Community Action
60 Years

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Helping People, Changing Lives

community Action®

OF SOUTH MISSISSIPPI

Executive Team

Tiffany Bradley
Finance Director

Lee Ann Kendrick
Adult Services Director

Vanessa Gibson
Executive Director

Tayonka Thomas
Children and Youth Services Director

Kelli Green
Human Resource Manager

Letter from the Executive Director

After several years of tumultuous change brought on by the pandemic, a change in leadership, and a name change, the agency began to settle into a new routine. Head Start was finally able to return to normal after operating with reduced class sizes to combat the spread of COVID-19. Parents and children alike were excited by this news and the year began full of hope for the future.

The Aging Transportation program struggled to hire and retain drivers, so dedicated staff pitched in to ensure that our seniors were picked up and delivered daily. Participation by seniors returned to pre-Covid numbers as their confidence in our ability to keep them safe from airborne contagions increased. They were ready to mingle after being isolated for so long.

Covid funding and guidelines also began to phase out this year. As we embarked on a new normal, it was important to maintain open lines of communication with the community and staff regarding expectations as we moved forward.

The leadership and faithful employees of this agency are to be commended for navigating successfully through each adversity that has come our way. We are strong, resourceful, and resilient. We look forward to the years ahead and the opportunity to continue serving our community.

Sincerely,

Vanessa Gibson

Executive Director

Mission

It is our mission to provide quality services that empower the community and foster independence.

Vision

Our vision is to be the standard of excellence in developing and delivering quality, responsive services.

Independent Auditors Report

In addition to regular reviews and self-assessments, an independent audit is performed annually.

Areas of review include internal control over financial reporting and tests of compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, grants, and other matters.

Opinion on Each Major Federal Program

We have audited the Community Action of South Mississippi, Inc.'s compliance with the types of compliance requirements described in the 0MB Compliance Supplement that could have a direct and material effect on each of the Community Action of South Mississippi, Inc.'s major federal programs for the year ended September 30, 2022. The Community Action of South Mississippi, Inc.'s major federal programs are identified in the summary of auditor's results section of the accompanying schedule of findings and questioned costs.

In our opinion, the Community Action of South Mississippi, Inc., complied, in all material respects, with the types of compliance requirements referred to above that could have a direct and material effect on each of its major federal programs for the year ended September 30, 2022.

Board of Directors

Ricky McCorvey
Private Sector

Cynthia Black
Public Sector Chairman

Angie Cowan
Poor Sector

Rosetta Williams
Poor Sector

Nancy Jo Maples
Public Sector

NOT PICTURED

Raquel Williams
Private Sector

Lauren Kelley
Private Sector Vice Chairman

Bernard Kirkland
Poor Sector

Paul Lee
Poor Sector

Terri Tyler
Public Sector Secretary

Carlos Moulds
Public Sector

Mandye Feranda
Private Sector

Policy Council

BOTTOM PHOTO FRONT ROW:

Julie Fortenberry
Parent

Letha Boulton
Community Rep Secretary
& Personnel Committee Chair

Octavia Holloway
Parent

BOTTOM PHOTO BACK ROW:

Jessica Shoemake
Parent

Laura Harry
Community Rep
Planning Committee Chair

Tiffany Woods
Parent - Assistant Secretary
& Grievance Committee Chair

Shalimar Legister
Parent - Vice Chairperson

Cha-Miracle Good
Parent

NOT PICTURED

Terri Tyler
Community Rep - Board Liaison

Chivalry Joyce
Community Rep - Chairperson

Christian Hartley
Community Rep
Finance Committee Chair

Khrystopher Green
Parent

Jessica Thomas
Parent

Nakilie Jefferson
Parent

Gwen Page
Parent

Antwon McNair
Parent

Federal Programs

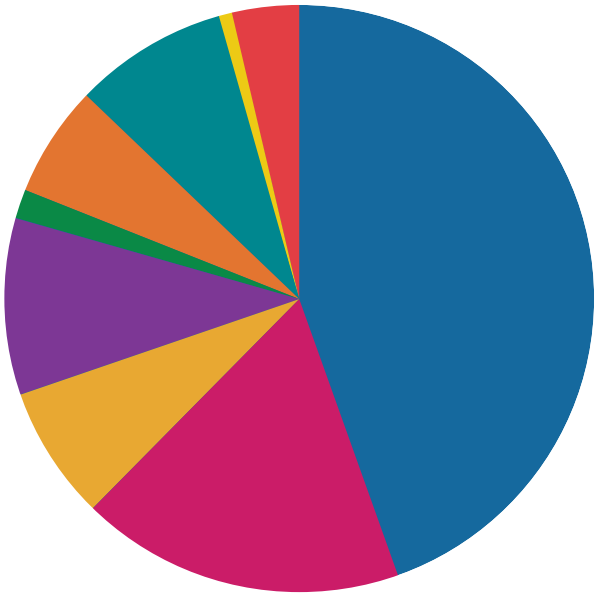
Revenue for FY2023

HEAD START (OPERATING)	$5,902,712
CSBG	$874,271
LIHEAP	$2,817,559
LIHWAP ARPA	$454,614
LIHWAP CAA	$580,088
FDCH	$51,408
USDA	$375,969
VITA	$72,973
TANF	$215,971
TITLE III B SENIOR CENTER	$68,452
TITLE III C CONGREGATE MEALS	$66,854
TITLE XX TRANSPORTATION	$232,551

