

YEAR IN REVIEW 2024-2025





From the Editor

This report is for the fiscal year ended January 31, 2025. Unless otherwise noted, service totals, statistics, and outcomes are for the period February 1, 2024, through January 31, 2025.

Electronic Copies

Visit our website at www.swgacac.com to view, print, or download a copy of this publication.

Information

Visit our website at 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.

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www.georgiacaa.org

National Community Action Partnership
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National Community Action Foundation
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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. Commander Clinton served as Executive Director until his death in 1980. Myrtis Mulkey-Ndawula succeeded Clinton as Executive Director and served until her retirement in 2016.

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 60 years it has been a way of life!

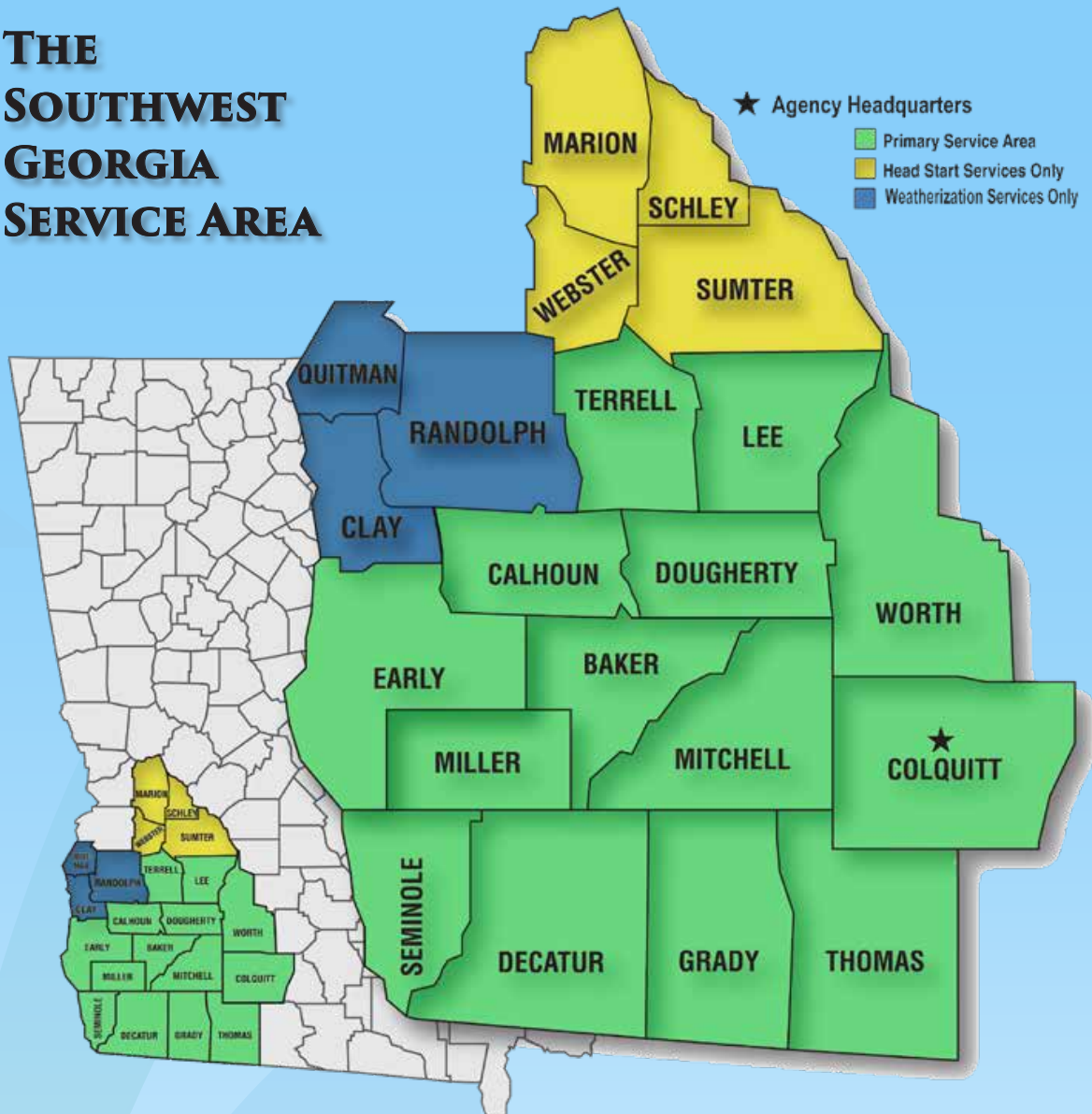
OUR MISSION . . .

