



2021 IMPACT REPORT

Aroostook County Action Program



Dear Friends,

June 1, 2022 marks the day 50 years ago the Central Aroostook Action Program and St. John Valley Action Council formally merged to form Aroostook County Action Program. As we celebrate the first five decades of ACAP, and look forward to the next half century of service to the people of northern Maine, we do so at a most critical time in our Agency, community and nation's history.

ACAP has been here to support the people of The County through many challenges. We have equally been working side by side, throughout this time, to help thousands of families and individuals realize their dreams and "Make Life Better." In our first 50 years we have worked with people in crisis and at their most vulnerable, and have advanced the health, wellbeing and prosperity of the people and communities we serve.

Although much has changed in northern Maine, our state and nation since 1972, and certainly life, as we know it, has been so very different for the better part of the past two years – one constant has remained through it all: the impact of our ACAP Team. Through the years, and through so much, our employees and volunteers have been there in ways big and small to make a positive difference in the lives of the communities and people we serve.

We dedicate this last Impact Report of our first 50 years to our ACAP Team and all who have served our Agency over these first five decades. Thank you to all who give their all!

With Gratitude,

Trudy Gorneault
ACAP Board Chairperson

Jason Parent
ACAP Executive Director/CEO

MAKING AN IMPACT...GROWING OUR PROGRAMS & SERVICES

BIRCH STREET COMMUNITY CENTER

Aroostook County Action Program and Presque Isle Housing Authority partnered to ensure that low income families have better access to comprehensive services. Recognizing the need for high quality early care and education services, combined with wrap around services for the entire family, the two entities partnered to deliver these services at the local housing authority.

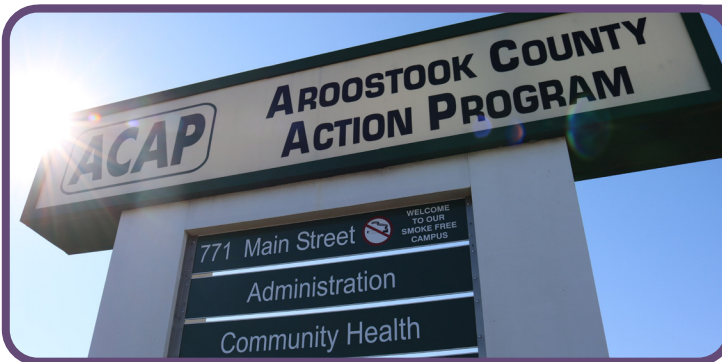


EXPLORING SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

As the need for safe and affordable housing continues to grow in Aroostook County, ACAP is planning its first supportive housing project that will be located at 1 Edgemont Drive in Presque Isle. The 12,000 square foot office building will be repurposed to include 14 housing units and continue to be the home of the Hope & Prosperity Resource Center. The supportive housing units will allow residents to stay in the apartment building with long-term leases, as they work with ACAP staff towards successful independent living.

RELOCATING THE HOPE & PROSPERITY RESOURCE CENTER

The Hope & Prosperity Resource Center reopened at 1 Edgemont Drive in Presque Isle. The facility had been designed especially to help individuals experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity. The Hope & Prosperity Resource Center is a Place with a Purpose. It is a warm, safe, and inviting space to work on goals. ACAP Coaches work with individuals and families interested in creating a plan that is customized to their needs.



RENOVATING TO OFFER COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES

Modifications were made at ACAP's 771 Main Street Office in Presque Isle to transform the space to serve as a one-stop, direct service location to include many vital community resources to help families and individuals become more economically self-sufficient. By housing multiple programs under one roof, we are able to provide a more comprehensive service delivery model that will facilitate the navigation and support of individuals and families through critical services to help them succeed.

EXPANDING CHILD CARE AT THE GOULDVILLE CENTER

In an effort to respond to an urgent community need for services caused by the sudden closure of a large child care center in central Aroostook County, and the feedback from families, ACAP quickly mobilized to add two new child care classrooms, a total of 24 new slots, to its Gouldville Early Care and Education Center in Presque Isle in the spring of 2021.