Head Start Budget

Head Start / EHS Expenditures for Fiscal Year 2022 (7/1/2022 - 4/30/2023)

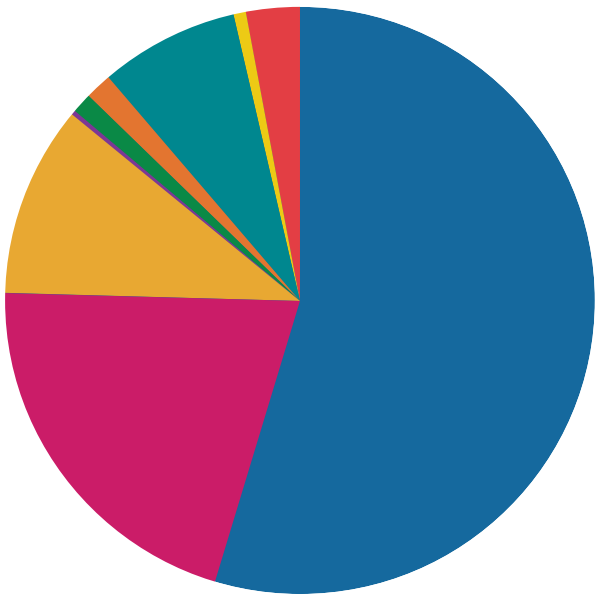
Personnel
$2,486,316
Fringe Benefits
$991,217
Indirect Costs
$415,727
Equipment
$543,670
Travel/Training
$82,034
Supplies
$347,696
Contractual
$467,401
Other
$43,816
Miscellaneous
$201,053



Total:
$5,578,930

PERSONNEL	FRINGE BENEFITS	INDIRECT COSTS	EQUIPMENT	TRAVEL/ TRAINING	SUPPLIES	CONTRACTUAL	OTHER	MISC:

Head Start / EHS Proposed Expenditures for Fiscal Year 2023 (5/1/2023 - 4/30/2024)



Personnel
$3,498,333
Fringe Benefits
$1,333,002
Indirect Costs
$664,334
Equipment
$13,332
Travel/Training
$76,887
Supplies
$91,251
Contractual
$486,055
Other
$41,065
Miscellaneous
$189,520

Total:
$6,393,779

Expenses listed under Miscellaneous include: utilities, lease payments, repairs, maintenance, facility maintenance and telephone. Expenses listed under Other include: food-other, medical and dental services,field trips and treats, parent activities, fuel and awards/incentives.

