

ANNUAL REPORT

2022
2023

Helping People, Changing Lives since 1964

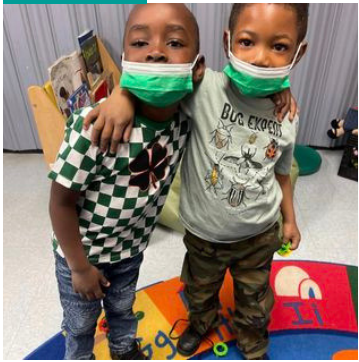


TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION

<i>GCA Board of Directors</i>	1
<i>Promise of Community Action</i>	2
<i>Our Mission & Vision</i>	2
<i>Company Info</i>	3

FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

<i>Letter from the CEO</i>	4
----------------------------	---

HEAD START PROGRAM

<i>Letter from the Head Start Director</i>	6
<i>Notice of Award</i>	7
<i>Approach to School Readiness</i>	8
<i>Families & Children Served</i>	9
<i>Children Services Provided</i>	10
<i>Family Services Provided</i>	11
<i>Summer Enrichment Program</i>	11-12
<i>Financial Information</i>	14-15
<i>Budget Justifications</i>	16
<i>Locations</i>	17

COMMUNITY SERVICE BLOCK GRANT

<i>Letter from the CSBG Director</i>	19
<i>Performance Outcomes</i>	20-25
<i>Demographics</i>	26
<i>Success Story</i>	27
<i>Community Events</i>	28
<i>Locations</i>	29

FROM THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

<i>Letter from the CFO</i>	31
<i>Agency-wide Financial Information</i>	32

ADMIN STAFF

<i>Admin Staff</i>	33
--------------------	----



Board of Directors

Representative of the Poor

Angelica Carter - Lincoln County
Clair Watkins - Stanly County
Joyce Coleman - Cleveland County
Mary Gibson - Gaston County
Sonya Lewis - Gaston County
William Lindsay - Gaston County

Public Elected Officials

Cherie Feemster - Gaston County
Machelle Parker - Stanly County
Ola Mae Foster - Lincoln County
Phyllis Williams - Cleveland County

Representative of Private Organizations

Deborah Oates - Cleveland County
Emily Winfrey - Gaston County
Michael Lane - Gaston County
Keith Poston - Lincoln County
Patsy Howell - Stanly County

2022 - 2023 Slate of Officers

Michael Lane
President

Deborah Oates
Vice president

Emily Winfrey
Secretary

Joyce Coleman
Treasurer

Ola Mae Foster
At Large





The Promise of Community Action

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

Our Vision

Providing quality services to empower families to eliminate barriers to success

Our Mission

Teaching and reaching communities through resources and education

Core Values

- Integrity
- Inclusiveness
- Empowering
- Warm, friendly environment
- Accountability
- Transparency

Company Information



Gaston Community Action, Inc.

Gaston Community Action, Inc. (GCA) is a private non-profit corporation structured in accordance with standards and requirements of the Federal Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 and amendments and duly chartered by the State of North Carolina to operate anti-poverty programs on October 22, 1964.

The CSBG program is directed toward making low-income residents of the four counties. The self-sufficiency program is funded by the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services by providing funds to help with employment, housing, education, and transportation. GCA also administers the Head Start Program in Gaston and Lincoln Counties.

The Head Start program educates 431 preschool children. The programs are funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families, USDA, and NC Pre-K funds.

Gaston Community Action, Inc. is governed by an eighteen (18) member tri-partite Board of Directors. One-third of the board is elected public officials or their representatives. One-third are representatives of business, industry, labor, religion, education, or other major groups and interests in the community. One-third are individuals who represent the poor in the area served. The tri-partite composition of membership provides for the actual problems experienced by the poor to be voiced by their representatives and responded to by the representatives of the business and local government.



GCA serves families and individuals in the counties of Cleveland, Gaston, Lincoln, and Stanly.

From the Chief Executive Officer

During the pandemic, Gaston Community Action, Inc. was able to maintain its day-to-day operations. Adjustments had to be made and were made to continue to serve the greater community of low-wealth families, their children, and newly unemployed individuals. Our outstanding board members and our outstanding staff served as frontline workers. Commitment, dedication, and perseverance have been demonstrated by all involved. Gaston Community Action's progress has been possible because of the sacrifices made. I am most thankful that we are able to remain and sustain our programs.

Our Community Service Block Grant Program continues to operate in four counties Gaston, Cleveland, Stanly, and Lincoln Counties. GCA provides a wide range of services to address meeting the needs of the family unit. Increased requests for job training, clothing, and job placement continue. As always, our focus remains on providing quality services, even during a pandemic.

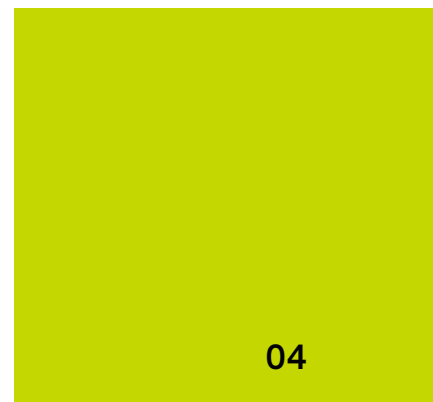
The adjustments made during COVID-19 impacted our Head Start Program. We were only able to serve 412 children. During the summer months, we provided additional educational services. This adjustment had a greater impact on our preschoolers' readiness for kindergarten.

Although COVID-19 remains active in our communities, Gaston Community Action will stay on the front line serving our families. In 2023-24, our goal is to seek and expand collaborations with other non-profit organizations. This endeavor means all hands on board, and doing their part, our GCA board creating impactful fundraisers, and our staff continuing to provide quality services. Once again all things will be possible for Gaston Community Action's road to success.

Sincerely,

Joseph W. Dixon

CEO - Gaston Community Action, Inc.





195

3 year old's served

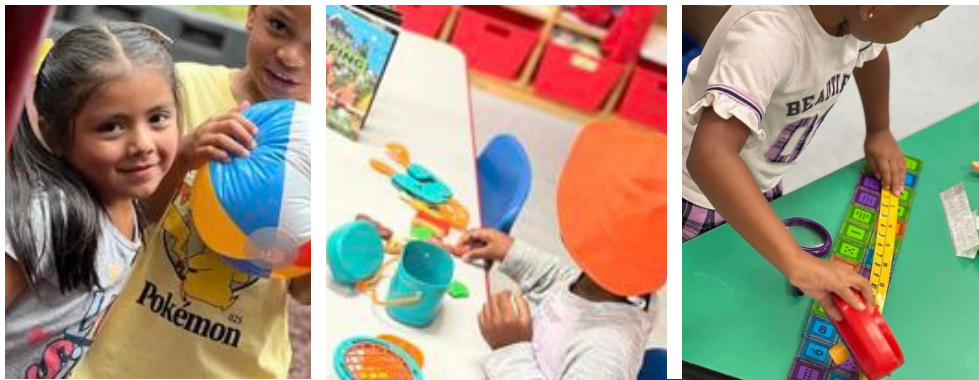
217

4 year old's served

Head Start

412

Cumulative Enrollment



Centers

7

75

Employed



2

NC Pre-k
Gaston County

3

NC Pre-k
Lincoln County

Annual Report School Year 2022—2023
In fulfillment of the requirements of the
Preparing Head Start for School Readiness
Act of 2007(644(a)(2)(B))

From the desk of the Head Start Director

We are excited and honored to share our Annual Report for Gaston Community Action Head Start. We would like to thank you for your continued interest and investment of time and energy to our program. The effects of the pandemic have impacted our program and contributed to a challenging program year for staff. The program continues to experience staff shortages, which resulted in the closure of several classrooms this year. The pandemic has impacted the field of education in general, and early childhood education specifically, resulting in considerable difficulty staffing early childhood programs, which has affected enrollment and the early childhood programs to fill slots. Despite these challenges, we have been committed to providing a high-quality, comprehensive early childhood experience for our students and families.