MAKING AN IMPACT...RESPONDING TO THE PANDEMIC



42 Households received COVID-19 Quarantine Community Supports



Over 5,000 Individuals receive the ACAP Weekly Briefing which contains agency updates and community resources and our webcast ACAP Today has produced over 100 informative episodes



119 Individuals utilized the Hope & Prosperity Wellness Shelter and received 2,743 services



1,153 Households received Rental Relief Assistance altogether totaling over \$4,553,072



160 Children in Early Head Start and Head Start enrolled in the Traveling Totes program which sends bags home on the weekend full of activities and food



The Don't Wait, Vaccinate project is a collaborative public awareness campaign to encourage County residents to get their COVID-19 Vaccination. This campaign helps connect the community to valuable resources and education. The multifaceted marketing campaign included local faces and current information through a variety of platforms. We have incorporated this information and consistent messaging across our programs and services throughout the pandemic. Aroostook County has seen great success with this campaign because of the strength of our community and local partners.



MAKING AN IMPACT...COLLABORATING WITH OTHERS



The Yellow Tulip Project is a new initiative at ACAP to help educate the community around the stigma of mental illness. In 2021 ACAP planted 10 Hope Gardens countywide to support this initiative.



The Community Closet is available 24/7 365 days a year at 771 Main Street in Presque Isle. This community driven project allows community members to donate gently used clothing and for other members to “shop” at no charge for clothing for themselves and their families.



The 2021 Cereal Drive was a huge success thanks to the support of Thompson Financial Group and Smith's Farms. Together they donated over 7,000 boxes of cereal which were distributed countywide.



Kids Community Closet, an annual event, in partnership with United Way of Aroostook, provides children with clothing they need to start the school year.

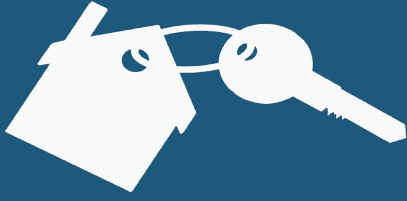


The Back Pack Program is a critical annual project created to ensure school age children have the supplies they need to go back to school. This community project serves over 800 students annually countywide.



The Cinderella Project of Maine came to Aroostook through a partnership with Waldo County Community Action Partners, United Way of Aroostook and the Aroostook Centre Mall. This first year we provided 75 dresses.

MAKING AN IMPACT...



196

Individuals completed the First Time Homebuyer Class



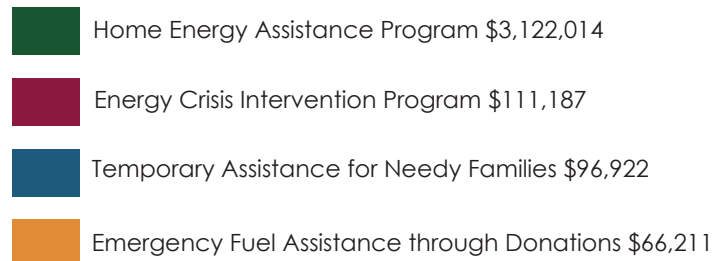
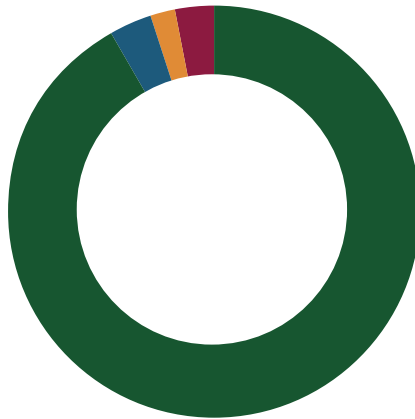
Helping Hands for Warm and Safe Homes Telethon is an annual partnership with WAGM and United Way of Aroostook. Through the generosity of the community, the partnership collects donations and provide those funds to support individuals and families to stay safe and warm in their homes.

2020-2021 Heating Assistance in Aroostook County

\$3,396,334 Total Amount of Heating Dollars Spent in Aroostook County

5,806

Home Energy Assistance Program applications were processed in the 2020-2021 Season



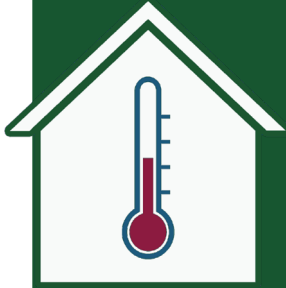
When we applied, found out ACAP had these services that would help us in our time of need, it was a God Send. We didn't know what we were going to do... and they not only helped us with the heat but with the electricity. So, it meant us staying warm and making it through the winter. We feel very blessed. We literally had nothing left, but our mere social security. So I called and we made an appointment. It was a relief to say the least. When you're in that situation you don't know what you're gonna do or how you're going to do it. Neither one of us was capable of working, so we said what are we going to do. They called us up and said they would be sending x amount to the propane company and the electric company, and I said oh my gosh above. I just couldn't believe it. That there were people that cared so much and were willing to help.



