



Aroostook County Action Program

We Make Life Better!

2019 Impact Report



Aroostook County Action Program



Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Partnership and impact – two words that best capture Aroostook County Action Program and our efforts in 2019. This report shares some of the many ways we worked collaboratively to make a difference in the lives of the families and individuals we served across the region – and the results of that work.

No partnership is more important than those we have with the people we serve. Through our Comprehensive Service Delivery and Whole Family Approach, ACAP customers are working with our team to set and achieve goals. They are in the driver's seat, with our support, making positive changes!

ACAP has been a key leader and convener in 2019 on some significant projects to meet the pressing needs cited in our most recent community assessment. The establishment of the Hope and Prosperity Resource Center at our 771 Main Street Presque Isle facility is helping meet a critical need for individuals and families facing homelessness or housing insecurity. Not only are customers accessing housing, they are securing employment, education, childcare and numerous other services offered by ACAP and our community partners.

Through a multi-sector collaborative addressing early childhood and transportation needs, the Going Places Network – with ACAP in the lead, got Aroostook's first fixed route bus service "The PI Loop" on the road in Presque Isle, helping address the key issue of access to transportation. Many other partnerships brought valuable health and prevention services, home weatherization and repairs, fuel assistance and many more services to communities across The County.

On behalf of the ACAP Board and Staff, thank you to all of our partners for helping us make a positive impact on the lives of thousands of people!

Steve Richard
ACAP Board Chair

Jason Parent
Executive Director/CEO

Aroostook County Action Program, Inc. provides services and resources that help individuals and families achieve greater economic independence. As a leader, or in partnership with others, ACAP strengthens the community by responding to human needs.

“I feel like an eagle”



Kayla, once hungry and homeless, led a life of crime and violence as she struggled just to survive. She had dropped out of school and was heading down the wrong path. There were many lows for Kayla including challenging relationships, difficult family situations, and single parenting of three children, one of whom has severe medical needs. Kayla knew she needed to go back to school. She wanted an education and a career to be able to take care of her family, but something always got in the way.

It was at that time that Kayla connected with the team at ACAP. First it was home visiting for her children and then a family coach. It was at that time that Kayla knew she needed to focus on her education to make life better for herself and her young children. Growing up as a child in poverty, she knew she wanted to break that cycle and education was the way to do that. The ACAP coaching team was able to connect Kayla and her family to the resources they needed, the resources that provided the stability for them to grow.

Through hard work, persistence and the supports around her, Kayla has been able to break the cycle. In May, Kayla graduated from Adult Education as the Valedictorian of her class. She received the Director's Choice Award and was inducted into the Adult Education National Honor Society. Kayla is now attending Northern Maine Community College as she pursues her degree in Early Childhood Education, with the goal of working with children and providing for her own children.

I wasn't the confident person you see now, I wouldn't talk much, I felt like an ant and now I feel like an eagle – I am higher than where I'm supposed to be". –Kayla Provost



Aroostook County Action Program
**Hope & Prosperity
Resource Center**

Hope and Prosperity Resource Center- A Place with a Purpose

The need for the Hope and Prosperity Resource Center has become evident over the past year as more and more County residents in crisis have turned to us. We have been able to not only assist these individuals and families move beyond the emergency situation, but to help them get housed, connected with employment, education, numerous services, and on the road to economic security and prosperity.

This new space allows us to provide more comprehensive services to our customers across The County, and continue the expansion of our coaching services region-wide.

The center is open at our 771 Main Street Presque Isle Office from 8-5 Monday through Friday.

The Numbers Tell a Story

The Women in Apprenticeship and Non-Traditional Occupations Grant supported Aroostook Women. One woman was the only student among her male counterparts to pass the CDL road test and another is logging in the North Maine Woods.

58 Women Served

ACAP's Health Navigator helped Aroostook County Citizens through the complex healthcare marketplace.

137 Aroostook County Citizens Served

ACAP has partnered with Houlton/Hodgdon Adult Ed, higher education, AMHC, FedCap, Community Health & Counseling, and the Career Center to develop and implement a pilot program for families in the Houlton area through the state's MaineSpark initiative. The partners will provide focused social, educational, and training supports to help families work toward long-term employability and stability.