This year we have conquered another successful year and we continue to accomplish our goals of making a difference in the lives of families and children within our community. Our goal is to serve as a model of excellence in early care and education throughout the nation, and this year marked an important step in achieving that goal with a successful review by the Office of Head Start. With the successful results from our Federal Monitoring Review, we realize that we have the necessary systems in place to continue to innovate and improve. We recognize that our success is only possible with the dedication of our staff and the support of our partners as well as our Board and Policy Council. Most of all, we would be remiss if we didn't recognize that parents are their children's first and best teachers. We are humbled by your trust in us to help educate and care for your children. With collaboration and stellar leadership, our program continuously provides families and children access to high-quality early educational programs in their earliest and most vulnerable years.

Each day, we make a positive difference in the lives of children through the outstanding dedication of our staff and the educational experiences we provide on a daily basis. Our Head Start program is the foundation that builds school readiness and future success. As we all know, young children today, are our future tomorrow. Investing in children is why we are committed to providing comprehensive services with excellence. This report is just a snapshot of our efforts throughout the year, but we hope you find it an uplifting reflection of our commitment to cultivating positive and long-lasting experiences for our children and our communities.

Sincerely,

Kristin Thomas, MC, MHRM

Head Start Director



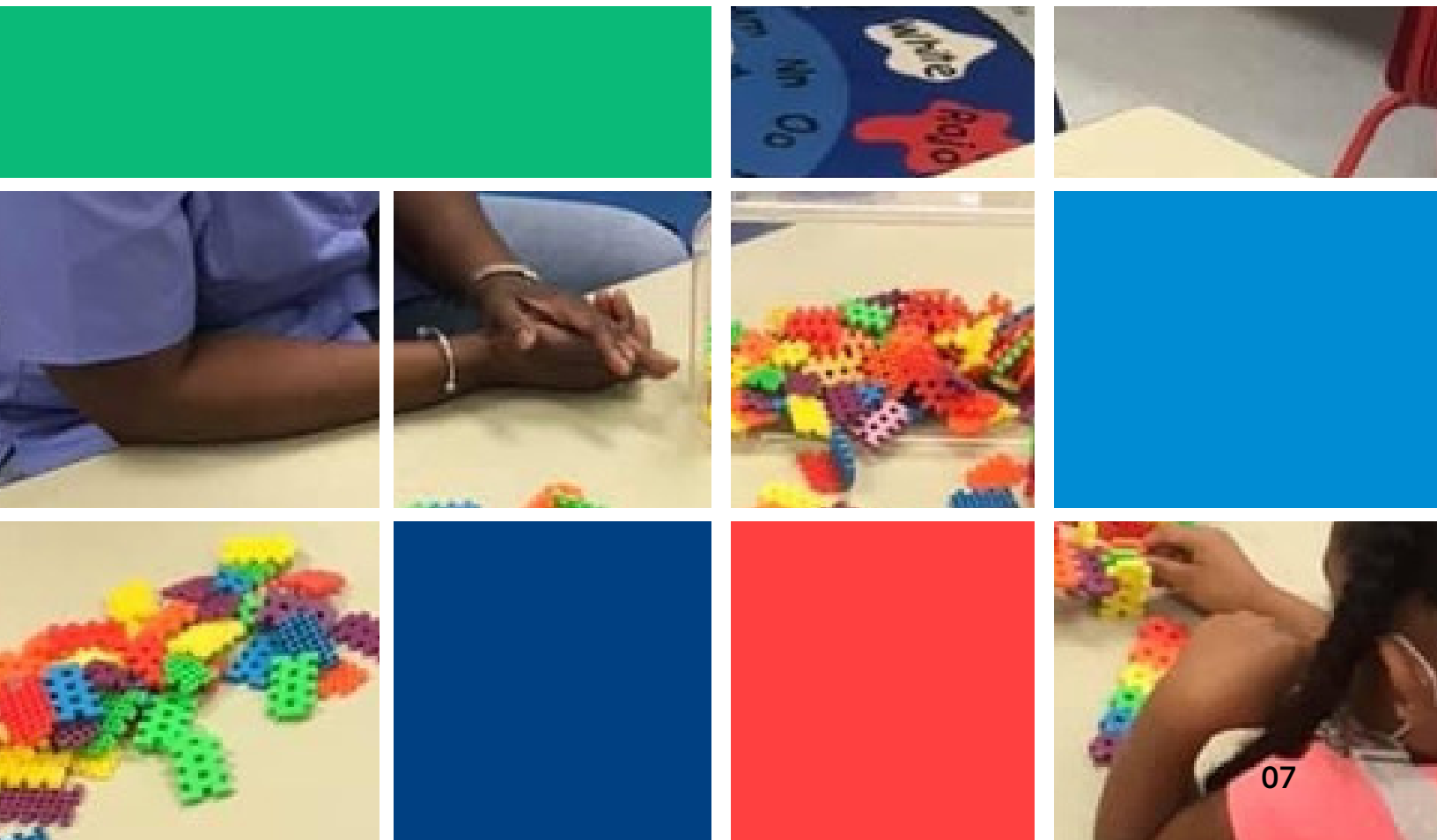
Program Notice Award for Five-Year Head Start Project Periods

The Office of Head Start (OHS) is moving from indefinite project periods to five-year project periods for all Head Start grantees. This requires changes in OHS funding practices and oversight of Head Start Programs. Changes in oversight will include improved communication between federal staff and grantees, as well as ongoing analysis of data to determine the type of support needed by grantees. The main purpose of improved oversight is to demonstrate the quality of program services, the effectiveness of management systems, and the achievement of outcomes for children, families, and communities. This is our agency's last year of the five (5) year period beginning July 2019. We were monitored by our funding sources in February 2023. Monitoring visits are to ensure program compliance in Health and Safety; ERSEA and Fiscal. We are looking forward to our CLASS observation review for our classroom teaching staff.

OHS APPROACH TO SCHOOL READINESS FOR GCA's HEAD START PROGRAM

The Head Start School Readiness encompasses three major frameworks that promote an understanding of school readiness for parents and families. The three frameworks provide the foundation for implementing a systemic and integrated comprehensive child development service including family engagement. Grantees must ensure that frameworks are implemented and reports are generated.

Gaston Community Action, Inc.'s Head Start is funded through the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start. Our funded enrollment is 431 children. Children who leave the program are replaced by those on a waiting list.



GCA's Approach to School Readiness Goals for children

Head Start defines school readiness as children possessing the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary for success in school, for later learning and life. The Head Start approach to school readiness means that children are ready for school, families are ready to support their children's learning, and schools are ready for children.