"When you have relief and have help, it means everything in the world to you. And I have to say Thank You from the bottom our our hearts."

-Leah LeFrancois, Bridgewater, Maine

KEEPING FAMILIES WARM & SAFE IN THEIR HOMES



My wife and I were fortunate to have our home in New Sweden be weatherized by the ACAP Weatherization Program. The results of that work have been extraordinary. For the first time in years we have been comfortably warm in our home and the resources required to heat have been cut drastically. It really has made a remarkable difference and we are so appreciative of the work ACAP performed for us. We are eternally grateful. We used to retire to our upstairs bedroom in full snow gear and hats because it would be about 45 degrees due to the heat loss from no insulation and extreme drafts from outside. Now regardless of the temperature and winds outside, the upstairs remains in the low to mid 60's constantly. A true testament to the quality of work that was performed. Thank you so much, it has made a tremendous difference. -Weatherization Recipient from New Sweden

234

Provided Repairs or Replacements to Heating Systems

91

Home Weatherization Projects Completed

5

Completed Inspections and Signed Contracts for Abatement through the Lead Hazard Program

68

New Heat Pump Installations

31

Above Ground Storage Tank Program Completions



MAKING AN IMPACT...



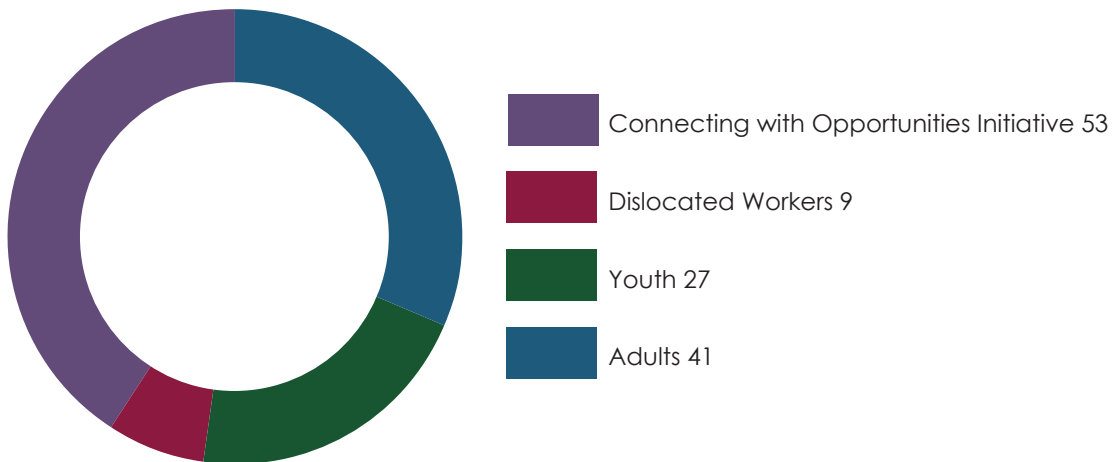
Carter was a referral to ACAP's Workforce Development career counselor through ACAP's Home Energy Assistance Program. Carter is a recent graduate of Northern Maine Community College with a degree in Computer Networking Technology. He was enrolled in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Older Youth Program to receive guidance and counseling assistance to develop a plan for his future employment in the Information Technology (IT) field.

Through assessment and exploration of the local labor market, as well as discussion of his current skills and long-term goals, Carter received assistance to identify potential employers in the area specific to his educational skill set. ACAP's career counselors worked with Carter to explore employers in the Central Aroostook area interested in a work experience program and a work experience position was developed with Reboot IT. The work experience program allowed Carter to gain hands on experience, establish a work history, gain good work habits/attitudes and to increase his knowledge in the IT field.

Carter successfully completed his work experience program and has been hired through an On-the-Job Training program with a local company in the Presque Isle area to continue to gain additional skills and training as an IT Support Specialist.

Workforce Development Participation

Workforce Development served a total of 130 customers.



50

Individuals obtained a recognized credential, certificate, or degree relating to the achievement of educational or vocational skills.

653

Services provided to Workforce customers.

HELPING PEOPLE PROSPER

The Hope & Prosperity Resource Center:

Served 118 Customers

Provided 2,784 Meals

Provided 6,729 Services

2,835 Coaching and Navigation services provided to Aroostook County residents from October 1, 2020 to August 21, 2021.