10+ Families Partnered With

ACAP supported 19 youth in work experience activities over the past program year. This opportunity gives young people a chance to develop employability skills and build a resume while earning a paycheck.

19 Youth Supported

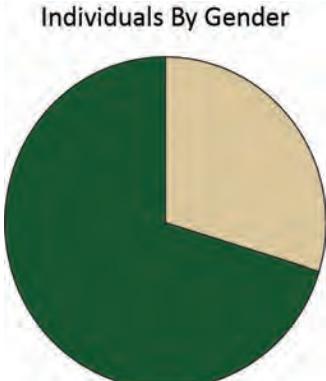
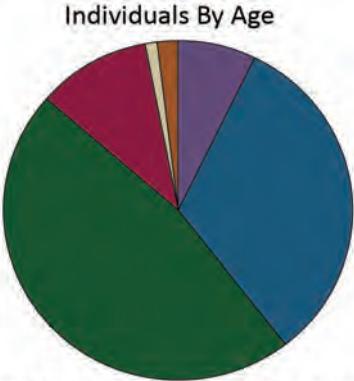


When a local business closes its doors it affects an entire community, an employee who is displaced and their family. This was just the case for 33 year old Andrew Levesque.

Andrew, a Fort Fairfield High School Graduate, feels very fortunate to still reside in his hometown with his wife. Andrew was working at Re-Energy in Fort Fairfield as an equipment operator until they suddenly closed down in November 2018. As an employee, Andrew had great health care benefits which included vision and dental; something very important to Andrew and his wife. When he became a dislocated worker, he had no choice but to start to navigate the health care system on top of searching for a new career, a very overwhelming process. Andrew worked with the ACAP team to review his options and evaluate which plan was best for him. He feels very fortunate that he was able to connect with the local Tribe for his health care benefits.

After the crisis of healthcare was averted, Andrew was able to discuss employment options with the team at ACAP. Through evaluation and discussions about the future, Andrew decided he would like to incorporate his love for numbers into his next career. That decision lead him to Northern Maine Community College (NMCC). Andrew is currently attending NMCC, pursuing his degree in Accounting. Because of his hard work and the supports he is receiving from ACAP, he currently holds a 4.0 GPA.

177 Individuals who utilized workforce development programs



- 3- Age 60-64
- 19- Age 45-54
- 2- Age 55-59
- 57- Age 18-24
- 13- Age 14-16
- 83- Age 25-44

- 53 Men
- 124 Women

Every Home Has A Story

Lead Hazard Program

\$2,700 Spent on Inspections & 3 Project Designs Completed

Above Ground Storage Tank Replacement Program

\$86,300 Spent on 30 Tanks Being Replaced

An elderly woman who recently lost her husband is struggling to make ends meet on Social Security. She discovers a roof leak that has caused significant damage to her ceilings and contacts her insurance company to file a claim, only to learn the water damage is not covered by her insurance. In addition to not having adequate insurance, the filed claim prompts a home inspection, followed by a letter from her insurance company with a list of repairs needed to be completed to avoid termination of coverage. With nowhere to turn, the homeowner reached out to ACAP's Home Repair program. Her roof was replaced, ceilings repaired, siding painted and other items required by her insurance company completed. Today, the senior citizen enjoys a safe and warm home, and is in compliance with her insurance carrier.

Home Repair Network

\$588,838 on 30 Jobs

Central Heating Improvement Program

\$481,146 Spent on 193 Jobs

A young couple with five beautiful children are new to Aroostook County and seeking employment. The family purchases a home and quickly discovers the well is dry. They are fortunate to have a wonderful neighbor who shares her water supply and allows the family to shower in an outdoor shower stall. The family gets creative and purchases a gym membership which allows them access to hot showers, and they use the local laundromat for laundry. After reaching out to ACAP, the family now has a new well.