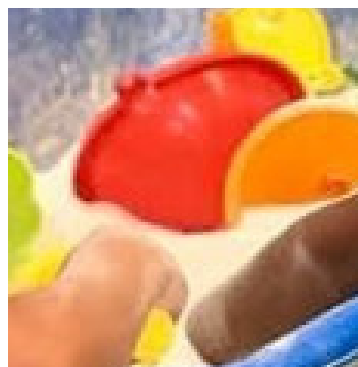
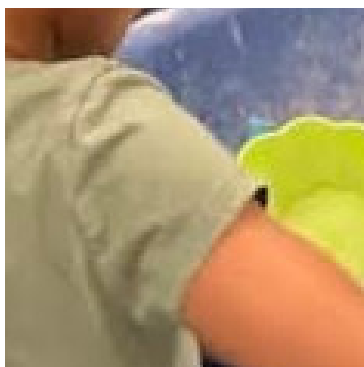
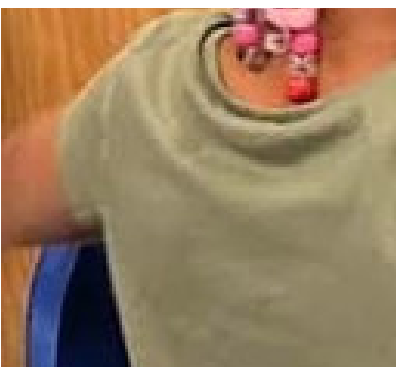
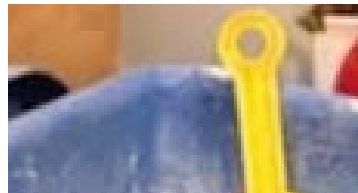
Gaston Community Action, Inc. Head Start is committed to ensuring that children who leave our Head Start program are prepared when they enter the kindergarten program in the public schools. The teaching staff use various strategies including the Classroom Learning Assessment System (CLASS) observation tool to enhance best practice to ensure all children enrolled are working toward meeting goals in all domain areas. These domain areas are assessed daily. The five essential domains are:

- Approaches to Learning and Play
- Social-Emotional Development
- Cognition and General Knowledge
- Language Development and Literacy Knowledge and Skills
- Physical and Health Development

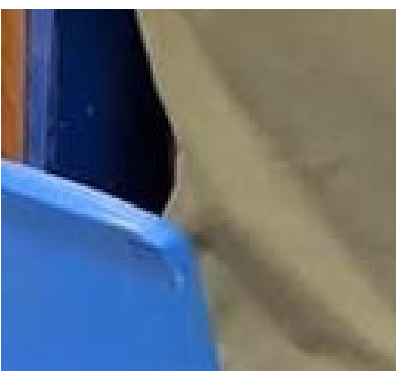
With the implementation of these domains, GCA HS will ensure that children (including those with disabilities) are fully equipped with the necessary skills to successfully transition to kindergarten. The training and mentoring of teaching staff are critical in meeting school readiness goals. Parents are included in goal setting in order to help the child's progress.



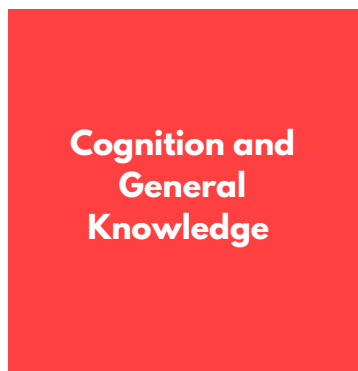
**Approaches to Learning and Play
Language Development and
Literacy Knowledge Skills**



**Social-Emotional
Development**



**Physical and
Health
Development**



**Cognition and
General
Knowledge**



Families & Children Served

336

Families Served

291

Single-parent

95

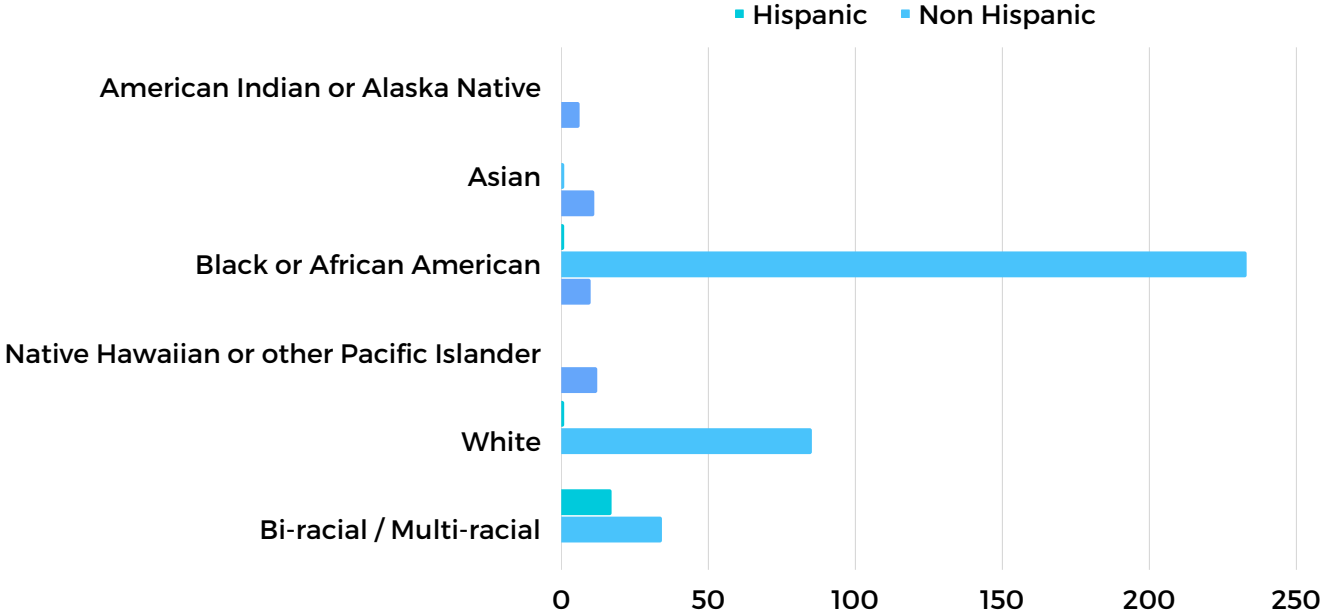
Two-parent

10

Homeless

2

Foster

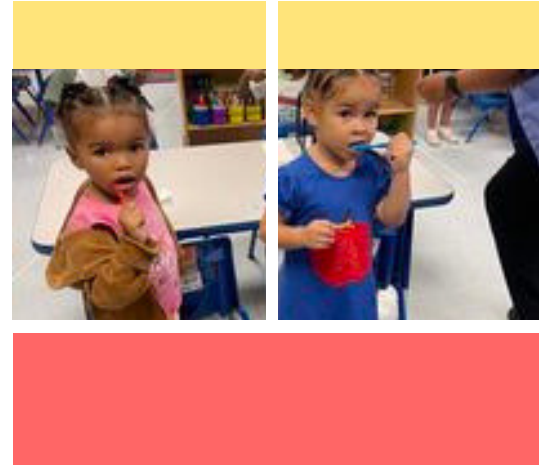


30

Dual Language Learners



Children Services Provided



DENTAL

383

Children received preventive dental care during the school year

MEDICAL

100 %

Of enrolled children have an ongoing source of continuous accessibly health care

336

Children were enrolled in Medicaid and 76 are enrolled in Private Insurance

21

Children were diagnosed by a health professional with a chronic condition.