60 Households received Family Coaching services, focused on supporting the child and parent/caregiver simultaneously to produce the best outcome for the family.

114 Households received coaching primarily focused on energy reduction.

65 Households received Coaching services. ACAP coaching empowers the customer to lead with guidance and support offered along the way.



Our team has seen many success stories over the past year, but Nathan's story is one we are especially proud of. In early 2019, Nathan was released from prison resulting from a drug conviction. He used drugs for ten plus years and in 2019, when he was released from prison, he realized he was starting from scratch and needed support. He worked hard to connect to all of the programs and services he needed to build a better life for himself and his young children. Fast forward to 2021, Nathan has been clean for nearly three years, he is raising his four beautiful children with his fiance Autumn and is a full time employee at ACAP. With the assistance, in part from our dedicated team, and his commitment to his family, he has rebuilt his life.

MAKING AN IMPACT...

FAMILIES SERVED THROUGH EARLY CARE & EDUCATION

130
Single Parent
Households

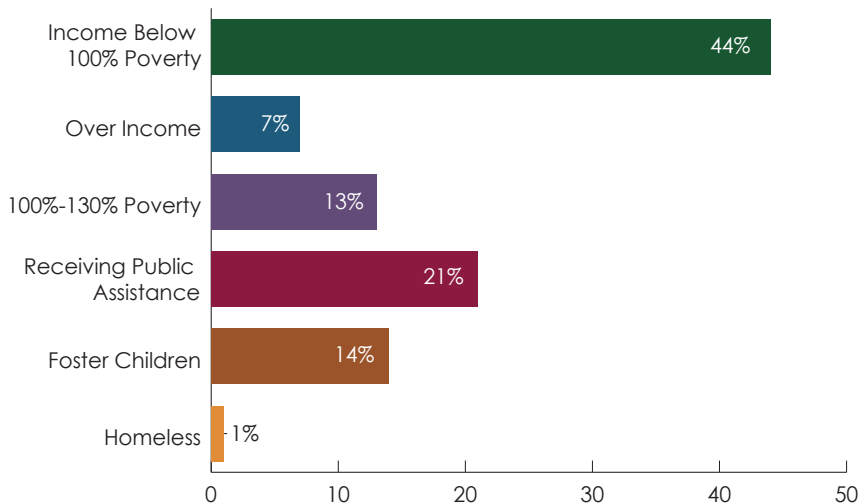
119
Two Parent
Households

7
Families
Experiencing
Homelessness

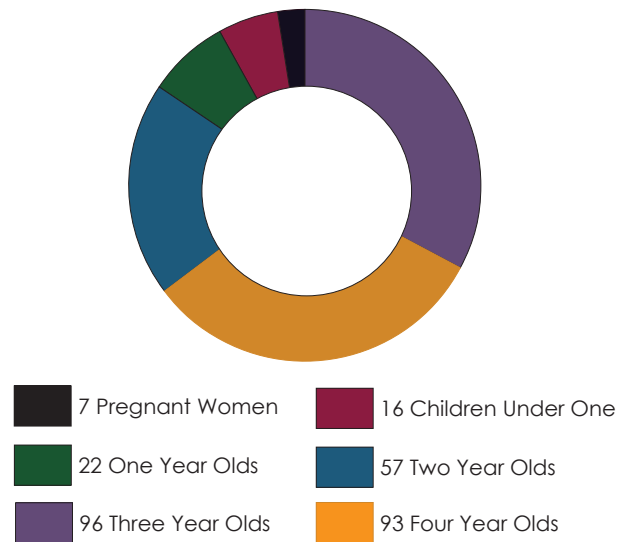
8
Children
Experiencing
Homelessness

7
Families found
housing during
the program year

Enrolled By Eligibility



Enrollment by Age



Maine Senate President Troy Jackson joined with leaders of the Aroostook County Action Program on the playground outside the Agency's Early Care & Education Center in Caribou. Senator Jackson visited the facility in his home district to underscore the especially acute need for more child care services in rural Maine. Senator Jackson spoke about the Kids First Plan, as part of LD 1712, An Act to Support Children's Health Development and School Success. The bill expands access to quality, affordable child care by investing in child care providers and working with community stakeholders to open slots in existing child care programs through the First 4 ME program administered by DHHS.