Head Start Eligibility

Income at or below 100% of federal poverty line

273
Children

Public assistance such as TANF and SSI

153
Children

Foster care

8
Children

Homeless

29
Children

Disability/special needs

35
Children

Over income

25
Children

Head Start Enrollment

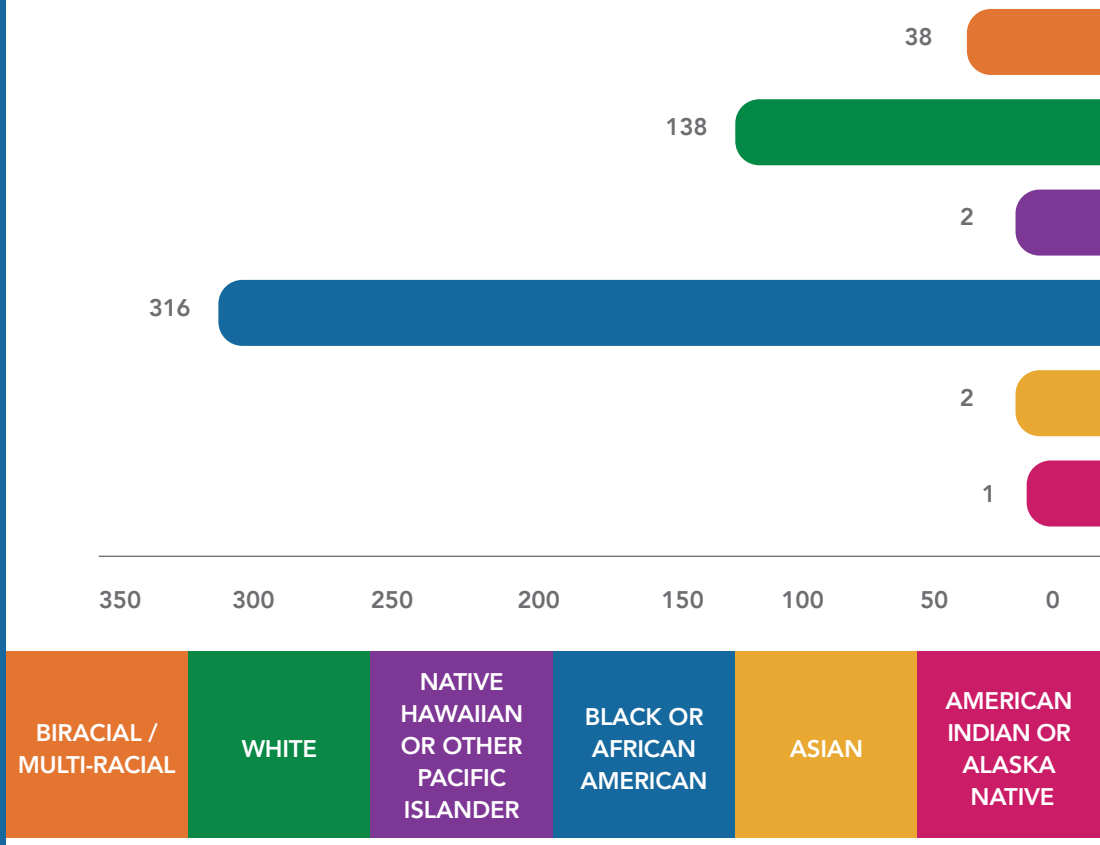
Funded Enrollment

534
Children

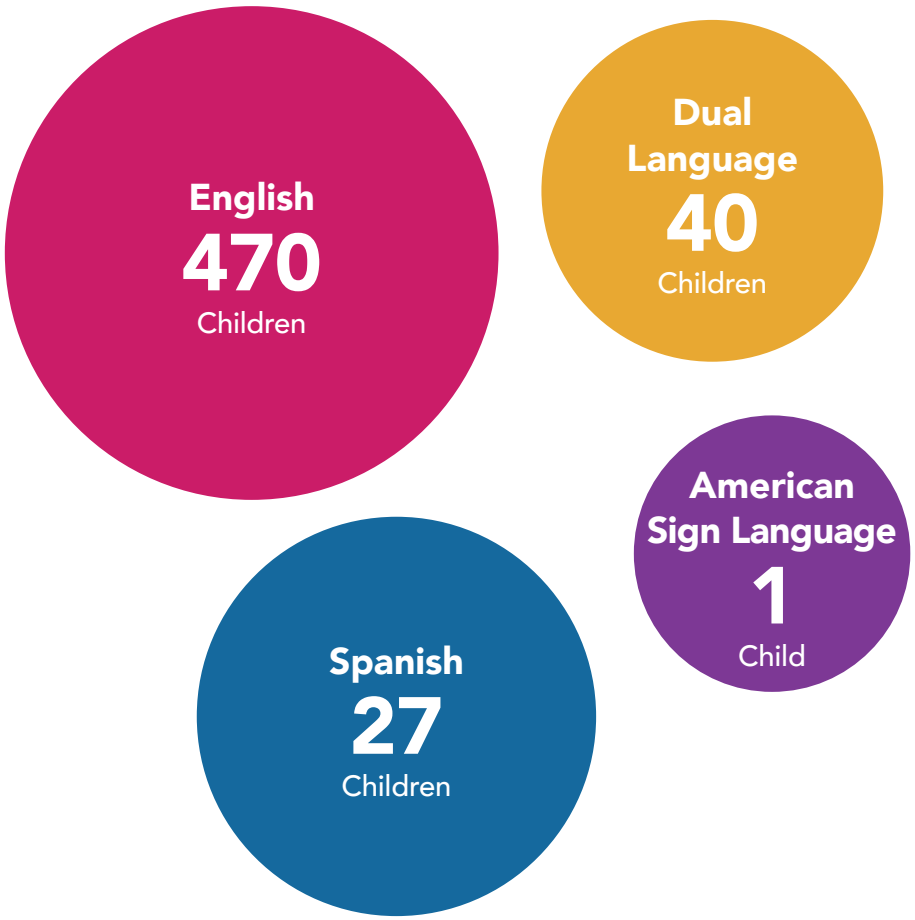
Cumulative Enrollment

498
Children

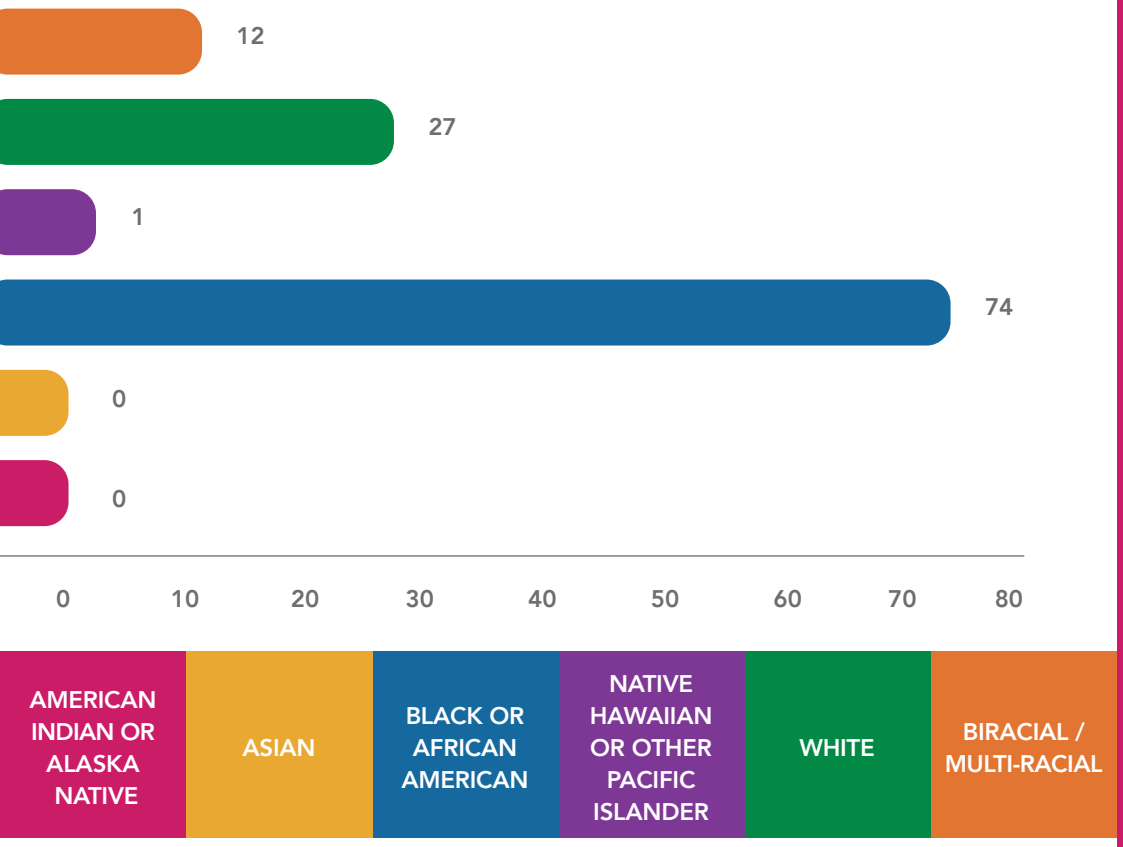
Head Start Demographics



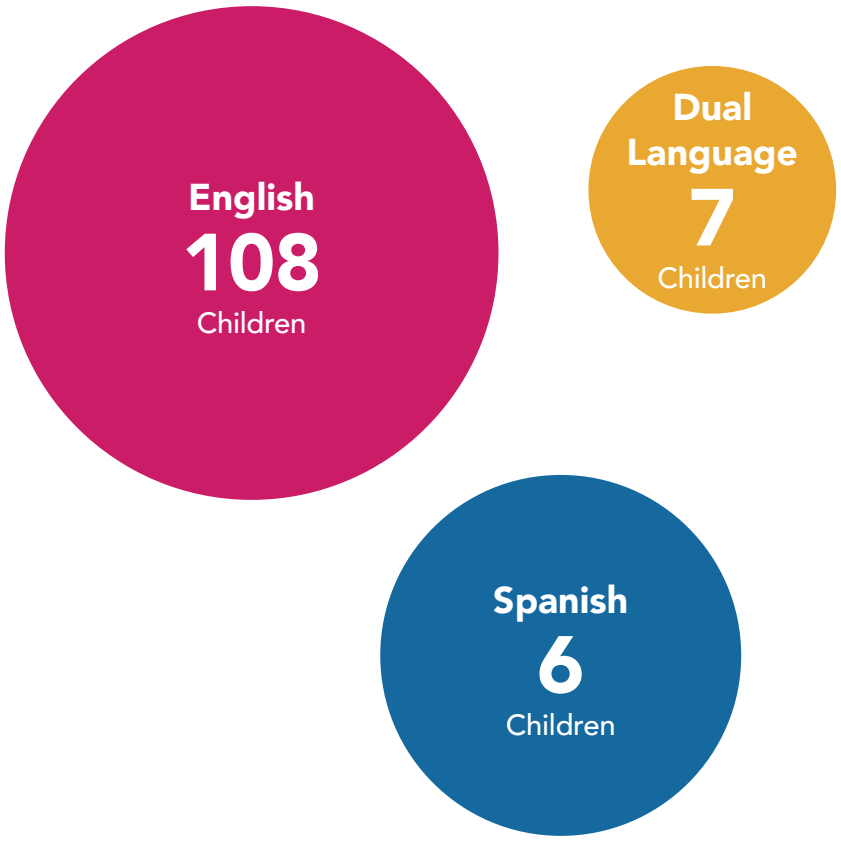
Head Start Primary Language



Early Head Start Demographics



Early Head Start Primary Language



Early Head Start Eligibility

Income at or below 100% of federal poverty line

59
Children

Public assistance such as TANF and SSI

39
Children