Home Energy Assistance Weatherization Program

\$120,215 Spent on 36 Jobs

Department of Energy Weatherization Program

\$104,864 Spent on 193

Three generations are living together in an older home. The household of four adults and two children are living on a very low income, complicated by four of whom have disabilities. The home is in desperate need of many repairs, including a leaky roof. Totes are used to catch the water in most rooms, including the children's bedrooms. In addition to the many needed repairs, the drinking water has high levels of nitrites, making the water unsafe to drink. The family reached out to ACAP and our team was able to install a new metal roof and replace the well. The family is appreciative of the assistance that allowed the family to stay together.

2018-1019 Home Energy Assistance Program

5,269 Applications
4,496 Eligible Households
\$3.58 Million Spent

\$878 Average Benefit

154 Individuals participated
in the First-Time Homebuyer
Education Class.

Lead Hazard Program

Provides inspections of buildings to detect the presence of lead paint on interiors and exterior surfaces.

Home Repair Network Program

Offers 0%, no payments, deferred/forgivable loans or grants to low income-eligible homeowners for home-repair, replacement or repair or septic systems, lead hazard reduction, replacement housing, accessibility, energy related repairs, and other essential improvements.

Rehabilitation Specialist

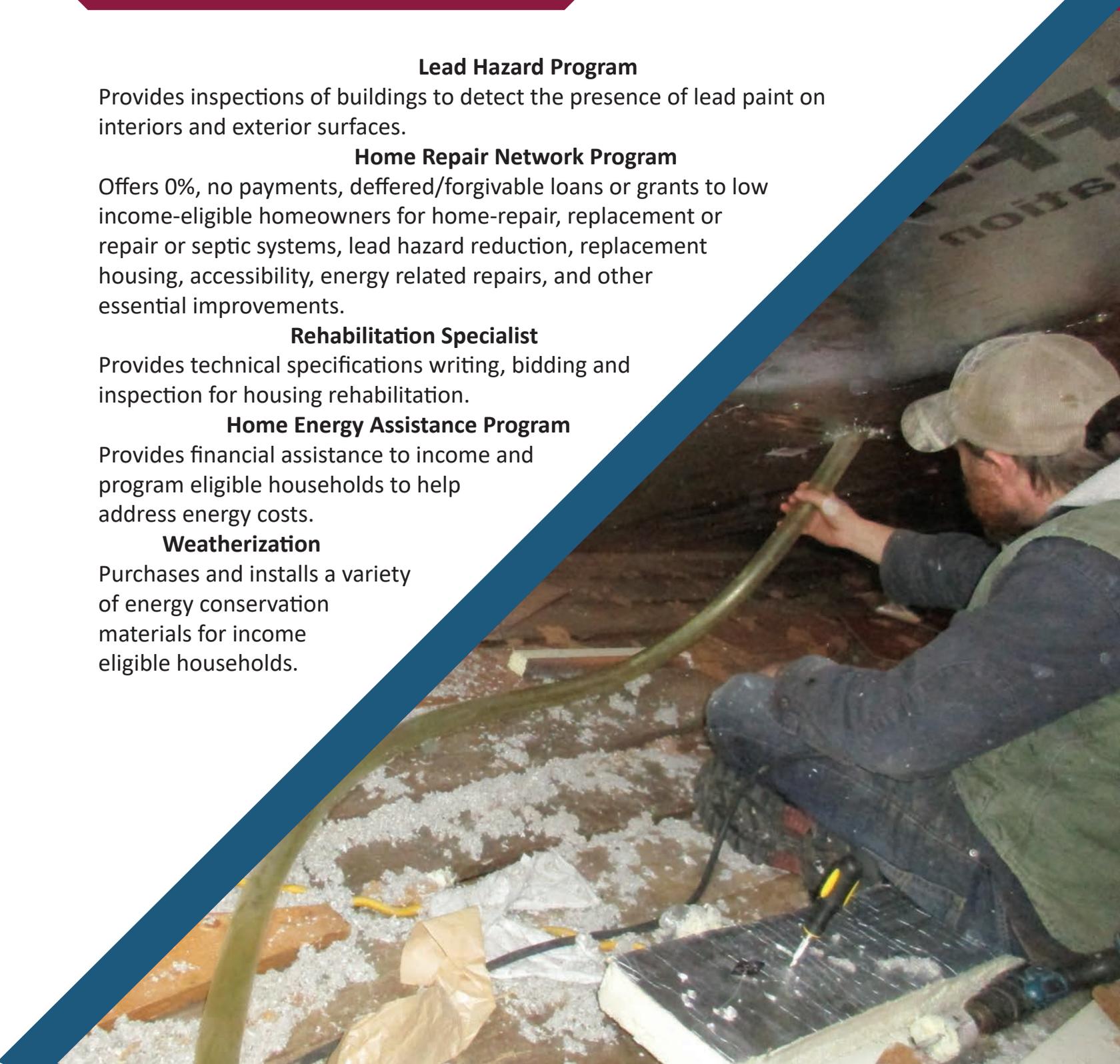
Provides technical specifications writing, bidding and inspection for housing rehabilitation.