FOR CHILDREN & THEIR FAMILIES

My family is currently in the adoption process for our five-year-old foster child. Our child came to our family over three years ago after suffering severe neglect, emotional and physical abuse in the biological home. The long term prognosis for children like our child without intervention isn't great. The one saving grace in our child's life was his time at ACAP. Around the age of 2 months, our child started at ACAP and was consistently cared for five days a week until arriving at our home. The needs not met at the biological home were being consistently met at ACAP. The loving care our child received from the teachers at ACAP, I think literally saved his life. I have since met the teachers who provided that care and I honestly believe that the love and care they gave has given our child the ability to heal and form proper attachments. The damage that was done in his early years is irreversible but without ACAP I don't think our child would ever have the capability of functioning as a healthy person with healthy emotions. Because of the attachment formed with the caregivers there, our child's brain as a young infant learned to form the secure attachment that was not formed in the biological home. Despite the issues we still battle, that attachment has since given our child the ability to form healthy attachments with our family. We'll forever be grateful for the services provided to our child while in the most vulnerable time of life. *-Early Care & Education Parent*



Average Monthly Enrollment

57

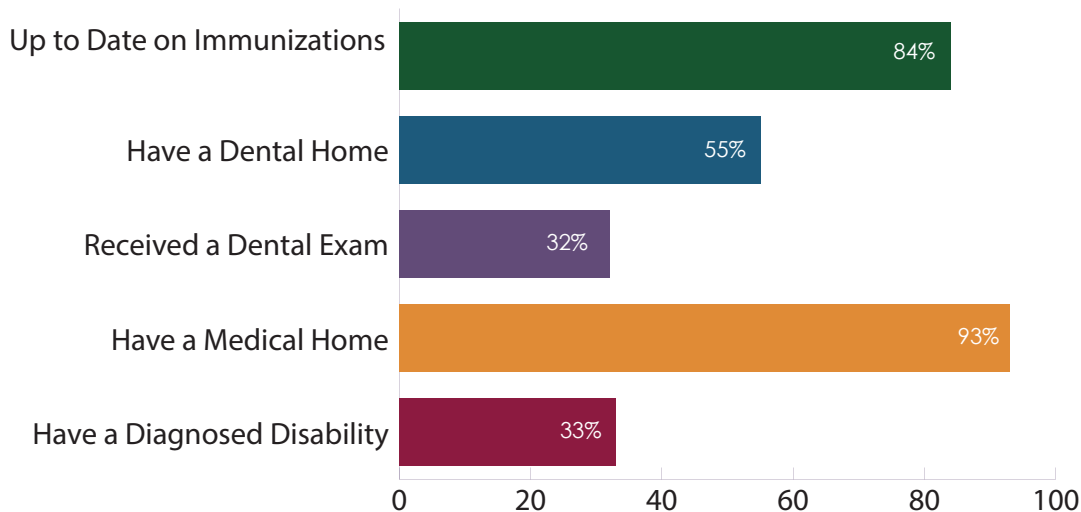
Federal Early Head Start Children

151

Federal Head Start Preschool Children

Enrollment numbers were impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Children's Health and Disability Services*



* Screenings, health and dental exams were impacted by closures due to the COVID-19 Pandemic

MAKING AN IMPACT...

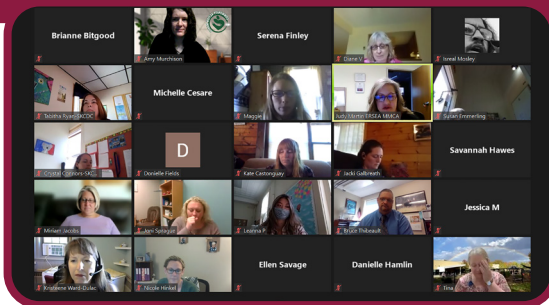
Parent Policy Council



In 2021, our Parent Policy Council continued to meet virtually. The role of Parent Engagement in Head Start/Early Head Start is to work with parents to develop strategies to be advocates for their children and to provide leadership in their communities for all children. By participating in parent governance opportunities at the local center level, parents can influence decisions that impact Head Start, not only in their own communities, but County and state-wide. Head Start builds leadership capacity

in communities by supporting parents to become leaders, advocates and supporters of policy and practice that impact young children and their families.

Head Start Goes to Augusta



Head Start Goes to Augusta is a yearly event for families enrolled in Head Start Programs from across the state to learn about the legislative process and advocacy. Typically, held in person at the State House in Augusta, this year provided a virtual experience for families. Gov. Mills provided a video for the group, welcoming parents to the virtual event. Activities included discussion about current legislation, how to submit testimony for a bill, the process of a bill becoming law, and the

opportunity for parents to share stories about the impact of Head Start. Bruce Thibeault, ACAP Policy Council Parent representative from the Caribou Center, along with ACAP Program Coordinator, Amy Murchison, attended the virtual event.