Foster care

8
Children

Homeless

6
Children

Disability/special needs

2
Children

Over income

0
Children

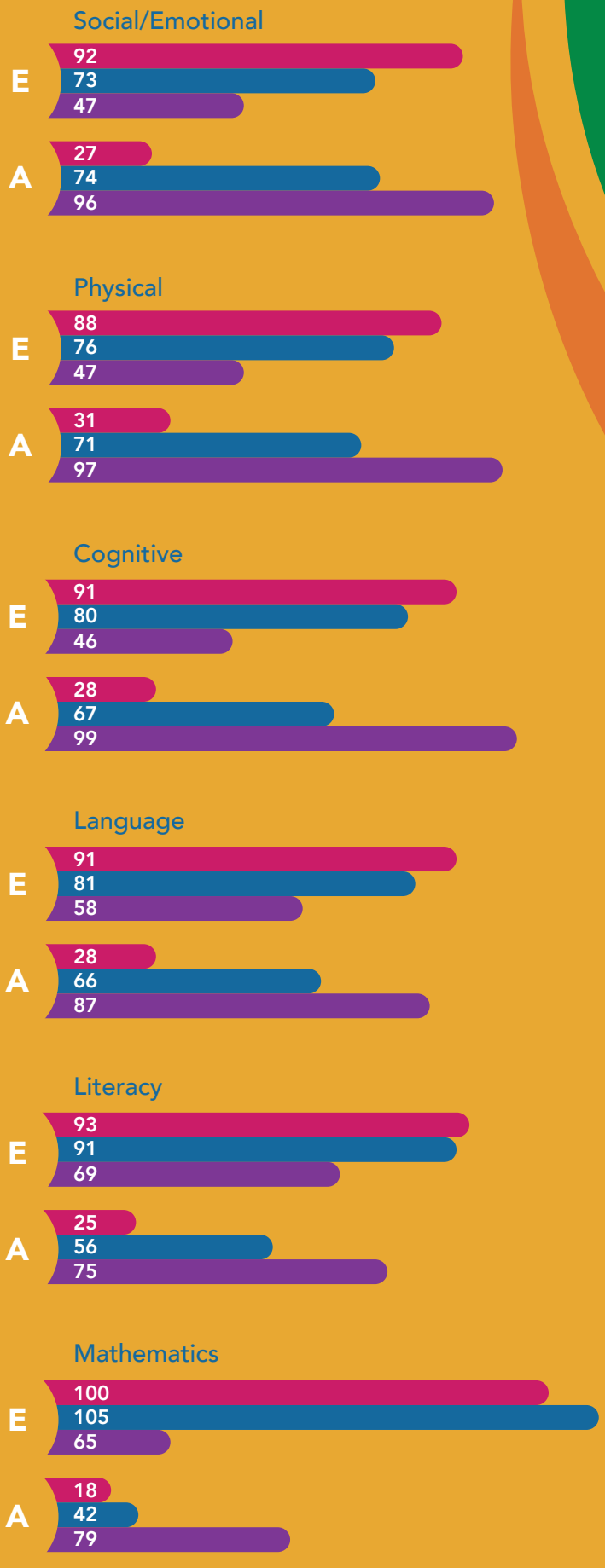
Early Head Start Enrollment

Funded Enrollment

98
Children

Cumulative Enrollment

114
Children



School Readiness

To collect school readiness data, the agency used The Teaching Strategies GOLD online assessment instrument. The system measures the knowledge, skills and behaviors that are most predictive of school success. The tool has 38 objectives, including 2 objectives related to English language acquisition. 36 objectives are organized into 9 areas of development and learning. The first 4 are major areas of child development; social/emotional, physical, language and cognitive. The content learning identified in early learning standards is organized into the following 5 areas; literacy, mathematics, science and technology, social studies and the arts. The objectives in English language acquisition help teachers follow a child's progress in acquiring receptive and expressive skills in English.

Teachers used the Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment tool quarterly to collect the data needed to plan activities for individual children. Through observations of children's work samplings and parental input, teachers leveled children in each objective area. At the end of each observation cycle, teachers finalized children's checkpoints. Teaching Strategies GOLD reports are generated to show which children are meeting, exceeding or below an area of development and learning.