Home Energy Assistance Program

Provides financial assistance to income and program eligible households to help address energy costs.

Weatherization

Purchases and installs a variety of energy conservation materials for income eligible households.



The Numbers Tell a Story

Drug Free Communities Grant coordinated an Aroostook Youth Prevention Day with:
400 Youth in Attendance

The Oral Health Education and Kids Integrated Dental Health Program provided:
556 Sealants 2,321 Flouride Varnishes 798 Oral Health Screenings

Let's Go! 5-2-1-0 held a cooking class for childcare providers to learn about healthy budget friendly recipies:
23 Childcare Providers Attended

Tobacco Prevention Project assisted local businesses and organizations with tobacco policies/updates:
4 Schools 3 Hospitals 1 Multi-Unit Housing Building 1 College

Let's Go! 5-2-1-0 Project signed on new partners that will be implementing the 5-2-1-0 program
15 schools 3 Recreation Centers 12 Childcare Sites

The Supplemental Nutrition Program for Woman, Infants and Children (WIC): clinic locations spread across the County in the towns of: Presque Isle, Caribou, Fort Kent, Madawaska, Van Buren, Houlton and Island Falls. In the 164 visits that WIC made around The County, they were able to see 1,910 individuals and 1,127 families. The visits provide WIC staff a chance to assess infants and children for growth and development issues and to routinely check for iron levels. The program also helps families with young children to purchase healthy food items that include: infant formula, fruits and vegetables, beans, eggs, peanut butter, milk among others. Seasonal Farmer's Markets provided access to fresh local fruits and vegetables. WIC coordinated approximately 8 farmer's markets in central and southern Aroostook County. This allows our clients to use their food vouchers for fresh, local produce and it supports County Agriculture.





Quality health screenings are so important for our students to ensure they receive the care they need.

This past year we were so fortunate to receive funding that allowed us to screen students for vision impairments. We screened 264 students enrolled in Head Start and Early Head Start and identified 29 students needing a more thorough examination. Of the 29 students, 8 visited a local eye doctor and all 8 are now wearing glasses. These are 8 students who have received the care they need and are more equipped to learn and grow. The prior year, without this invaluable equipment, we were only able to identify 4 students to refer and only 1 student attended the follow up appointment and received glasses.

This device saved time and resources when used to screen children who are non-verbal, have developmental delays or speak English as a second language.

264 Students Screened

29 Students Referred

8 Attended Follow-Up Exams and Now Wear Glasses

“Children are our most valuable resource.”

— Herbert Hoover, 31st President of the United States



Head Start Annual Report

Family Engagement

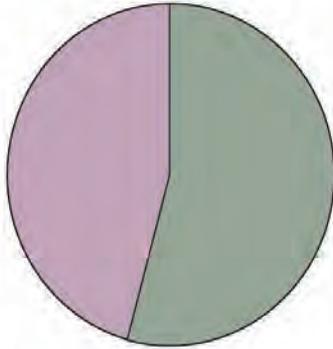
Family engagement in Head Start and Early Head Start is a systemic process fully integrated into ACAP's program. We believe family engagement happens through the development of strong, goal-oriented relationships between families with staff. Program staff partner with families to support family well-being, building a strong parent-child bond, and nurturing lifelong learning and development for the whole family. Family engagement is measured by the child and family outcomes achieved through the goal setting process. A large aspect of ACAP's program continues to link families with the community through community partnerships, referrals and projects.