Head Start Financial Statement 2020-2021

Head Start Revenues			Head Start Expenses		
Category	Budget	Actual	Category	Budget	Actual
Federal	\$4,229,899	\$4,012,406	Personnel	\$3,127,762	\$2,890,788
State	\$245,464	\$245,464	In-Kind	\$1,057,999	\$801,067
Other	\$106,000	\$79,811	Travel	\$78,596	\$20,175
In-Kind	\$1,057,999	\$801,067	Occupancy	\$364,626	\$401,510
Total Revenue	\$5,639,362	\$5,138,748	Supplies	\$406,083	\$250,025
			Food for Children	\$38,000	\$96,136
			Bus Service	\$95,833	\$228,992
			Training for Staff	\$34,275	\$53,086
			Administration	\$402,772	\$373,790
			Client Services	\$7,000	\$608
			Contractual	\$21,167	\$10,591
			Other	\$5,250	\$11,980
			Total Expenses	\$5,639,363	\$5,138,748

Aroostook County Action Program was audited by Chester M. Kearney for the period of October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020. The auditor opinion of statement reflected we were fairly presented. There were no findings or questioned identified costs.

FOR CHILDREN & THEIR FAMILIES



A well-respected leader in early care and education in Maine, and a beloved cook who provided nourishing meals to over a hundred County preschool-aged children daily, and in the spring lost her battle with cancer, were both recognized for their numerous contributions during a celebration held at ACAP's newly acquired property on Park Street in Presque Isle.

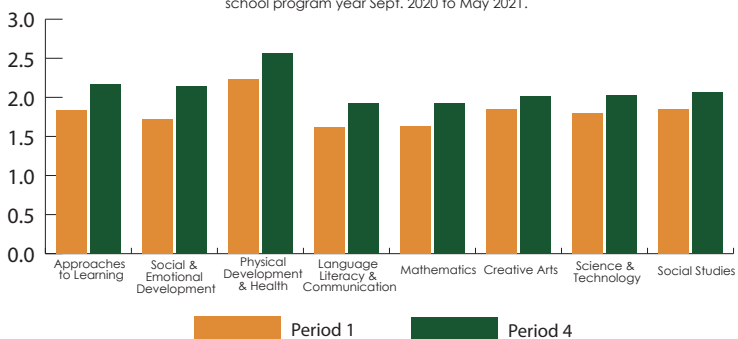
Sue Powers, ACAP Senior Director of Programs, who marked 40 years with ACAP in July, and Valerie Delong, an Early Care & Education Program team member, who served the agency for 23 years - including most recently as cook at the Gouldville Center in Presque Isle, were both honored during the celebration.

The former private residence that sits on the Park Street property, is named "Powers Place" in honor of the leader and long-time advocate for young children and their families. The decision to name the facility, which will house the leadership team for the Agency's Early Care & Education programs, including Powers' own office, was made official by the ACAP Board of Directors in April.

To celebrate her life, and recognize her contributions to ACAP, Val's family planted an apple tree on the site of the new addition to ACAP's 44 Park Street campus as part of the event. The tree signifies Val's many contributions to the Agency, her spirit, love for children and the nourishment she provided them daily. Powers shared that she hopes that one day, when the tree bears fruit, that children from the Gouldville Center will walk over with their teachers and pick apples to make applesauce in Val's honor.

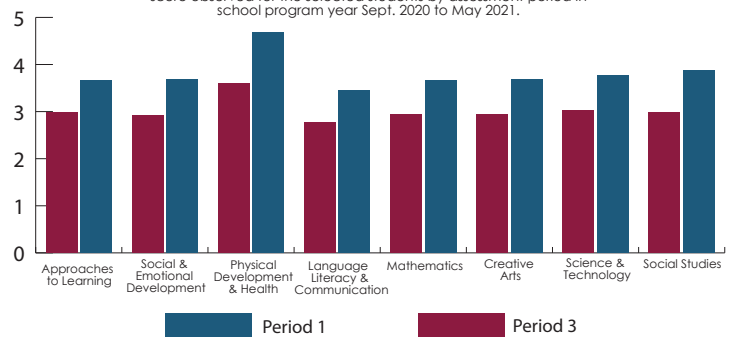
Early Head Start Assessment Data

The assessment describes the growth as the average of the highest score observed for the selected students by assessment period in school program year Sept. 2020 to May 2021.



