 14 counties within the Agency's primary service area and serve as the local sites where clients can apply for all services other than Head Start/Early Head Start. (Refer to the map on page three.)

Baker County residents are served through the Mitchell County NSC, Lee County residents are served through the Dougherty County NSC, and Seminole County residents are served through the Miller County NSC.

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Baker County  
165 West Circle Drive  
Camilla 31730  
(229) 336-5797

Calhoun County  
104 Maxwell Street  
Arlington 39813  
(229) 725-1325

Colquitt County  
912 First Avenue SE  
Moultrie 31768  
(229) 985-3610

Decatur County  
1732 Bethel Road  
Bainbridge 39817  
(229) 246-3119

Dougherty County  
317 West First Avenue  
Albany 31701  
(229) 883-1365

Early County  
1241 South Main Street  
Blakely 39823  
(229) 723-3190

Grady County  
260 Second Avenue SE  
Cairo 39828  
(229) 377-3213

Lee County  
317 West First Avenue  
Albany 31701  
(229) 883-1365

Miller County  
360 South Fourth Street  
Colquitt 39837  
(229) 758-2848

Mitchell County  
165 West Circle Drive  
Camilla 31730  
(229) 336-5797

Seminole County  
360 South Fourth Street  
Colquitt 39837  
(229) 758-2848

Terrell County  
771 Rountree Drive SW  
Dawson 39842  
(229) 995-4121

Thomas County  
127A/B Smith Avenue  
Thomasville 31792  
(229) 228-1162

Worth County  
504 East Price Street  
Sylvester 31791  
(229) 776-4851

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# CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTERS

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A network of 21 Child Development Centers (CDCs) provides Head Start/Early Head Start services throughout the 18-county Head Start service area. (Refer to the map on page three.)

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Dougherty County Administrative Office  
317 West First Avenue  
Albany 31701  
(229) 436-9022

Dougherty County Multipurpose Center  
209 Slater King Drive  
Albany 31701  
(229) 436-6234

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Baker County  
139 Roosevelt Street  
Newton 39870  
(229) 734-5564

Lee County  
145 Groover Street  
Leesburg 31763  
(229) 759-2559

Sumter County  
915 North Lee Street  
Americus 31719  
(229) 924-7666

Calhoun County  
18904 Morgan Road  
Arlington 39813  
(229) 725-3442

Leslie  
264 Leslie Highway  
Leesburg 31763  
(229) 759-1800

Terrell County  
2526 Albany Highway  
Dawson 39842  
(229) 995-3473

Colquitt County  
570 Jonah Tillman Road  
Moultrie 31788  
(229) 985-7400

Lippitt  
819 Lippitt Drive  
Albany 31701  
(229) 420-7331

Thomas County  
915 Lester Street  
Thomasville 31792  
(229) 226-2595

CRK  
2103 East Broad Avenue  
Albany 31705  
(229) 432-5440

Miller County  
739 North 4th Street  
Colquitt 39837  
(229) 758-3860

Tift  
622 West Tift Avenue  
Albany 31701  
(229) 434-7338

Decatur/Grady  
215 School Road  
Climax 39834  
(229) 246-6458

Mitchell County  
111 South Perry Street  
Camilla 31730  
(229) 522-9995

Tri-County  
116 Rogers Street  
Buena Vista 31803  
(229) 649-3389

Early County  
5050 Freeman Road  
Blakely 39823  
(229) 723-6814

Moultrie Road  
111 Moultrie Road  
Albany 31705  
(229) 435-6580

Whitney  
1129 West Whitney Avenue  
Albany 31701  
(229) 436-2055

Harvey Road  
2423 Harvey Road  
Albany 31701  
(229) 446-4959

Seminole County  
710 East MLK Drive  
Donalsonville 39845  
(229) 524-6060

Worth County  
504 East Price Street  
Sylvester 31791  
(229) 776-5081

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# THE COMMUNITY ACTION 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 are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.

**HELPING PEOPLE. CHANGING LIVES.**



WWW.SWGACAC.COM  
912 FIRST AVENUE, S.E. ♦ P.O. BOX 3728 ♦ MOULTRIE, GEORGIA 31776-3728  
229-985-3610 ♦ 800-642-3384 ♦ FAX: 229-890-1056  
MEMBER ♦ GEORGIA COMMUNITY ACTION ASSOCIATION  
WWW.GEORGIACAA.ORG