11

Needed no treatment

5

Received medical treatment

NUTRITION

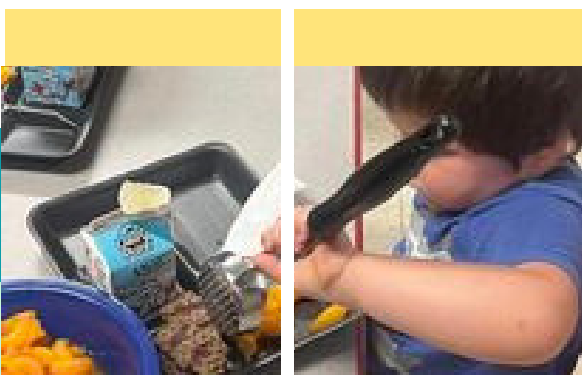
100%

Of children enrolled participated in the Child and Adult Care Program and received free meals

TRANSPORTATION

76

Children were assisted with transportation to and from classes



Family Services Provided



Involvement in discussing their child's screening and assessment results and their child's progress

Supporting transitions between programs

Research-based parenting curriculum

Education on preventive medical and oral health

Education on nutrition

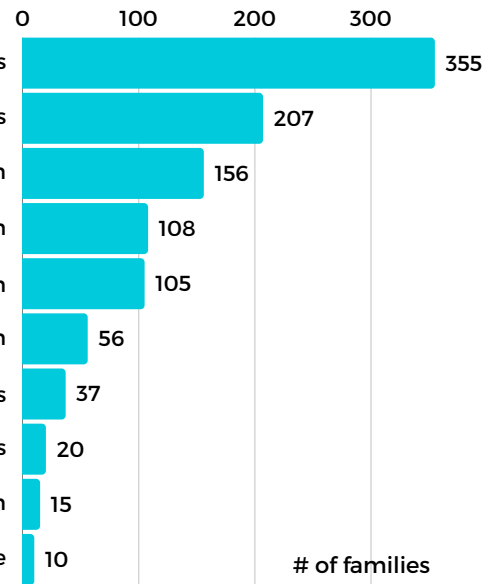
Emergency/crisis intervention

Mental health services

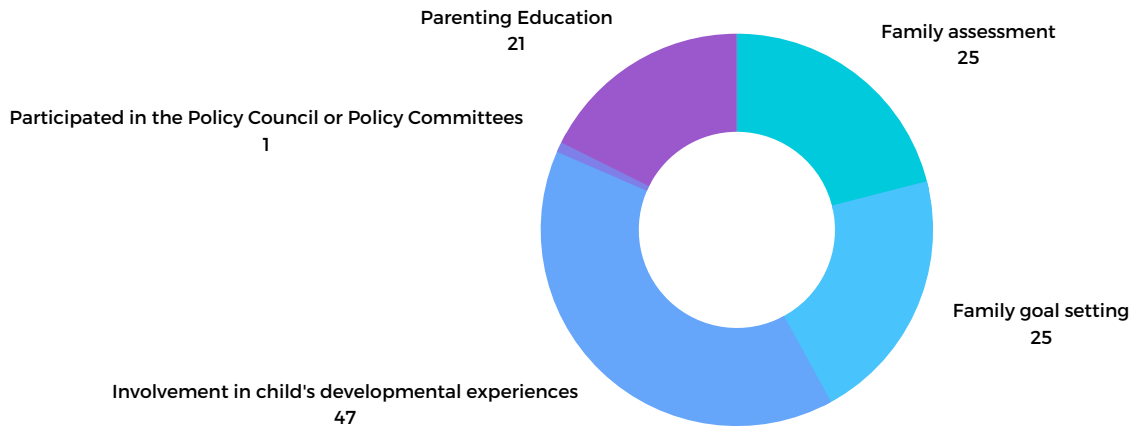
Asset building services

Assistance in enrolling into education or job training program

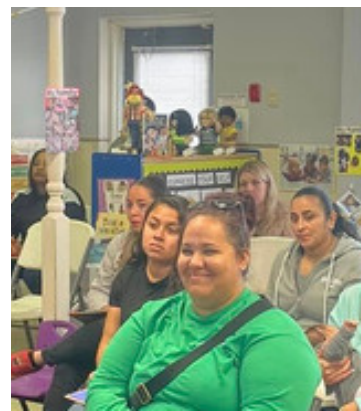
Housing assistance



Parent Engagement / Male Involvement



Parents participated in the parent curriculum (Ready Rosie)



103
Volunteers

51
Current or former Head Start Parent

173

Transition to Kindergarten



SUMMER HIGHLIGHTS



01

ENGAGEMENT

Children were present each day!

02

PARENTS

- 1) Were supportive, included and engaged!
- 2) Were truly thankful for our Summer Enrichment Program!

03

TEACHING TEAMS

Teaching Teams were creative and excited about implementing lessons with their students.

04

GROWTH

Through the rigorous and intentional teachings, children gained additional skills across developmental domain areas.

73

Students Attended the Summer Enriched Program





SUMMER LESSON PLANS

Children had a blast exploring these various topics!



CAMPING

Children were able to explore what's considered to be summer fruits and cold treats and then graph the class favorites to analyze favorites.

THE BEACH

All Children learned some common terms associated with the beach and be able to identify those beach terms through various classroom activities.



SUMMER AROUND THE WORLD

Children were able to discover what other children or countries are doing around the world and were able to dress up and present their selected countries

SUMMER FRUITS & COLD TREATS

Children taste tested various Fruits & Treats!



PHOTO TIME



Head Start Funding Sources

CATEGORY	7/01/2022-3/31/2023	4/01/2023-6/30/2023	TOTAL
Head Start, OHS, DHHS	4,154,793	951,751	5,106,544
GCA Non-federal share	904,796	267,915	1,172,711
Gaston Pre-K	74,100	0	74,100
Lincoln Pre-K	35,727	98,487	134,214
USDA	233,899	64,310	298,209
Other	5,722	350	6,072
TOTAL FUNDING	5,409,037	1,382,813	6,791,850

Head Start Budgeted Expenditures

CATEGORY	7/01/2022-3/31/2023	4/01/2023-6/30/2023	TOTAL
Personnel	1,878,674	491,754	2,370,428
Fringe Benefits	588,842	174,987	763,829
Travel			0
Equipment	426,853		426,853
Supplies	182,039	49,315	231,354
Contractual	354,551	85,307	439,858
Facilities/Construction			0
T&TA	69,245	31,074	100,319
Other	489,223	142,674	631,897
Indirect Costs	514,814	139,787	654,601
GCA Non-federal share	904,796	267,915	1,172,711
Total	5,409,037	1,382,813	6,791,850

Head Start Budget Justifications

Personnel	2,370,428	Includes compensation for all Head Start employees for services rendered to the program.
Fringe Benefits	763,829	Includes FICA, health insurance, life insurance, disability insurance, workers comp insurance, SUTA and retirement paid on behalf of eligible staff.
Equipment	426,853	Includes playgrounds with slide & playground mats, playground timber replacement, playground awnings, A/C unit replacements, fence installation.
Supplies	231,354	Includes janitorial supplies, office supplies, disabilities supplies, program supplies and medical/dental supplies.
Contractual	439,858	Includes child dental treatment, child medical treatment, equipment rental/lease, child mental health contract, school lunches, contract food.
T&TA	100,319	Includes employee development and training & technical assistance for staff.
Other	631,897	Includes all other expenditures necessary for Program function such as communications, postage, local travel, space costs, translation, dues & registration, publications, printing, advertising, policy council & parent activities, equipment maintenance & repair, liability insurance, transportation costs, professional services, facility repairs & licensing, & technology costs.
Indirect Costs	654,601	Includes all allowable expenditures within the indirect cost pool to administer the Program.
GCA Non-federal share	1,172,711	Includes property or services that benefit the Head Start program and are contributed by non-Federal third parties without charge to the grantee.
TOTAL	6,791,850	

Head Start Locations

Gaston County



Cherryville Head Start
203 N. Elm Street
Cherryville, NC 28021
(704) 435-8946



Highland Charter Head Start
324 N. Highland Street
Gastonia, NC 28052
(704) 866-9874



Rankin I Head Start
714 Rankin Ave
Gastonia, NC 28052
(704) 861-2285



Rankin II Head Start
304 N. Highland Street
Gastonia, NC 28052
(704) 866-6345

Lincoln County



Oaklawn Head Start
410 Linden Street
Lincolnton, NC 28092
(704) 735-4702



Deaton Head Start
101 Deaton Ave
Lincolnton, NC 28092



Rankin I Head Start
714 Rankin Ave
Gastonia, NC 28052
(704) 861-2285



Head Start Central Office
223 N. Morris Street
Gastonia, NC 28052
704-861-2283

Hours of operation
7:30 AM - 2:00 PM

Community Service Block Grant



From the desk of the CSBG Director

GCA operates the Total Family Achievement Program (TFAP) with federal funds from the Office of Community Services (OCS) under the Community Service Block Grant (CSBG), administered by the NC Department of Health & Human Services (NCDHHS) under the Division of Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO).

