

NEK-CAP News Winter Edition ~ January 2014

Serving Atchison, Brown, Doniphan, Jackson, Jefferson, Leavenworth, Marshall, Nemaha, Pottawatomie & Riley Counties



From the Executive Director's Desk

Submitted by Jeanette Collier, Executive Director

Fifty years ago on January 8, 1964, President Johnson declared "War on Poverty". NEK-CAP, Inc. (Northeast Kansas Community Action Program) and other community action agencies were soon formed across the country and became officially recognized at the federal level as anti-poverty organizations with the charge of eliminating or ameliorating the causes and conditions of poverty at the local level. NEK-CAP, Inc. began by providing services to low-income families and communities across five counties and over time increased the service area to ten counties. Currently the counties served are Atchison, Brown, Doniphan, Jackson, Jefferson, Leavenworth, Marshall, Pottawatomie and Riley. Beginning in April, 2014 the service area will be expanded to include Washington, Smith, Osborne, Republic, Mitchell, and Jewell.

As a recognized anti-poverty entity by the Office for Community Services, a branch of Health and Human Services, the agency is funded through the Community Services

Block Grant, which is administered by the Kansas Housing Resources Corporation. Via the Community Services Block Grant, we are afforded the opportunity to be innovative in our approach to addressing the local needs of those living in poverty.

For approximately forty-nine years, NEK-CAP, Inc.'s resolve has remained constant in our effort to assist low-income families in their journey to become economically secure. One of the primary keys to our successes in this anti-poverty conflict has been through partnerships and collaborative efforts that many of you have shared with NEK-CAP, Inc. over the years. On behalf of those served, the staff and Board of Directors, I thank you for your support and encourage you to continue to share in our vision: "That one by one all families become self-reliant".

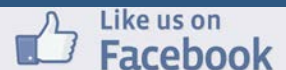


NEK-CAP's Mission

We provide comprehensive education and social services to low-income community members through collaborative partnerships focused on promoting family development, empowerment, and economic security.

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.



Atchison^{Axtell Centralia Effingham} Hiawatha
 Highland Holton Horton^{Hoyt} Kansas
 Leavenworth Manhattan Marysville Meriden
 Nortonville Onaga Oskaloosa Ozawkie^{Perry} Sabetha
 Seneca Tonganoxie Troy Valley Falls Wamego^{Wheaton}



NEK-CAP, Inc. Community Needs Assessment

Submitted by Jeanette Sperflage, Integrated Services Specialist

NEK-CAP, Inc. has been very busy for the past three months collecting information from the communities we serve across our ten county service area. A Community Needs Assessment Survey was prepared and distributed through the Family Development Advocates and the Child and Family Advocates, along with Facebook, NEK-CAP, Inc. website and email distribution. The number of respondents was 505 with a total of 92.1% of complete surveys. Respondents included 166 Head Start 0-5 parents and community clients. Preliminary results included 42.6% of respondents indicated the primary cause of unemployment is not enough jobs (figure 1.1) and 49% indicated the biggest problem for adults in the community is their inability to pay all their bills on time (figure 1.2). Approximately 63.5% of the respondents have private health insurance with 12% having no insurance (figure 1.3). Ninety percent (95%) of the respondents have access to a

computer with 81.5% having internet access at home.

In conjunction with the Community Needs Assessment survey, public meetings were held in each of the ten counties we serve during the months of October and November. At these meetings, NEK-CAP, Inc. focused on capital asset based information in their respective counties. Capital assets discussed were Financial, Human, Social, Political, Natural, Cultural and Built. Northeast Kansas is rich in the various capitals, but we still have some challenges. These barriers include safe and affordable housing, accessible safe drinking water and jobs. When completed the overall NEK-CAP, Inc. Community Assessment will be available on our website – www.nekcap.org. NEK-CAP, Inc. would like to thank everyone who participated in the online assessment and the county meetings.