Family & Community Activities

- Celebration Events During the Week of the Young Child
- Head Start Goes To Augusta
- Home Based Socializations
- Kindergarten Field Trip
- Let's Go! 5-2-1-0 Education
- Link Up for Learning Day
- Nutrition Education
- Parent Ambassador Program
- Parent Committee Meetings and Trainings
- Story time with Community Members

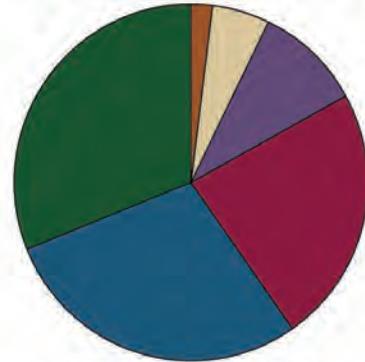
Children and Families Served

275 Total Families



- 149 Single parent families
- 126 Two parent families

317 Total Pregnant Women & Children



- 7 Pregnant women
- 16 Children under age one
- 31 One year olds
- 74 Two year olds
- 91 Three year olds
- 98 Four year olds

About Our Kids

Children up to date on immunizations	98%
Children have a dental provider	65%
Children that recieved a dental exam	90%
Children have a medical provider	98%
Children that have a diagnosed disability	22%

10 Families and 11 Children were homeless

8 Families found housing during the program year

Average Monthly Enrollment

The program remained fully enrolled each month for the program year.

173 Federal Head Start preschool children

64 Federal Early Head Start children

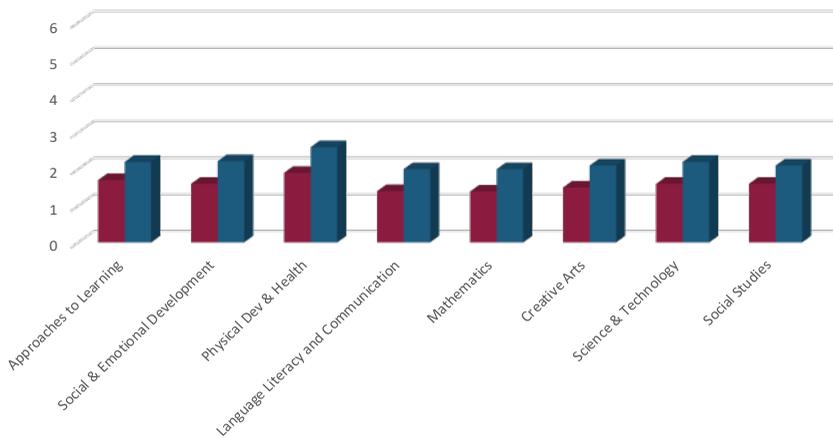
Enrollment By Eligibility

Income below 100% poverty	59%
Over income	6%
100%-130% of poverty	13%
Receiving public assistance	15%
Foster Children	6%
Experiencing Homelessness	2%

Head Start Reauthorization, through the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007, requires grantees to issue a report following each fiscal year to inform the public of program outcomes. In compliance with this requirement, ACAP is pleased to present the Head Start Annual Report for 2019.



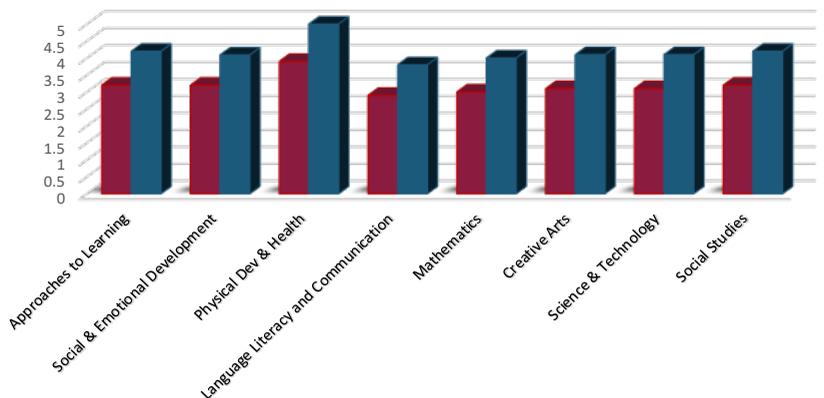
Average Growth in Infants and Toddlers by COR Category
 Early Head Start & Infant/Toddler Child Care
 Ages 0 - 3 years
 Fall 2018 - Spring 2019