The CSBG program is designed to alleviate the causes and conditions of poverty in communities in efforts to promote self-sufficiency.

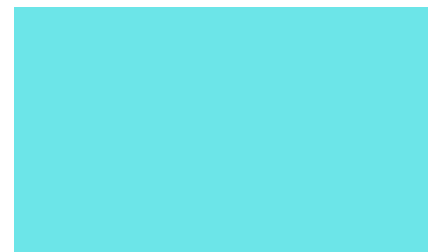
The TFAP utilizes CSBG funds to serve the counties of Cleveland, Gaston, Lincoln, and Stanly with a vision of providing quality services to empower families to eliminate barriers to success, and a mission to teach and reach communities through resources and education.

During the 2022-2023, 145 individuals and families received assistance with the CSBG program. Overall, 17 families rose above the income poverty guidelines and reached self-sufficiency.

Sincerely,

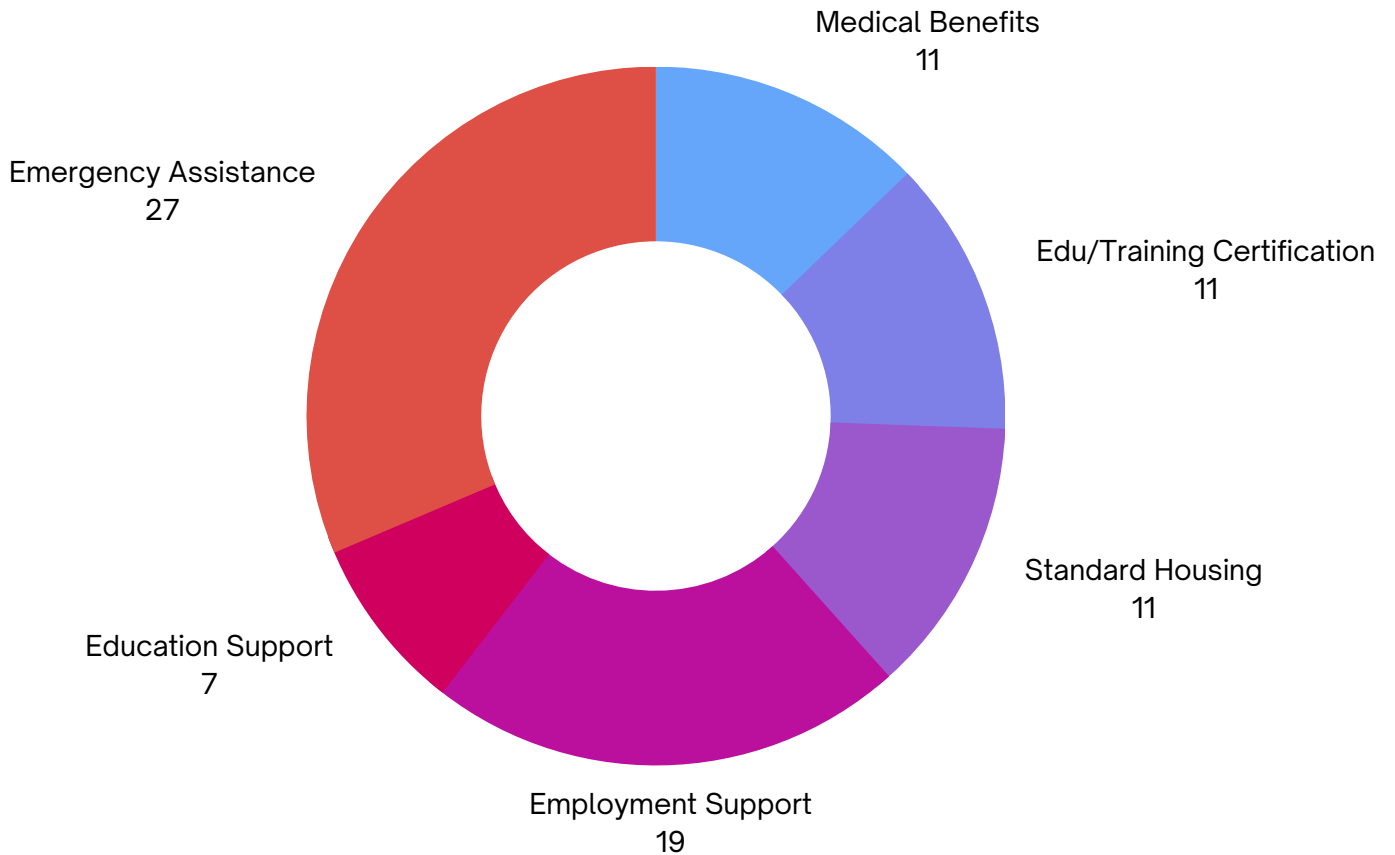
Alicia Exum, MBA

CSBG Director



CSBG Performance Outcomes

7/1/22 - 6/30/23



145 Families Served