~ Graphs included on following page ~



Comments/Questions: please contact Linda Grier, Integrated Services Office Manager, lgrier@nekcap.org

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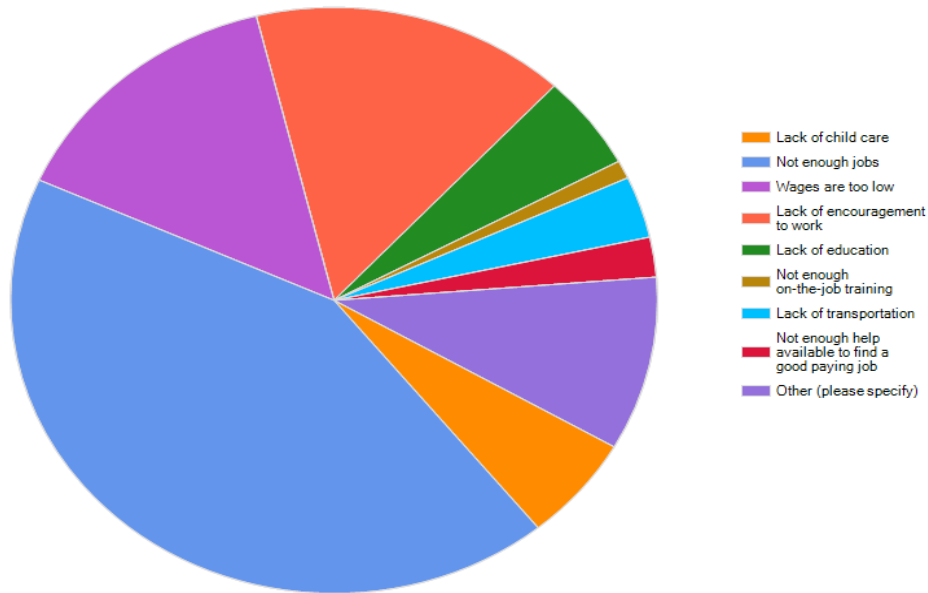
*Atchison, Brown, Doniphan,
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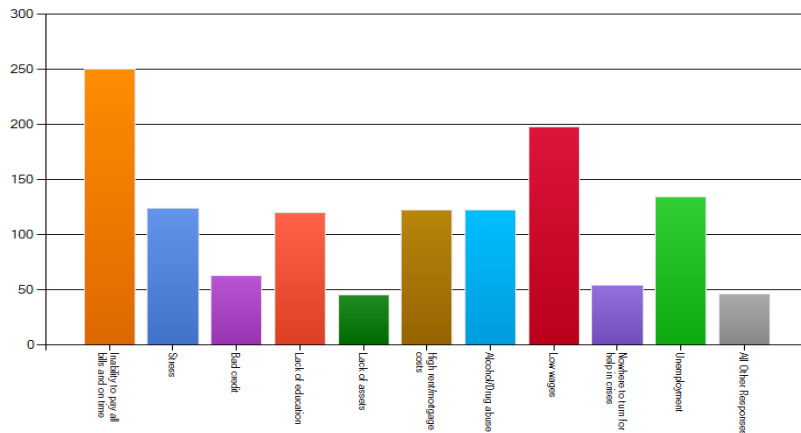
NEK-CAP, Inc. Community Needs Assessment (cont.)

Submitted by Jeanette Sperflage, Integrated Services Specialist

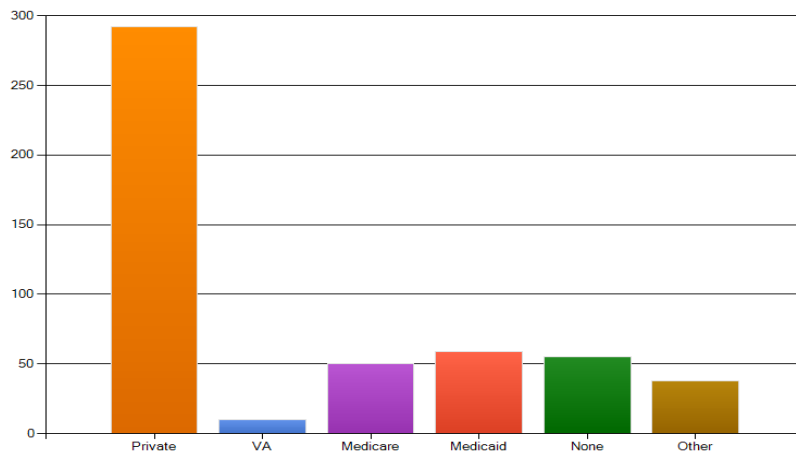
What do you feel is the primary cause of unemployment in this community? (Check only one)



I. What do you feel are the biggest problems facing adults in the community? (Check up to three)



Do you have health insurance coverage?