. . . 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	348,188
17 County Population	359,411
18 County Population	391,613

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

21,000

**Southwest
Georgians**

- 1 in 18

persons -

are provided direct services by the Agency.

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Remember ...

*You must never be fearful about what you are
doing when it is right.*

-Rosa Parks

FROM THE CEO

Greetings:

This year we celebrate 60 years of *helping people help themselves!*

This milestone is a testament to our unwavering commitment to our mission and the dedication of our board, employees, and partners who support our efforts. I'm grateful for the opportunity to express my appreciation to each of you. Together, we uplift those who face the greatest challenges.

When I look back at copies of our *Year in Review* from years gone by, I am filled with heartfelt gratitude and admiration for how far we have come and what we have accomplished on behalf of those in need in Southwest Georgia. Our employees show up daily as advocates and champions for those who need our help the most. Your compassion makes a profound difference in the lives of the individuals and families we serve. Through your hard work we create meaningful change and foster hope throughout Southwest Georgia.

I'm pleased to share that we attained exemplary outcomes across all departments again this year in support of our mission. Here are just a few examples:

- Meeting enrollment requirements under the Office of Head Start's Full Enrollment Initiative
- Boasting impressive gains across all domains of measurement for Head Start and Early Head Start participants
- Attaining or maintaining State Quality Ratings for 19 of our 21 Head Start Child Development Centers through Quality Rated Child Care
- Weatherizing a total of approximately 150 homes by surpassing requirements for number of units served for all weatherization contracts
- Providing essential services such as rent, utilities, and food for more than 1,000 households in emergency situations to prevent families from becoming homeless or malnourished and lacking necessities
- Providing critical assistance to offset the increased cost of winter heating and summer cooling for more than 7,000 homebound, elderly, and low-income households
- Providing enrichment activities through YES! summer day camps for more than 100 youth

We are proud to be a leader in local efforts to break the cycle of poverty by actively targeting homelessness, education disparities, health disparities, food insecurity, and other factors commonly associated with poverty.

We look forward to continuing our legacy of service to the community and the next 60 years of helping people and changing lives!

Sincerely,



Randy Weldon
Chief Executive Officer



Randy Weldon,
Chief Executive
Officer

Gentlemen, we will chase perfection, and we will chase it relentlessly, knowing all the while we can never attain it. But along the way, we shall catch excellence.

-Vince Lombardi

FROM THE CHAIR



**Raimond Burley,
Board Chair**

Dear Friends:

As chairman of the Board of Directors, it is my pleasure to present to you this report which showcases our many achievements over the past year. The board and staff have worked tirelessly to continue providing the highest quality services to the children, families, and individuals that we serve.

We face many challenges each year. We have auditors, monitors, and funding source representatives who pay us visits to examine everything from our documentation to our facilities and classrooms to our payment methods. We are pleased to report that each of these visits confirmed that we are meeting all contractual obligations and fully accounting for the funds we are entrusted to expend in the delivery of high quality services.

Our largest program in terms of funding, Head Start, remains poised to offer excellent child development services to the children and families in Southwest Georgia. Our Community Services Department continues to meet the needs of those who find themselves in dire circumstances. Our Housing and Energy Department continues to expand and address housing safety and energy efficiency while remaining a program of excellence.