CSBG Supportive Services 7/1/22 - 6/30/23

45

Families Maint.
Housing

17

Utility Payments

9

Transportation

145

CSBG Families Served

\$104,696

Funds used on Supportive Services

\$47,148

Funds used towards training

CARES CSBG Supportive Services 7/1/22 - 9/30/22

46

Families Maint.
Housing

29

Utility Payments

2

Medical Payment

14

Transportation

100

CSBG CARES Families Served

\$148,245

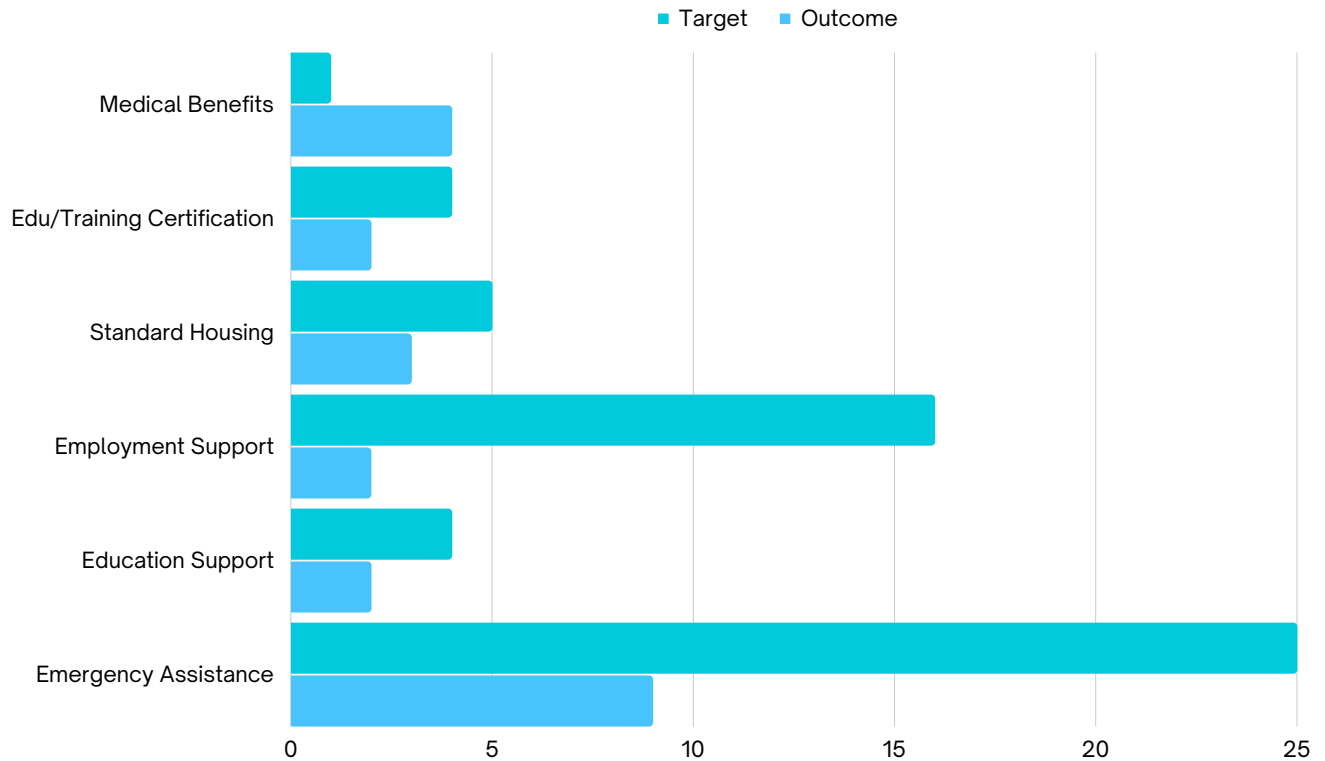
Funds used on Supportive Services

\$22,260

Funds used towards training

Cleveland County

46 Families Served



5
Obtained
Employment

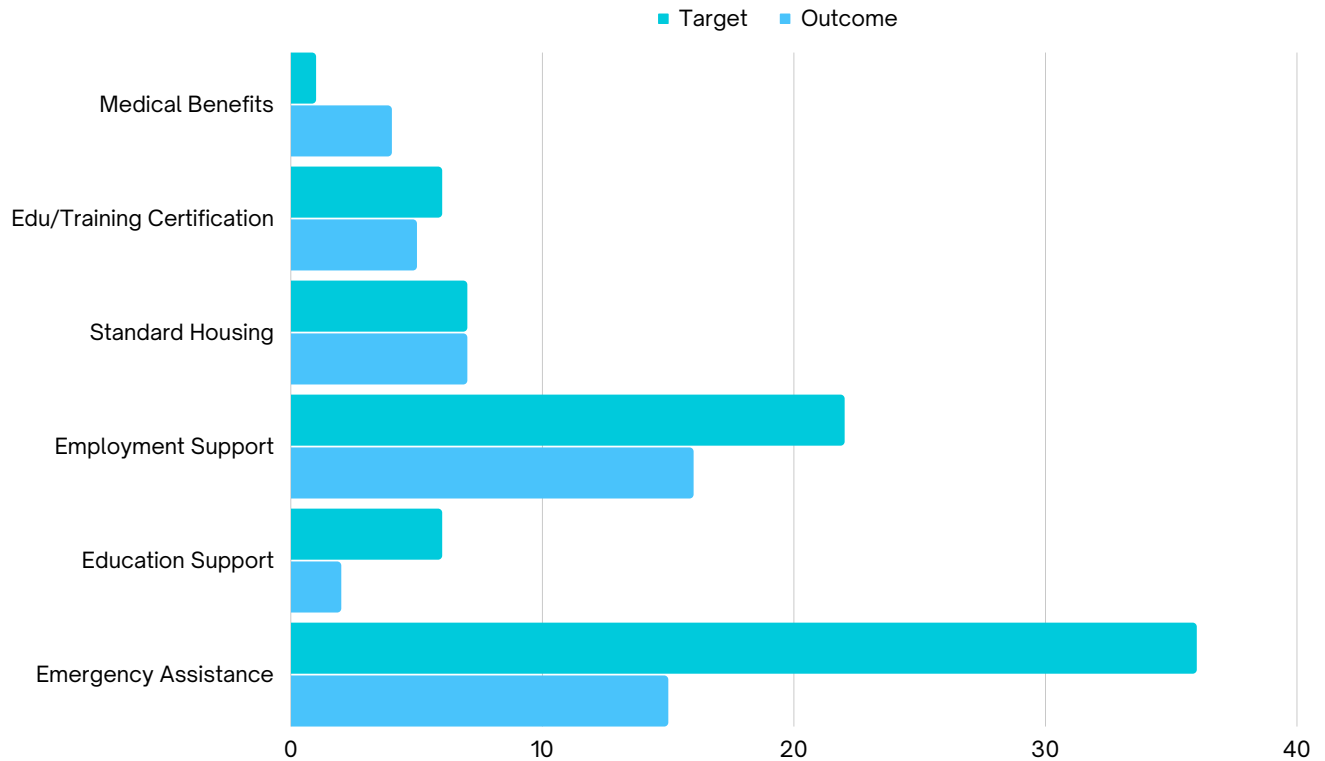
0
Obtained Better
Employment

7
Risen Above
Poverty Level

CSBG Performance

Gaston County

56 Families Served



7
Obtained
Employment

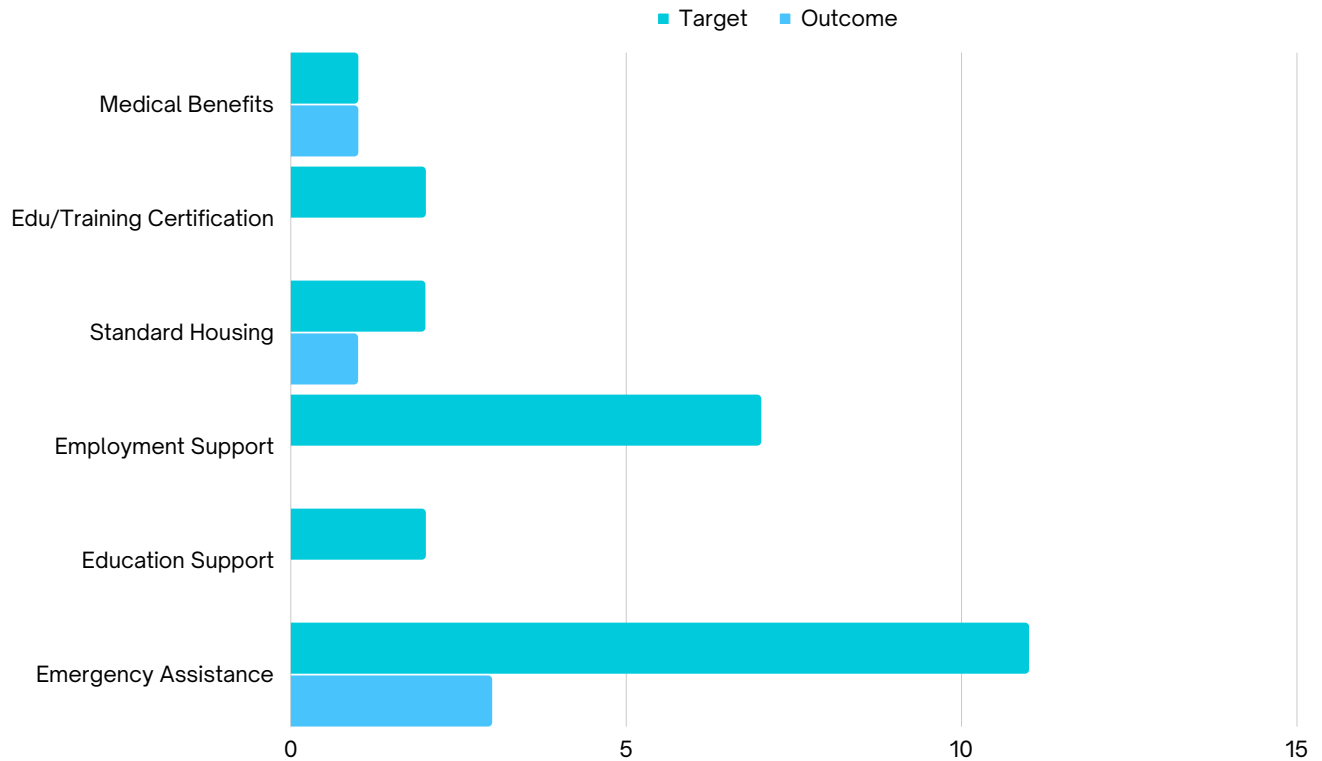
5
Obtained Better
Employment