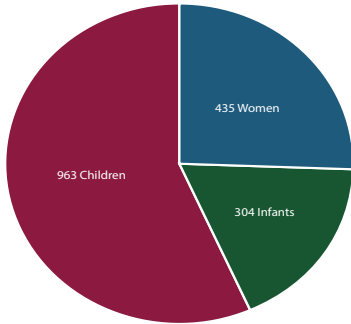
Head Start Assessment Data

The assessment describes the growth as the average of the highest score observed for the selected students by assessment period in school program year Sept. 2020 to May 2021.



MAKING AN IMPACT...

WIC Participation Rates



Total WIC Participation: 1,722

\$751,246

Spent in 16 Aroostook WIC approved grocery stores

5,620+
Social service referrals

\$90,388
Spent on fruits & vegetables

\$4,000
In farmers market vouchers distributed

10 +
Aroostook County WIC Approved Farmers



WIC Clinic Locations

Madawaska
Fort Kent
Van Buren
Caribou
Presque Isle
Houlton

2,650

Outreach miles traveled**



Team of Experts*

3 Certified Lactation Counselors

4 Nutritionist & Nutrition Educators

1 Registered Dietitian

1 Breastfeeding Peer Counselor



18 electric breast pumps were loaned to participants

70.6% of pregnant enrollees initiated breastfeeding after delivery

29.3% of pregnant enrollees who reported smoking 3 months prior to pregnancy reported quitting before child was born

19.3% breastfed 6 months or more

81 new moms utilized the Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program

25.9% breastfed 3 months or more

WIC Annual Report Dates are from 7/1/2020 to 6/30/2021
Health Data Unavailable due to COVID-19 closures and remote clinics

* Staff may occupy more than 1 role

**Outreach Miles were impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic closures

PROVIDING FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION SUPPORT



60 Southern Aroostook ACAP Head Start children were able to get their hands dirty with 5 themed activities designed to engage families in container gardening.



415 families at 23 Early Care & Education Sites were provided with gardening items including seeds to begin their own home garden.



4 school Nutrition Staff Workgroup meetings were held where staff from 30 school kitchens could network and were provided with recognition, training, recipes, and resources.

1200 water bottles were provided to County registered sites.

\$1000 mini grants were provided to 2 Let's Go! 5210 registered sites to improve physical activity.

8 schools and communities were provided with Story Walks.

46 Child Care sites participated in the Child and Adult Care Food Program which works with providers to meet USDA food and nutrition guidelines.



MAKING AN IMPACT...



25 Tobacco Free/Smoke Free Policies

The policies were established in County business, housing units and municipalities reaching over 10,338 individuals.

140 Individuals, including 40 youth, trained to address the dangers of nicotine.

47 Servers Trained

The servers trained in responsible beverage service to reduce risk of underage alcohol consumption, spot signs of intoxication, preventing DUIs and to create safer communities and establishments where alcohol is served.



17 Restorative Circles

The Restorative Circles kept young people out of juvenile detention, held them accountable and restored relationships with those harmed by their actions. 90% satisfaction rate among those who were harmed and those who caused harm.

13 Community Events

The Community Events were attended by the prevention team reaching over 1000 people with prevention and wellness information.



HEALTH, PREVENTION & WELL BEING OF OUR COMMUNITY

Our Health Team travel to all eight Early Care & Education Centers from Fort Kent to Dyer Brook to conduct vision and hearing screenings. Early Care and Education health staff use two evidenced based screeners to perform these critical screenings.

The Spot Vision Screener is a handheld, portable device designed to help quickly and easily detect vision issues on individuals as young as six months. It captures an image of the eyes from a non-invasive, three-foot distance. Results are easy to interpret and shared with parents and when necessary an eye specialist.



The ACAP Health Team uses the Otoacoustic Emissions (OAE) test to identify the level of a child's hearing. By placing a small earphone in the child's ear, a monitor measures the level of sound emitted back to the earphone. With the OAE test, our screeners are able to determine the results of the hearing test at the time of the testing, the test results are shared with the child's family and a follow-up with an audiologist is recommended if a hearing loss is determined.

The ACAP Oral Health Program Dental Hygienist provides sealants and fluoride varnish to preschool through grade 5 children at all ACAP locations and Aroostook County schools, twice annually. This service is offered to all students with or without dental insurance.