We remain steadfast in our promise to *help people help themselves!* Please take a few minutes to review this recap of our efforts and join us in celebrating our accomplishments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Raimond Burley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Raimond Burley
Chairman
Board of Directors

*In prosperity our friends know
us; in adversity we know our
friends.*

-John Churton Collins

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

as of January 31, 2025

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

Mitchell Blanks
Seminole County

Hilda Buie
Miller County

Linda Burney-Henry
Decatur County

LaFaye Copeland
Grady County

Phillip Corker
Grady County

Marybell Hernandez
Colquitt County

Johnny Jackson
Mitchell County

Patricia James
Lee County

Rita James
Early County

Fernando Johnson
Early County

Thelma Johnson
Dougherty 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)

Stephanie Anderson
Ex-Officio (Policy Council)

* Executive Committee Member At-Large

** Policy Council Liaison

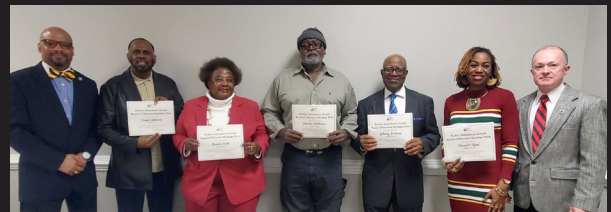
Public, Private, Low-Income: Working Together to Make a Difference!

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 board chair Raimond Burley and CEO Randy Weldon holding their perfect attendance certificates awarded for attending all board meetings held during 2024. Those pictured include: (l-r) Burley, Fernie Johnson, Brenda Scott, Charlie Williams, Johnny Jackson, Sherrell Byrd, and Weldon.