6
Risen Above
Poverty Level

CSBG Performance

Lincoln County

28 Families Served



2
Obtained
Employment

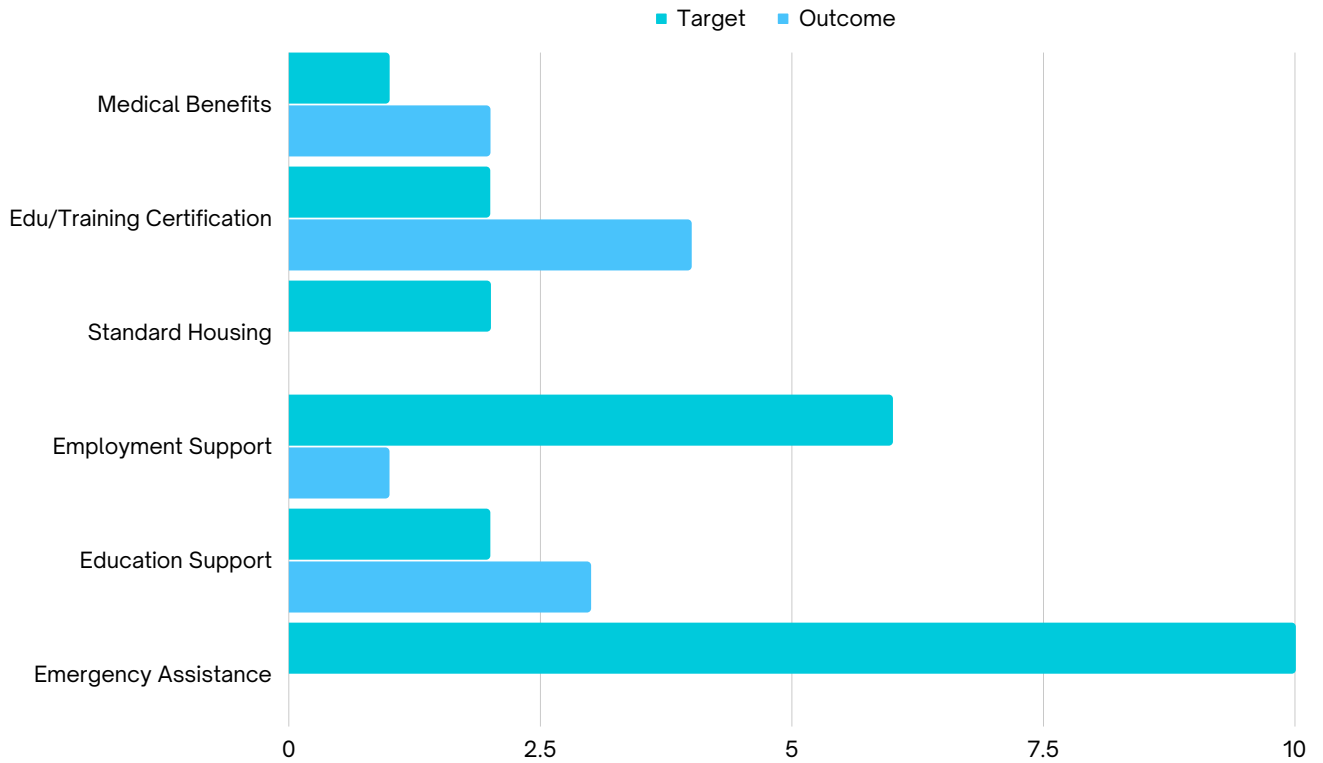
0
Obtained Better
Employment

1
Risen Above
Poverty Level

CSBG Performance

Stanly County

15 Families Served



3
Obtained
Employment

0
Obtained Better
Employment

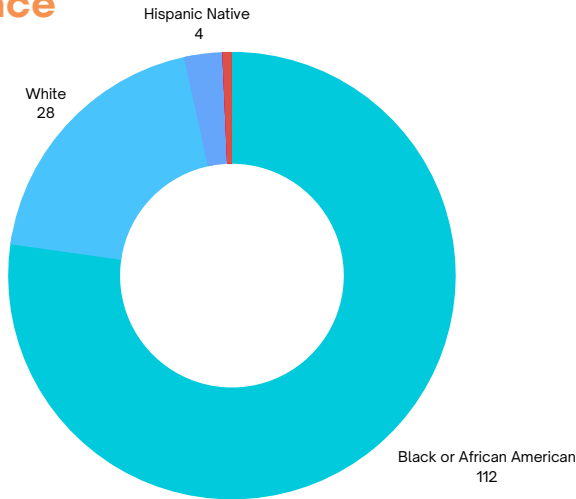
3
Risen Above
Poverty Level

CSBG Performance

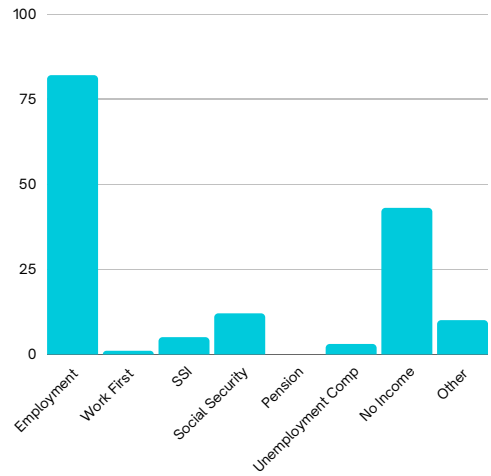
Demographics

145 Families Served

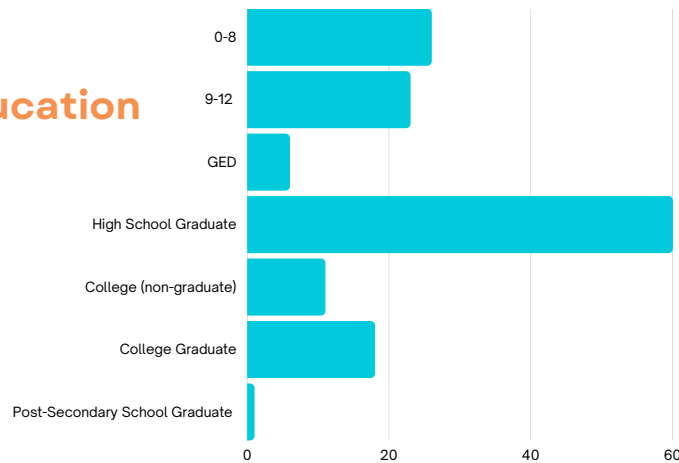
Race



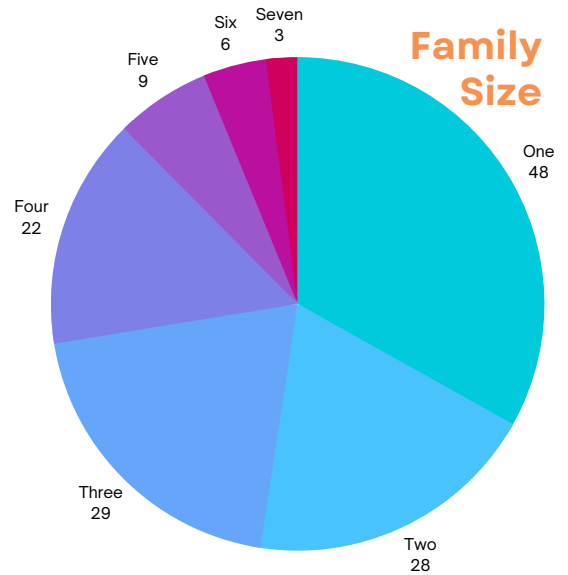
Source of Income



Education



Family Size



111
Females

33
Males

1
Other

Family Type

Single Parent (Female): 78
 Single Parent (Male): 4
 Two-Parent Household: 7
 Single Person: 49
 Two Adults (No children): 2
 Grandparents: 1