We would like to welcome the following new Board Members:

David Shrum,
Low Income Rep.
for Area III ~
JA/JF Counties

Tina Haefke,
Private Sector Rep.
for Area III ~
JA/JF Counties

Stephanie O'Shea,
Low Income Rep.
for Area IV ~
NM/PT Counties

Achievements ~ Accomplishments ~ Successes

Submitted by staff members

"Success means doing the best we can with what we have. Success is the doing, not the getting; in the trying, not the triumph. Success is a personal standard, reaching for the highest that is in us, becoming all that we can be."

~ Zig Ziglar



I've been working with a mom who works very hard to make sure that her children are well taken care of, not only physically, but emotionally. She is a mother who cares much more about her family than she does herself--but this fall, it was time for her to take care of herself!

In September 2013, she started having severe pain and health issues, and her doctors were not sure why she was so sick. Through a series of tests on many different days, the doctors were stumped. I could see the frustration that this mother was experiencing, which was also affecting the family. The little boy was having trouble being away from her, and even got sick to the point of hospitalization in October. It was all becoming to be a heavy burden on the family, and I tried to support them in every way possible. Even in the midst of all the stress, she still found time to ask about parenting (Love and Logic) techniques and setting schedules/consistency for her boys and participated in several home visits with me regarding these things.

Finally, in November, she went to a specialist and was able to get a diagnosis. At first, she was not ready to read about her diagnosis or learn about the symptoms, prognosis, and treatment. I could see some fear in her demeanor. I told her that if she ever wanted to research her diagnosis, that I would be available for her to do that when she felt comfortable. Not even two days later, she came to my office with a clipboard full of highlighted articles about her condition that she had researched for hours the previous evening. She wanted to sit down and make a list of questions for her doctor's appointment that would occur the following week to talk about treatment options.

Now, as of January 2, she has had 3 surgeries (at one time), and is recovering nicely. During the time that she was recovering, she had family members and friends watching her boys, church members bringing them meals, and a very supportive fiancé right there by her side. She had expressed being excited to eat Christmas dinners with her family and friends.

I am so proud of this mother's ability to advocate for herself, her health needs, and her family. It is impressive how connected she is with friends and church members--and that those people came together to take care of

her when she needed them. Her resiliency to hardships is nothing but remarkable. *Submitted by: Carissa Welsh, Leavenworth County Family Development Advocate*

(Permission was given to use actual names)

Adam and Amy Amos are a young couple who have 3 children and have been involved in the EHS/HS program for 4 years. They have had many struggles trying to keep their own place and finding steady employment. Adam worked in Atchison but the company he worked for continually laid him off. Amy has learning disabilities and has a hard time finding employment.

At the beginning of the 2013-2014 school year, we sat down and filled out a new FDP and set some goals based on the information and needs of the Amos family. Two goals were ongoing. The first was for them to obtain Section 8 assistance for their rent and obtain housing of their own. They were living with Amy's mom. In November, they were accepted into Section 8 housing and Belinda White was able to work with the ESG program and obtain assistance for their deposits. In the same month they were able to find a 3 bedroom home in Elwood, KS for rent and moved in to their own place.

The second goal was for Adam to obtain full time, consistent employment. Adam continued to put in applications for employment. In December, he was called in for an interview at Affiliated Food in Elwood, KS and was hired on later in the month. He is working full time and enjoys his job. Amy and Adam are ecstatic at the opportunity.

Joshua, their 6 year old, attended Head Start for 2 years and is doing so well in school that his teachers are very impressed with his knowledge and ability to learn. Ayden, their 4 year old is currently in Head Start and doing well. Emily, their 18 month old is in Early Head Start and is developing wonderfully.

This family has been a joy to work with and are very focused and capable of reaching even more goals in the future. They are excited about what they have been able to do thus far and excited about their future. Way to go Amos' and way to go Doniphan County!! *Submitted by: Tami Burkeybile, Doniphan County Child and Family Advocate 0-3*

Comments/Questions: please contact Linda Grier, Integrated Services Office Manager, lgrier@nekc.org