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

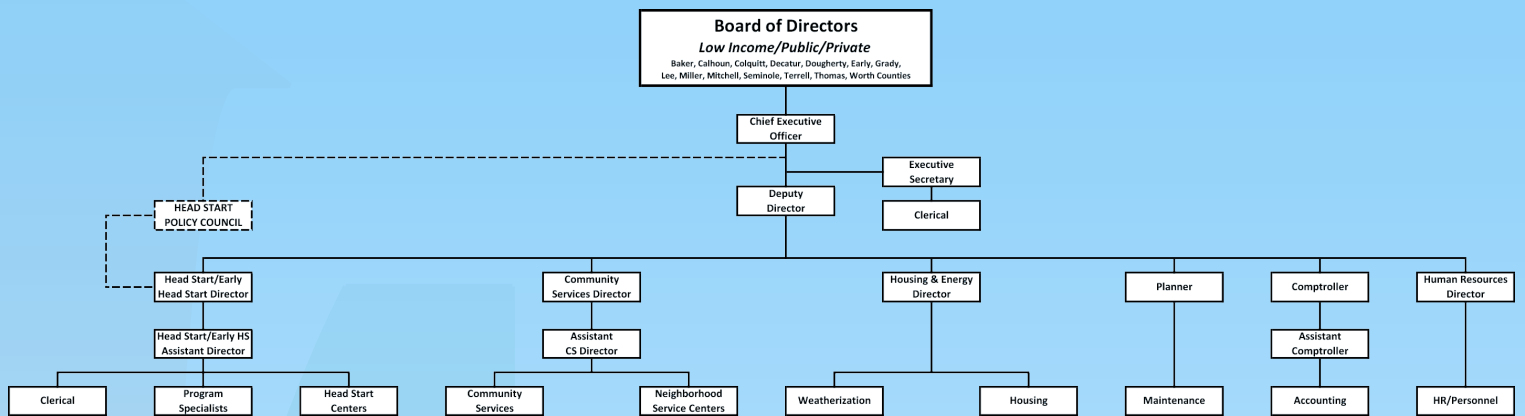


Lykesa Bridges
Head Start/Early Head Start
Assistant Director



Dusniel Alvarez
Housing & Energy
Director

ORGANIZATION CHART

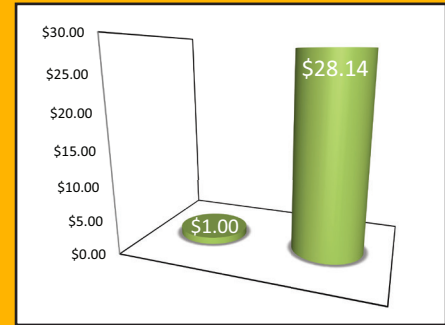


COMMUNITY SERVICES

CSBG Adds Critical Resources to the Community

Per the National Association for State Community Services Programs (NASCS), the CSBG network leveraged \$6.22 from state, local, and private sources for every dollar of CSBG funding. Leverage included \$2.65 from state sources, \$1.33 from local sources, \$2.07 from private sources, and volunteer hours valued at \$0.17. Including all federal sources, the CSBG network leveraged \$20.95 for every dollar of CSBG funding. In comparison, the CSBG network in Georgia leveraged \$15.18 for every dollar of CSBG funding.

The results for SWGACAC were even more significant. Local CSBG funding of \$1,205,346 leveraged more than \$33.9 million! ***That equates to leverage of \$28.14 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 various targeted job fairs.

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 and other necessities 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)	\$291,041.25	403	1,097
Emergency Food & Shelter (FEMA)	\$41,808.17	92	226
Emergency Food & Shelter (FEMA) American Rescue Plan Act	\$1,769.07	7	10
Emergency Relief Fund (Colquitt County)	\$58,251.53	256	484
Project HOPE (City of Albany)	\$95,188.59	270	677
Total	\$488,058.61	1,028	2,494

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.

Making a Significant Impact . . .

7,333 Households

(approximately 17,000 individuals) were assisted through the 2024-25 LIHEAP funding cycle.

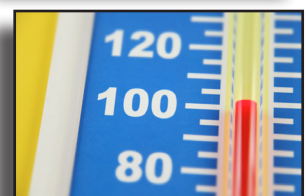
Nearly three in four LIHEAP recipient households in Georgia have at least one vulnerable person. Nearly two in three are elderly. More than one in three is disabled.



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 \$3.42 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

County	Heating Benefits Expended	Heating Households Served	Cooling Benefits Expended	Cooling Households Served
Baker	\$21,502	43	\$13,100	31
Calhoun	\$13,000	24	\$24,800	58
Colquitt	\$317,158	645	\$242,945	559
Decatur	\$125,412	248	\$130,500	306
Dougherty	\$448,516	826	\$478,900	1,097
Early	\$55,714	106	\$62,500	141
Grady	\$152,425	315	\$107,600	252
Lee	\$44,440	102	\$55,900	131
Miller	\$45,664	92	\$24,400	57
Mitchell	\$121,318	250	\$96,600	226
Seminole	\$60,121	123	\$37,700	86
Terrell	\$83,391	173	\$54,000	125
Thomas	\$236,266	492	\$178,900	421
Worth	\$109,864	223	\$77,900	181
Total	\$1,834,791	3,662	\$1,585,745	3,671



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. Hot meals are purchased locally and delivered weekdays Monday- Friday to homebound and elderly individuals. In addition to the nutritional benefit of the service, delivery personnel are trained to detect deteriorating health conditions, hazardous living conditions, and other client needs so that those needs can be appropriately addressed.

Senior Nutrition Highlights

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

50 Average Number of Meals Served Per Day
12,081 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 third year for Colquitt and the eighth year that Mitchell/Baker helped bring the program to their counties. A new milestone was set as almost 4,500 new toys were distributed to 2,157 children across these three counties.