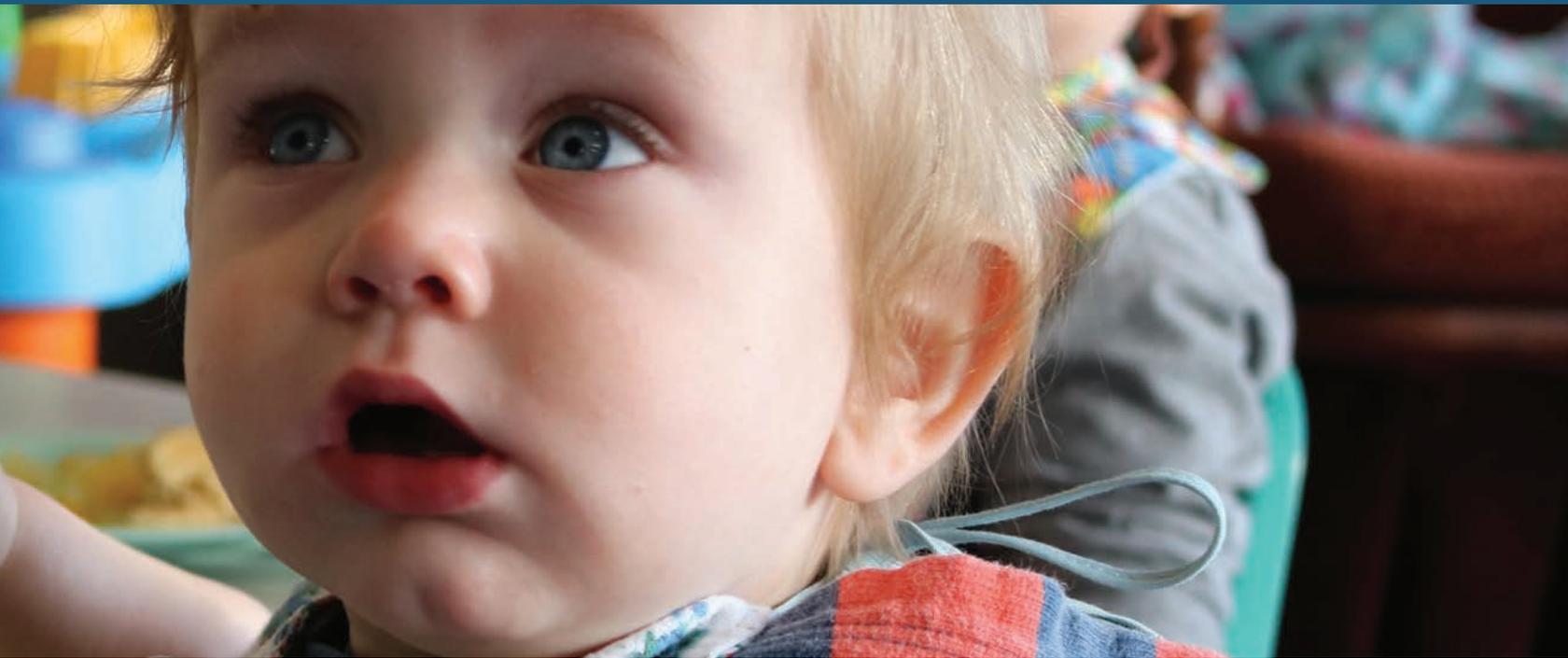
Each year children are assessed using web based COR (Child Observation Record). The development of the children is measured using anecdotes collected during daily routine and activities. Teachers collect data for 34 indicators in 8 domain areas of development. The graph shows enrolled children's developmental growth across the 8 domains of learning for the program year 2018-2019.