134
Sealants
applied

64
Urgent Care
Referrals

2,660
Oral health
screenings

Screening numbers were impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic closures.



MAKING AN IMPACT...

ACAP employs over 200 professionals County-wide, an increase of 40 employees in just one short year. Our dedicated team work beside our customers to help make life better. As the pandemic has continued, our dedicated team has risen to the occasion to meet the emerging needs of the community that we serve. Not only continuing to provide vital services, but improving the way we deliver those services and expanding our offerings to make a bigger impact. In addition to hiring new staff, we also continue to promote our existing staff as they gain skills and expertise. We have added several new programs that have allowed many on our team new opportunities. We are incredibly proud of our growing team and the commitment they have for the community.



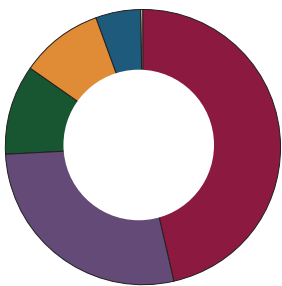
MISSION STATEMENT

ACAP Board Members, staff, leadership team and input from various stakeholders all lead to an updated more succinct Mission Statement. This is a Community Services Block Grant requirement and the board adopted the newly revised statement in June, 2021.

“Aroostook County Action Program leads or collaborates to provide services that support, empower and improve lives.”

CERTIFIED COMMUNITY ACTION PROFESSIONALS

Three of Aroostook County Action Program's very own – Jamie Chandler, Chief Operating Officer; Sue Powers, Senior Director of Programs; and Amy Murchison, Program Coordinator – received their highly esteemed Certified Community Action Professional Program (CCAP) endorsements. CCAP is designed for those who are current and emerging leaders in the Community Action Profession. By attaining the certification, these three leaders are positioned to further ACAP's service delivery to those in our community.



Early Care and Education	\$6,241,282
Management and General	\$2,336,949
Workforce Development	\$1,175,084
Energy and Housing	\$10,401,929
Prevention and Wellness	\$2,166,265
Fundraising	\$58,403

Based on ACAP's September 2021 unaudited/preliminary Revenue and Expense Report. Our most recent audited financials can be found at www.acap-me.org.

As we enter our 50th year serving Aroostook County, partnerships and collaborations are more critical than ever. Thank you to our partners, funders, municipal leaders and entire community for your support of our work for the last five decades. We could not continue to “Make Lives Better” without your commitment.





Board of Directors

Consumer Sector

Carolyn Kimball
Deacon Al Burleigh
Kaytlyn Robbins
Monica Jerkins
Patty Perry
Suzanne Senechal-Jandreau
Trudy Gorneault

Public Sector

Dan MacDonald
Dave Keaton
Gary Sanfacon
Nancy Troeger
Senator Troy Jackson
Senator Trey Stewart
Sheriff Shawn Gillen

Private Sector

Andy Grass
Billi Griffeth
Erik Vaughn, R.N.
Jeff Ashby, Esq.
Paul Towle
Paula Sperrey
Dr. Tara Whiton

Aroostook Policy Advisory Council

Carolyn Kimball
Christine Brown
Deacon Al Burleigh

Jennifer Sweetser
Patty Perry
Suzanne Senechal-Jandreau

Tammy Goetsch
Trudy Gorneault

Parent Policy Council

Community Representatives:

Josselyn Langworthy
Martha Jane Book
Nina Bradstreet
Paula Stevens

Parent Representatives:

Kaytlyn Robbins
Monica Jerkins
Evann Myhre
Bruce Thibeault
Jennifer Smith

Health Services Advisory Council

Addy Beck-Bell
Alison Gooding
Amy C. Murchison
Bethann Basso
Brandi Perry
Chastity Holland
Dawn Roberts
Dotty Sines
Elaine Sipe
Ellen Bemis

Holly Ellithorpe
Jenna Norton
Jennifer Robichaud
Jennifer Smith
Kelly Edgecomb
Leah Buck
Linda Mastro
Lisa McKenna
Lucy Morin
Meg Hegemann

Dr. Norma Desjardins
Rachelle M. Roy
Renee Bragdon
Robin Thurston
Samantha Langley
Sarah Ennis
Stacy Boucher
Vicky Bolstridge

Thank you,

Team ACAP for 50 years of commitment to our community!



207-764-3721
www.acap-me.org
info@acap-me.org



Aroostook County Action Program

We Make Life Better!

Aroostook County Action Program leads or collaborates to provide services that support, empower and improve lives.