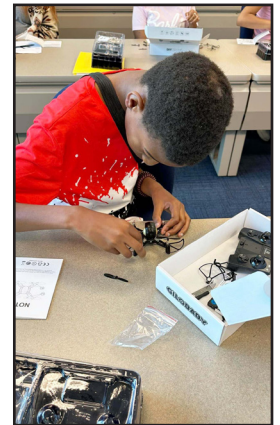
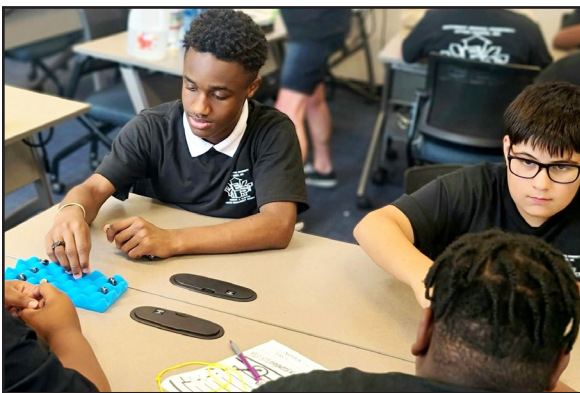
This is an initiative that we look forward to assisting with each year. We are proud to partner with Toys for Tots, Albany Marine Corps Logistics Base, and numerous businesses, civic organizations, and volunteers to distribute toys and bring joy to underprivileged children during the Christmas season.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



HELPING PEOPLE. CHANGING LIVES.

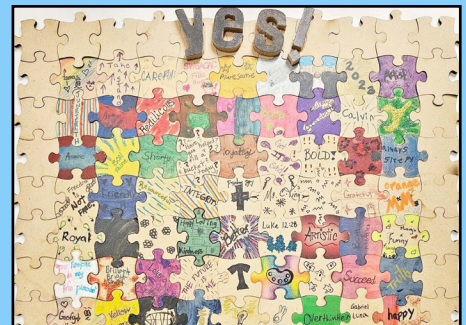
Robert J. Clinton Summer Youth Enrichment Summit (YES!) • Named after the Agency's original CEO, the Robert J. Clinton Summer Youth Enrichment Summit (YES!) is a series of regional week-long summer enrichment camps targeted at youth ages 12-14. Youth who attend benefit from experiences made possible 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 2024 included Albany, 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 107 youth participants for 2024!



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

Housing 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, installation of weatherstripping, 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.

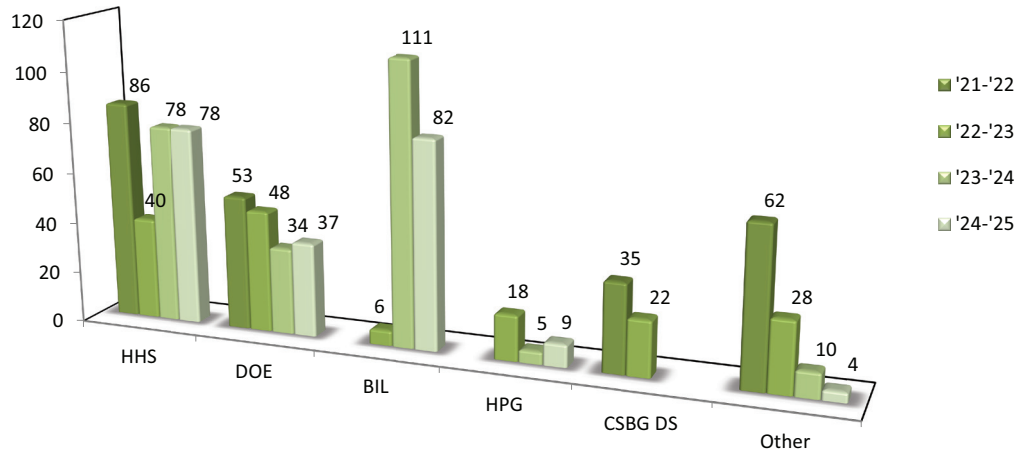
Indoor air quality that promotes a "healthy" home is also a weatherization focus. Air quality measures such as vented stove hoods, bathroom exhaust fans, and whole house energy recovery ventilators (ERVs) are now required. Health and safety measures are a top priority and include installation of smoke 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 '21-'22; and anonymous donations. HPG funding awarded for '21-'22 was delayed due to reorganization within USDA and the pandemic.



Making an Impact . . .

*I can feel the difference
inside the house already.
They did a wonderful job.*

-Garrison Family
Cairo, 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, City of Albany, and various local community foundations.