Head Start Physical Health

HEAD START CHILDREN AT ENROLLMENT

Children with health insurance

482

Enrolled in Medicaid and/or CHIP

450

Children with an ongoing source of continuous, accessible health care

429

Have been determined by a health care professional to be up-to-date on all immunizations

178

The agency has implemented the following programs to combat childhood obesity; The Organwise Guys to empower kids to be healthy and smart from the inside out! Color Me Healthy to get children excited about eating smart and moving more. The 5210 program to educate children and families on good nutrition and exercise (Aim for 5 fruits and vegetables every day,keep recreational screen time to 2 hours or less every day, include at least 1 hour or more of active play every day, and skip sugar sweetened beverages, drink more water every day.)

HEAD START CHILDREN AT END OF ENROLLMENT YEAR

Children with health insurance

478

Enrolled in Medicaid and/or CHIP

447

Children with an ongoing source of continuous, accessible health care

445

Have been determined by a health care professional to be up-to-date on all immunizations

409

Children who are up-to-date on a schedule of age-appropriate preventative and primary health care, according to the relevant state's EPSDT schedule for well child care

445

Received medical treatment for chronic conditions

8

Head Start Body Mass Index

Underweight

13

Children

Healthy Weight

101

Children

Overweight

71

Children

Obese

280

Children

Early Head Start Disability Services

10

EHS children enrolled in the program who had an individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) at any time during the program year indicating they have been determined eligible by the Part C Agency to receive early intervention services under the individuals with Disability Education Act (IDEA)

Early Head Start Physical Health

HEAD START CHILDREN AT ENROLLMENT

Children with health insurance

81

Enrolled in Medicaid and/or CHIP

81

Children with an ongoing source of continuous, accessible health care

81

Have been determined by a health care professional to be up-to-date on all immunizations

97

HEAD START CHILDREN AT END OF ENROLLMENT YEAR

Children with health insurance

86

Enrolled in Medicaid and/or CHIP

81

Children with an ongoing source of continuous, accessible health care

81

Have been determined by a health care professional to be up-to-date on all immunizations

80

Children who are up-to-date on a schedule of age-appropriate preventative and primary health care, according to the relevant state's EPSDT schedule for well child care

80

Received medical treatment for chronic conditions

2

Children Diagnosed Primary Disability

Referred for Evaluation
61

Received an Evaluation
37

Received a Diagnosis
35

Children Enrolled with an IEP during the program year
40

Speech or Language Impairment
28

Autism Spectrum Disorder
1

Developmental Delay
10

Mental Health

Due to a shortage of mental health professionals in the community, the agency was unable to provide mental health consultations for all classroom staff as planned. We were able to create relaxing spaces for staff to de-stress. Use of the Employee Assistance Program was encouraged, and health and safety practices were in place to provide as much peace of mind as possible.

Head Start Dental Health

AT ENROLLMENT

Children with ongoing dental care at enrollment
384

AT END OF ENROLLMENT

Children with ongoing dental care at end of enrollment and completed a professional dental exam
443

Children diagnosed as needing treatment since last year's PIR report who are up-to-date on a scheduled oral care
113

Children who received dental treatment
28

Services

Employment

Education & Cognitive Development

Income, Infrastructure & Assets Building

Health/Social Behavioral Development

Civic Engagement & Community Involvment

National Community Action Network Theory of Change Goals

Goal 1

Individuals and families with low incomes are stable and achieve economic security.

Goal 2

Communities where people with low incomes live are healthy and offer economic opportunity.

Goal 3

People with low incomes are engaged and active in building opportunities in communities.

Community Action of South Mississippi Community Service Block Grant (CSBG)

Community Action of South Mississippi engages in programming to assist clients with meeting their goals in the areas of Employment, Education, Income & Asset Building, Housing, Health & Social Behavior and Civic Engagement. Based on our annual community needs assessment we target efforts in areas that our identified by the community, for the community. Employment, Education, and Housing have been serious issues this year.

Snapshot of Highlights for 2023

Housing

These funds were used eliminate homelessness, ensure families were not displaced and to prevent evictions and foreclosures.

293
Households Assisted

$263,726
Housing Assistance Funded

Health

2,481
Clients helped to increase their nutrition skills to include cooking, shopping and budgeting for healthy meals

2,160
Mississippi senior citizens helped to maintain an independent lifestyle ensuring the seniors can remain in their home and avoid the need for assisted living

1,997
Mississippians with disabilities helped to stay in their home and maintain their independent lifestyle

Employment

238
Mississippians provided with assistance that led to full time employment, increased salary and benefits and increased skills within the workplace

Income

1,449
Mississippians assisted in achieving and maintaining the capacity to meet their own basic needs

251
Individuals helped to improved their overall long-term financial well being through financial education and skill development

Education

These clients have completed a recognized credential, certificate or degree achievement in the field of their choice.