Professional growth and development for staff is based on prior year assessment results. We continue to work with our teachers, students and their families to enhance children's learning both in the classroom and at home.

Preschool Head Start, Child Care & Foundations
 Average Growth by COR Category
 Fall 2018 - Spring 2019



Creating Future Leaders



Head Start Goes to Augusta

Families of children enrolled in Head Start Programs from across the state were invited to Augusta on March 28, 2019 to tour the State House, meet legislators, learn about the legislative process, observe a legislative session and learn about advocacy. Participating families from across the state learn more about how the Maine government conducts business, and the importance of advocacy efforts for programs like Head Start.

Parent Policy Member from Madawaska, Kelsey Dionne was able to make the trip this year. Kelsey shared, "It was truly a great experience. Not only did this experience allow me the opportunity to see our State House, meet and interact with legislators, but I had the opportunity to explain the benefits of child development received through Head Start."



Head Start Financial Statement 2018-2019

Head Start Revenues		
Category	Budget	Actual
Federal	\$3,884,229	\$3,884,229
State	\$267,579	\$224,166
Other	\$153,824	\$157,070
In-Kind	\$853,905	\$880,537
Total Revenue	\$5,159,537	\$5,146,002

Head Start Expenses		
Category	Budget	Actual
Personnel	\$2,985,729	\$2,869,139
In-Kind	\$853,905	\$880,537
Travel	\$62,185	\$56,524
Occupancy	\$255,550	\$286,967
Supplies	\$124,467	\$68,542
Food for Children	\$39,000	\$59,163
Bus Service	\$70,000	\$67,393
Training for Staff	\$43,411	\$27,846
Administration	\$378,145	\$471,617
Contractual	\$8,500	\$10,379
Discretionary	\$313,040	\$314,172
Other	\$25,605	\$33,723
Total Expenses	\$5,159,537	\$5,146,000

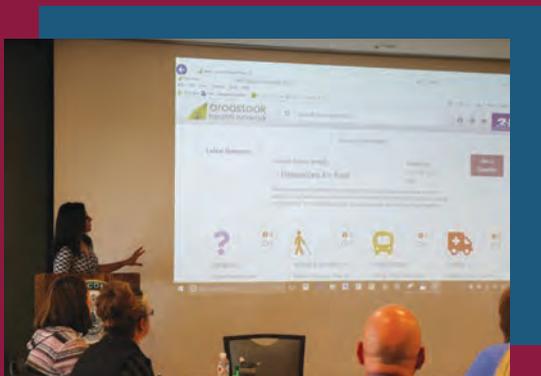
Some agency-wide audit findings were disclosed in accordance with Circular A-1-33, Section 510(a). A copy of audited financials are available upon request. The Office of Head Start has established a program compliance monitoring schedule for assessment. ACAP was not scheduled for monitoring this cycle.

The PI Loop- Connecting Riders to Their Community

ACAP is proud to be the convener and fiscal sponsor of the PI Loop. This 36 passenger, metro style bus offers safe and convenient transportation to riders at an affordable price. The PI Loop runs a fixed route with strategically placed stops throughout the city with the goal of transporting riders to work, school, recreation, medical appointments, retail locations and more. The PI Loop was designed to provide more access to transportation as identified by our most recent community needs assessment.



This project was made possible because of the determination and hard work of the members of the Going Places Network which includes: Aroostook Area Agency on Aging, Aroostook Band of Micmas, Aroostook Council for Healthy Families, Aroostook County Action Program, Aroostook Regional Transportation System, City of Presque Isle, Katahdin Trust Company, MSAD #1, Northern Light Health, Northern Maine Community College, Presque Isle Housing Authority, Public Health Nursing, United Way of Aroostook.



Aroostook Pathfinder Project-Improving Communications Among Partners

Collaboration is at the heart of everything we do and we are always looking for better ways to work with partners. As a member of the Aroostook Health Network, our staff worked with others from the Network to better help connect clients to the services they need. As a result of that team, the Aroostook Pathfinder Project was launched. This technology driven project connects community partners to one another in a secure portal allowing for resource sharing in real time and captures the information for future users to reference.