HPG

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 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. As one of the largest grantees in Georgia, CAC is authorized to provide Head Start services for 18 counties to 1,783 children ages 0-5 with 1,415 enrollment slots for preschoolers ages 3-5 and 368 enrollment slots for infants and toddlers ages 0-2.

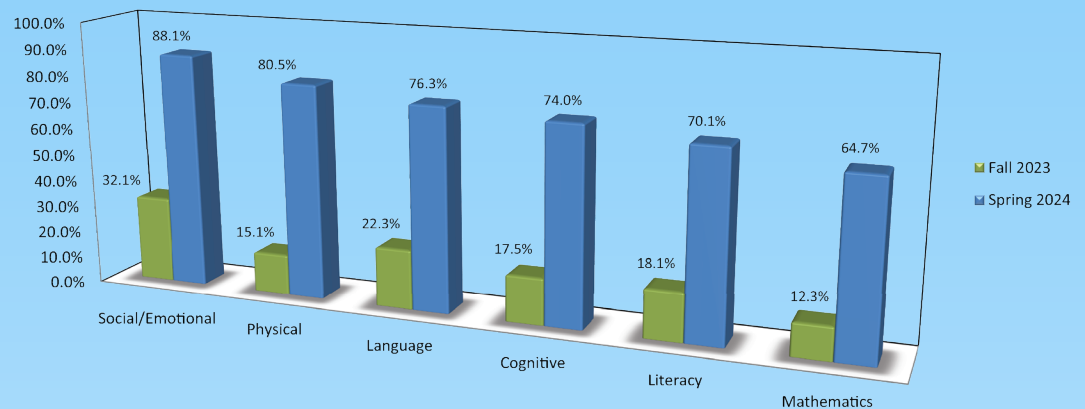
Head Start services are provided through a network of 21 Child Development Centers (CDCs). (See page 27 for contact information.)



Unless noted otherwise, information provided is for the 2023-2024 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!

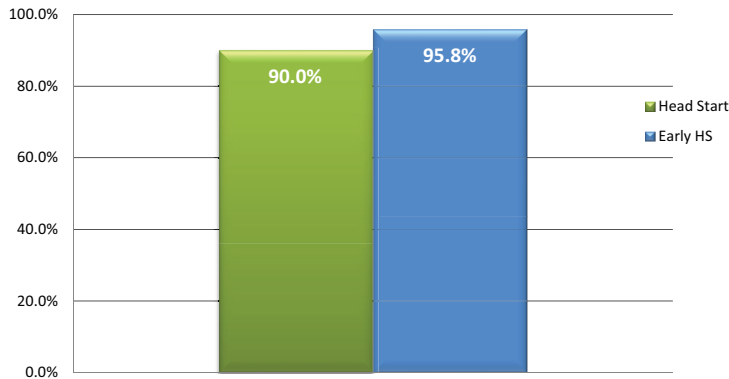
Program Operation • CAC operates a full year, full day, center based option in which Head Start children attend the program 6.5 hours per day for a minimum of 1,020 hours annually while Early Head Start children attend 7 hours per day for a minimum of 1,380 hours annually as required by Federal Head 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, 2025, nineteen (19) centers are rated with two (2) or three (3) star ratings, and one (1) center has initiated the rating 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: 2,094

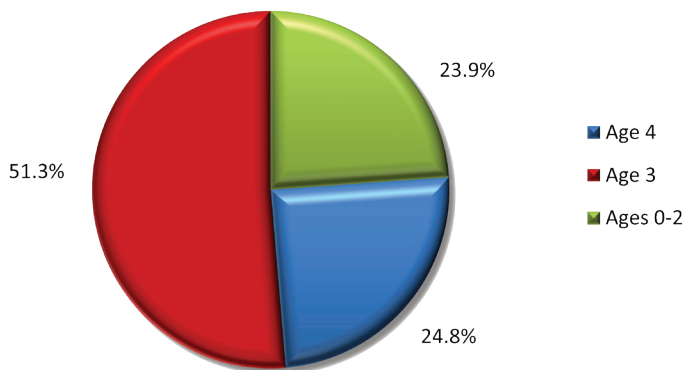
This total includes 12 pregnant women and includes children and families that entered and exited the program prior to the end of the school year.