60
Clients assisted in their pursuit of improving their education.

Civic Engagement & Community Involvement

261
Mississippians assisted to increase their skills, knowledge and abilities to work toward improving conditions within their own community by improving leadership skills, social capacity and engagement

2023 VITA Highlights

$260
Average family savings on a simple 1040 or more if tax preparation involves itemizing

3,697
Federal returns completed in 2023

$5,262,712
Total tax refund amount (funds brought back into our community)

1,193
Total number of volunteer hours

Volunteer Assistance Tax Program (VITA)

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) grant program is an IRS initiative designed to support free tax preparation service for the underserved through various partner organizations. This service helps low- to moderate-income individuals, persons with disabilities, the elderly, and limited English speakers file their taxes each year. The South MS VITA coalition is comprised of four agencies; Community Action of South MS, Mercy Housing & Human Development, Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church and Keesler AFB. VITA is offered at 6 locations across the coast. The coalition has provided tax assistance for 18+ years to individuals who make under $65,000 per year.

In 2023, CASOMS VITA Coalition has completed tax returns for clients across the country.

Child and Adult Care Food Programs (CACFP)

CASOMS contracts with the MS Department of Education to provide breakfast, lunch and snacks to children enrolled in Head Start, Early Head Start and First Step Childcare. The CACFP serves nutritious meals and snacks to eligible children who are enrolled for care at participating childcare centers. CACFP also provides meals and snacks to children and youth who participate in afterschool care programs or reside in emergency shelters.

Family Day Care Homes (FDCH)

CASOMS operates the Family Day Care Homes (FDCH) program in George, Harrison, Jackson, Perry and Stone Counties. FDCH provides reimbursements for meals and snacks that meet the requirements set forth by USDA. These are private homes where children under 13 receive care. The homes are licensed, registered/inspected or approved for the program. The reimbursements make the cost of day care more affordable for many lower income families. Health and safety standards, training and monitoring are also very important components in the FDCH program.

There are two types of FDCH:

- Licensed homes that care for 6-15 children
- Alternate approved homes that care for 5 children or less

Food Pantry

Food insecurity is a problem throughout our service area. Community Service Block Grant Funds are used to purchase food for our food pantries in George & Jackson Counties. Community Action of South Mississippi has operated a food pantry in Jackson County for many years through our partnership with Catholic Charities. Food baskets are distributed on Fridays or daily an emergency basis as needed. The baskets include meat, fish, dairy, eggs, fresh fruits and vegetables and canned goods. The selection varies monthly but always provides high quality nutritious food for families in need.

In 2023, CASOMS expanded the food pantry operation to include George County. This partnership includes CASOMS, Sisters in Christ and Feeding America.

Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) relies on innovative and collaborative efforts to reach children in need. USDA encourages collaborations with valued partners such as CASOMS to raise awareness about the nutrition gap low-income children face when schools close for the summer and the availability of summer meals to close this gap.

The SFSP was established to ensure that low-income children continue to receive nutritious meals when school is not in session. Free meals that meet federal nutrition guidelines are provided to all children at approved SFSP sites in areas with significant concentrations of low-income children.

The SFSP operates during school vacations, primarily in the summer months—from May through September. It may also provide meals during vacation breaks in schools that are operated on a year-round basis or a continuous school calendar.

Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP)

The Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) provided funds to help income-eligible residents maintain access to drinking water and wastewater services for families across the country. This important resource provided financial assistance to eligible households in managing costs associated with:

- Water bills
- Wastewater/sewer bills
- Stormwater fees
- Groundwater fees
- Reconnection fees
- Late fees
- Lien removal fees (water-related)

LIHWAP was available for individuals and families who needed assistance paying a current bill, had past-due water bills, had their service terminated, or received a notice indicating that their service would be terminated in the next 60 days.

LIHWAP funds were paid directly to water providers on behalf of income eligible families.

The LIHWAP program will not continue for 2024.

Food Pantry Boxes Provided

In Jackson & George Counties

716
Adults

1,547
Senior Citizens

394
Children

2,220
Total Households

2,657
Total Individuals

SFSP Stats

4,200
Total meals provided for summer 2023

LIHWAP Stats

1,525
Families assisted across George, Harrison and Jackson counties served in 2023

$519,777
Total LIHWAP benefits provided to water providers in our area

LIHEAP Funding Paid to Largest Utility Vendors in 2023

$496,816
Coast EPA

$2,022,677
Mississippi Power

$1,255,025
Singing River EPA

LIHEAP Stats

4,563
Households Assisted

9,684
Individuals Assisted

$435,277
Heat and air conditioning vendors across Mississippi who received LIHEAP funds to repair or replace heat/air equipment in 2023

Parenting Initiative

488
Parents in Harrison & Jackson Counties were provided Active Parenting in 2023

87
Adults were provided Within My Reach relationship workshops in 2023

Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

Community Action of South Mississippi provides Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) services for George, Harrison and Jackson Counties in South Mississippi. LIHEAP provides federally funded assistance to reduce the costs associated with home energy bills, energy crises, weatherization, and minor energy-related home repairs.