The Pathfinder Project pulls the data from 2-1-1 Maine and allows the users to print a list of the resources available in Aroostook County. Additionally the portal allows case managers to have conversations that can allow for better services for all clients.

1st Annual Prevention Carnival - A Day to Celebrate Our Agency and the Community We Serve



On August 1st, ACAP hosted our 1st Annual Prevention Carnival at our Main Office, 771 Main Street in Presque Isle. Over 300 community members joined us where we shared lots of important information about our programs.

In addition to the educational materials, we also offered many other opportunities ,all at no charge to families:

- A healthy grilled dinner including locally grown vegetables
- 2nd Chance Community Closet allowing parents to select 5 outfits per child for back to school
- Distributed over 300 backpacks to students
- Provided produce from a local farmer for families to take home
- Physical education stations for children

This event highlighted our vast programming, allowed us to work with community partners and provided the community with food, clothing and school supplies.

By working together, we are making lives better!

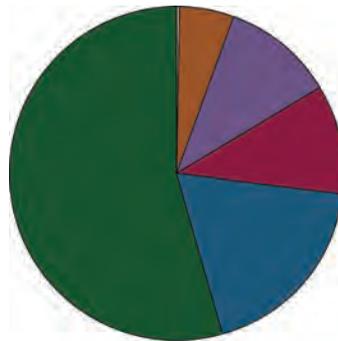
Supporting Our Work

Collaboration is at the core of our work as we strive to make life better for those living in Aroostook County. This past year has been a year of tremendous growth for our agency, including more staff, more programs and more partnerships. More than ever we are working with our partners, clients and donors to ensure we are meeting the needs of the community and doing so as efficiently as possible.

Year after year, we are humbled by the commitment and generosity of our donors and the trust they have placed in us. Thank you to the over 500 donors including foundations, organizations, municipalities, individuals and state and federal funders who believe in our community and the work we are doing. Thank you to volunteers who share their most precious gift, the gift of time, with us as we work to make life better. By focusing on the collective gift we have been given, we are better able to increase the collective impact we are making.

THANK YOU to all of our donors; our Champions of Change! Every gift truly makes a difference and when we combine each gift, no matter the shape or size, with that of many others, we are able to make lives better. This is only possible because of the support of our donors and funders.

Projected spending based on program area. Our most recent audited financials can be found on our website at: <https://www.acap-me.org>



- \$48,823 Fundraising
- \$857,489 Management & General
- \$1,195,192 Workforce Development
- \$1,195,696 Energy and Housing
- \$2,083,217 Community Health
- \$6,064,583 Early Care and Education

Heating Homes with Helping Hands Telethon

Heating Homes with Helping Hands 2nd Annual Telethon was a huge success. As a community we were able to raise over \$58,000 valuable dollars that ensured our friends and neighbors were warm in their homes. Through our partnership with United Way of Aroostook and WAGM TV, we were able to educate the community about the programs we offer and give the community the opportunity to contribute to the work that we do, knowing they are providing a warm home for a family in need in our community. 432 individual donors showed their support for the community in November of 2018, the average donation being just over \$134. In addition to raising money to help warm local homes, we also had a phone bank open to answer questions about our heating assistance programs and to schedule client appointments. Hundreds of calls, thousands of dollars and dozens of volunteers all working together to make life better in Aroostook County.



Our Community Voices

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Dan MacDonald, Caribou, Parliamentarian
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Christine Brown-Caribou
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Bonnie Foster-Houlton
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Jennifer Sweetser, Presque Isle

Parent Policy Council

Community Representatives

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Lisa Rubin, Fort Kent

Parent Representatives

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Samantha Anderson, Caribou
Ruth Hanson, Presque Isle
Jessica McNeal, Presque Isle

Cassandra St. Peter, Caribou
Kelsey Dionne, Fort Kent
Evann Myhre, Presque isle

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Laura Turner
Taylor Turner



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