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 **1,634** eligible children (**49.7%**) and Early Head Start served **427** eligible children (**9.2%**) for a combined percentage of **26.0%**.

Another 33 children whose family incomes fell 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 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

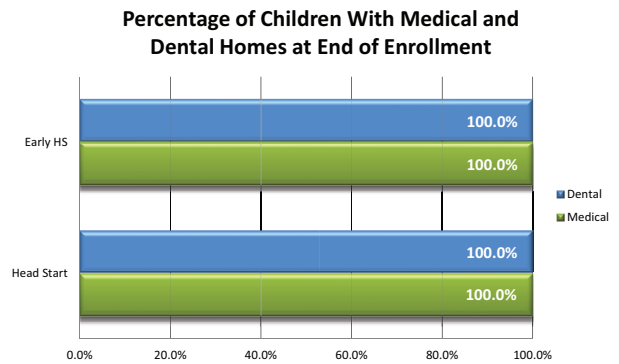
Head Start Parent & Family Engagement Outcomes

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 follow-up dental treatment, mental health assessments and referral, nutrition assessments and treatment, immunization, and safety education just to name a few.



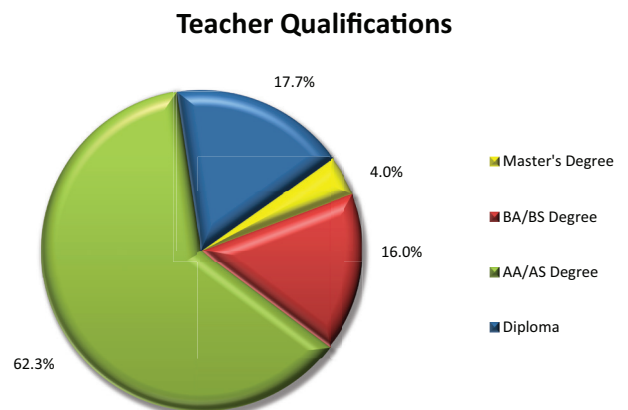
Head Start is a program inclusive of all children and families. It is well known for its non-discriminatory practices, especially in its commitment to serving children with disabilities. CAC promotes inclusion by actively recruiting children with disabilities in collaboration with Local Education Agencies (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 25 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, nine Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) reliable observers, 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. Fifteen to twenty workshops are presented during this time.

All Head Start lead teachers hold at least an associate college degree, with more than one in five 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.

While we try to teach our children all about life, our children teach us what life is all about.

-Angela Schwindt



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, 2025

	BUDGET	EXPENDITURES	
U.S. DHHS, ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES			
Salaries	\$13,346,052	\$13,082,407	
Fringe Benefits	3,804,209	3,770,610	
Travel	38,000	0	
Supplies	1,137,909	920,396	
Contractual	177,250	139,350	
Equipment	498,758	341,499	
Other (utilities, building/vehicle maintenance, fuel, training, etc.)	2,314,995	3,076,655	
Indirect (federally approved rate)	<u>2,284,673</u>	<u>2,270,929</u>	
SUB-TOTAL	23,601,846		23,601,846
BRIGHT FROM THE START			
Child & Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)	No Budget, Reimbursable		<u>1,860,260</u>
TOTAL			\$25,462,106
OTHER			
In-kind Donations (<i>required minimum 20% local match waiver granted</i>)			<u>5,900,462</u>
GRAND TOTAL			\$31,362,568

Monitoring & Review • The annual Head Start/Early Head Start program self-assessment was completed in May of 2024. 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 fifth year of our current five year grant cycle. On-site monitoring reviews are typically conducted annually. A *Risk Assessment Notification (RAN)* review was conducted in 2024 to gather information about incidents that potentially affect the health and safety of program participants. Among other benefits, RAN reviews provide feedback to improve program management and prevent child health and safety incidents.