LIHEAP helps families stay warm in the winter and cool in the summer through programs that reduce the risk of health and safety problems that arise from unsafe heating and cooling situations and practices.

LIHEAP benefits target households with low incomes, particularly those that have a high home energy burden (percentage of income that goes to heating and cooling bills) and/or have members who are elderly, disabled, and/or have young children.

Families do not receive funds from the LIHEAP program; all funds are paid directly to the utility companies on behalf of the eligible family.

LIHEAP funds are also used to ensure that Mississippi homes have adequate heat/air systems. As we all know living in Mississippi means an air conditioner is a must not a luxury. Community Action of South Mississippi partnered with vendors across the area to repair and in many cases replace air conditioning and heating systems to ensure families are able to remain safe in their home

Parenting Initiative

With grant funding from Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) CASOMS provides parenting classes for parents in Harrison and Jackson counties.

We use two curricula for the classes – Active Parenting and Within My Reach.

Active Parenting offers workshops for families with children 0-5 and 6 & up. These free classes are offered for parents during the day, weekends, and evenings as requested.

The Within My Reach curriculum is designed to strengthen the adult partnership in order to allow parents to provide a health family environment for their children.

Through our pre/post testing and annual follow up we are pleased to share that 100% of families who participated in the Active Parenting classes report that they are still using the tools they learned from the instructor and Active Parenting curriculum materials.

The Within My Reach curriculum provides adults with tools designed to strengthen their relationship skills. Research shows that when adults have strong, healthy relationships, children are given a better chance at growing up in a healthy, loving environment.

60+ Programs

Healthy bodies, alert minds, energized spirits — that is what Community Action of South Mississippi Seniors Program for adults age 60+ is all about. CASOMS Senior Program is year-round and offers diverse activities to support independence and enhance quality of life. We are pleased to say that we have finally recouped our pre-covid attendance and participation.

The senior center is a focal point in the community where persons, individually or as a group, come together for a broad spectrum of services, educational and recreational programs and activities. These facilities enable individuals 60 years of age and older to socialize, develop skills, engage in activities, learn new roles that enhance their dignity, support their independence and encourage their involvement within the community.

Services offered include transportation, congregate meals, and a variety of activities geared toward adults 60+.

Units of Service

14,693
Congregate Meals

26,109
Transportation

16,358
Senior Center

Community Engagement

Health Advisory Committee

United Way Sponsored Literacy Week

Chevron Refinery Little Libraries

Pascagoula Audubon Center

Scranton Nature Center

Lynn Meadows Children's Museum

Policy Council Board of Directors

Partnerships with Public Schools

Excel by 5

Pre-K Launchpad

Pascagoula-Gautier School District

Books Come Alive Jackson & George County Library

Transition to Kindergarten Field Trip

American Cancer Society Relay for Life

American Heart Association Heart Walk

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

HIV/AIDS Awareness Workshops

Coastal Family Health Center (Mobile Unit)

South MS Smiles

Vision Center

Vancleave Library

Turkey Boxes = Food Pantry Donations

Vancleave Volunteer Fire Department

Let's Go Gulf Coast

BAZ Family Medical Clinic

Community Action of South Mississippi

Helping People, Changing Lives

CASOMS.ORG

Administration Office

Jackson County
5343 Jefferson Avenue
Moss Point, MS 39563

Senior Center Centers

Ocean Springs Senior Center
514 Washington Ave
Ocean Springs, MS 39564

Moss Point Senior Center
5343 Jefferson Avenue
Moss Point, MS 39563

First Step Centers

First Step Childcare Center
5343 Jefferson Avenue
Moss Point, MS 39563

Head Start Centers

Gautier HS
(Gautier Elementary)
505 Magnolia Tree Drive
Gautier, MS 39553

Gautier Head Start Center
1017 Highway 90
Gautier MS 39553

Jefferson Head Start Center
5343 Jefferson Avenue
Moss Point, MS 39563

Kreole HS
(Kreole Primary School)
6312 Martin Luther King Blvd
Moss Point, MS 39563

Martin Bluff HS
(Martin Bluff Elementary)
1306 Roys Rd
Gautier, MS 39553

Pascagoula HS
3301 Spruce Street
Pascagoula, MS 39581

Taconi Head Start
711 Magnolia Street
Ocean Springs, MS 39564

CSBG LIHEAP Centers

George County
11 Holmes Street
Lucedale, MS 39453

Harrison County
500 24th Street
Gulfport, MS 39507

Jackson County
5343 Jefferson Avenue
Moss Point, MS 39563