Success Story



04

In August 2022 The Participant was able to obtain employment in the safety field with a major contracting company across Charlotte, NC. As a result, in obtaining and maintaining employment for 90 days, the participant was able to reach self-sufficiency and has far exceeded the income poverty guideline

03

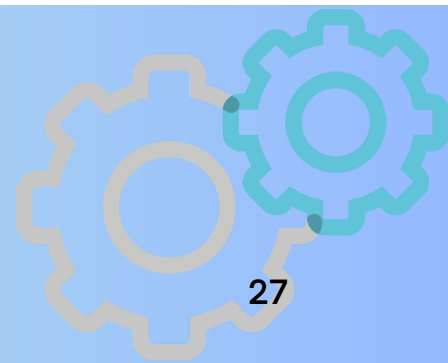
With the assistance of a CSBG Case Manager, the participant was interested in enrolling in a safety class, (OSHA 500). The participant was able to complete and obtain his safety course certification to teach safety classes and share his passion for employment safety with others

02

The participant was placed on workman's comp due to accident on the job

01

Participant enrolled into the Total Family Achievement Program in June 2022 with zero income



Community Events



CSBG Locations

Gaston County

223 N. Morris Street
Gastonia, NC 28052
(704) 861-2283

Gaston County Staff

Alicia Exum, CSBG Director
Robin Conner, Case Manager
Leslie Lowery, Case Manager
Tomeka Black-Starr, Intake Specialist

Cleveland County

827 S. Washington Street
Shelby, NC 28150
(704) 480-0722

Cleveland County Staff

Jackie Thompson, Case Manager
Wavie Wallace, Intake Specialist

Lincoln County

1224 Flint Street
Lincolnton, NC 28092
(704) 748-9744

Lincoln County Staff

Cynthia Vinson, Case Manager

Stanly County

507 Old Charlotte Road
Albemarle, NC 28001
(704) 985-1928

Stanly County Staff

David Brown, Case Manager



Office Hours
Monday - Friday
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Financial Highlights

Financial Audit Results: For the year ended June 30, 2022, the auditor issued an unmodified opinion. There were no financial statement findings and no questioned costs.



From the desk of the CFO

During this time of uncertainty, Gaston Community Action, Inc. (GCA) stepped up to the challenges facing our organization and the families in the communities where we serve and the staff remained fully committed to helping people and changing lives.

One of the most critical parts of community-based human services infrastructure was preparing to respond and leverage a wide range of funding to best utilize the impact of those dollars in the community and help to build community resilience.

GCA finance department administered and managed a range of federal, state, and local funding streams, blending those resources to fill gaps in services and maximize the impact of each dollar. The experience of the administrative staff along with sound fiscal management practices provided the capacity to quickly receive, track, and disburse funds to those most in need of resources.

Additional funding was provided by the US Department of Health and Human Services, the NC Department of Health and Human Services, USDA, NC Pre-K funding, and Target.

The additional funding has been utilized to help staff and families experiencing financial hardships, provide materials to promote learning, and provide training to address situations that staff, families, and the entire community had not experienced before. We have learned as an organization that where there is a need, there is a way to address it, even if it is something the agency has never done before. Relationships were developed and strengthened as we all used the power of teamwork, conviction, commitment, resolve, and creativity to address problems that impacted all of our lives.

The lessons learned and the lives touched during such a challenging time truly embrace 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 we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.

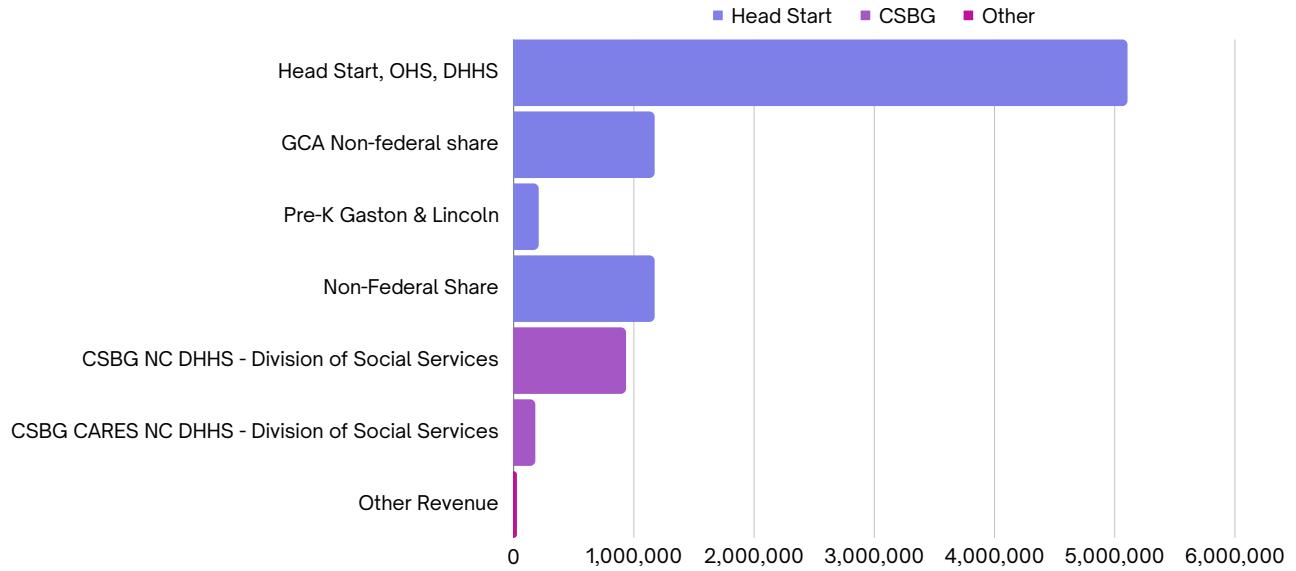
Sincerely,

Susan Salzman, MBA, CCAP
CFO - Gaston Community Action



Financial Information

July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023



Head Start US Dept. of Health & Human Services - Administration for Children and Families	5,106,544
USDA	298,209
Pre-k Gaston & Lincoln County	208,314
Non-Federal Share	1,172,711
CSBG - NC DHHS- Division of Social Services	934,730
CSBG CARES NC DHHS- Division of Social Services	180,179
Other Revenues	27,044
TOTAL	7,927,731



ADMIN STAFF

Joseph W. Dixon

Chief Executive Officer

Susan Salzman

Chief Financial Officer

Shelly Robinson

Assistant Financial Officer

Travice Tatum-Conner

Chief Human Resource Officer

Anais Moreau


Compliance Coordinator



Thank You



We hope to continue to increase services and funding through partnerships and collaborations

 (704) 861-2283

 223 N. Morris Street - Gastonia, NC 28052

 www.gastonca.org