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, 2025

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES (DHS)

Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)	\$ 956,692	
Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)	<u>3,082,299</u>	
SUB-TOTAL		\$4,038,991

U.S. DHHS, ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES

Head Start Federal/Federal Training & Technical Assistance	17,883,259	
Head Start Non-Federal/Non-Federal T&TA	4,470,815	
Early Head Start Federal/Federal T&TA	5,718,587	
Early Head Start Non-Federal/Non-Federal T&TA	<u>1,429,647</u>	
SUB-TOTAL		29,502,308

BRIGHT FROM THE START

Child & Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)		1,860,260
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GEORGIA ENVIRONMENTAL FINANCE AUTHORITY (GEFA)

HHS Weatherization	461,502	
DOE Weatherization	286,149	
DOE Bipartisan Infrastructure Law	<u>2,104,442</u>	
SUB-TOTAL		2,852,093

USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT, RURAL HOUSING SERVICE

Housing Preservation Grant		125,000
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PRIVATE HOUSING GRANT

Anonymous Donation		25,000
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CITY OF ALBANY

Project H.O.P.E.	235,899	
Weatherization	<u>1,000,000</u>	
SUB-TOTAL		1,235,899

FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (FEMA)

Emergency Food & Shelter Grant		43,974
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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>2,949</u>	
SUB-TOTAL		37,949

COLQUITT COUNTY EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND

Colquitt County United Way	45,000	
Colquitt County Board of Commissioners	10,000	
City of Moultrie Utility Check Off	2,146	
Donations by Religious Organizations	<u>2,800</u>	
SUB-TOTAL		59,946

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

		<u>96,675</u>
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GRAND TOTAL

\$39,878,095

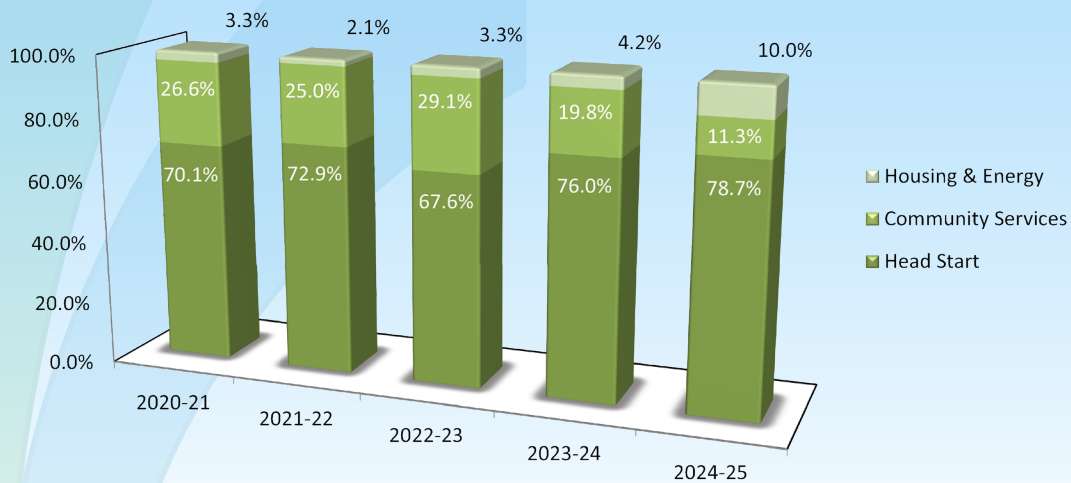
FUNDING ANALYSIS

Source of Funding



- A.** U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children & Families **74.0%**
- B.** Georgia Department of Human Services **10.1%**
- C.** Georgia Environmental Finance Authority **7.2%**
- D.** Bright From the Start (State of Georgia) **4.7%**
- E.** USDA Rural Development, Rural Housing Service; City of Albany; Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA); United Way (various counties); and Other State, Local, and Private Funding **4.3%**

Use of Funding



NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICE CENTERS

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.

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

CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTERS

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.)

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

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

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.



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229-985-3610 ♦ 800-642-3384 ♦ FAX: 229-890-1056

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