

NEK-CAP News Winter Edition ~ December 2017

Serving Atchison, Brown, Doniphan, Jackson, Jefferson, Jewell, Leavenworth, Marshall, Mitchell, Nemaha, Osborne, Pottawatomie, Republic, Riley, Smith, and Washington Counties.

Season's Greetings



*Wishing you the
Happiest Holidays
from
Jeanette Collier
and
the rest of the
NEK-CAP Inc. Board
and
Staff*

From the Executive Director's Desk

Submitted by Jeanette Collier, Executive Director

As the end of 2017 quickly approaches, on behalf of NEK-CAP, Inc. staff and the Multi-County Board of Directors, I thank you for your support of NEK-CAP, Inc. programs and services and wish you a blessed New Year!

Conducting the triennial Community Needs Assessment and revising the organization's Strategic Plan were two top priorities this past year. Based on input through agency surveys, SWOTs, community focus groups, and analyses of both qualitative and quantitative data five Strategic Priority Areas were identified:

- 🔴 Brand Awareness & Communication (Externally & Internally)
- 🔴 Poverty Awareness
- 🔴 Individual & Family Stability
- 🔴 Partnerships (Five Key Sectors)
- 🔴 Fund Development/Sustainability

In 2018 we will continue through collaborative partnerships to advocate on behalf of economically insecure and vulnerable populations to the Kansas Legislature and Congressional

Representatives and Senators. Key issues that we will be monitoring include:

- 🔴 Removing Barriers and Improving Access by Low-Income Participants in Civic Life
- 🔴 Improving the Child Welfare System/Safety Net Programs in Kansas
- 🔴 Preserving the Kansas Earned Income Tax Credit Refund
- 🔴 Improving Access & Funding to the Mental Health Systems in Kansas
- 🔴 Expanding KanCare
- 🔴 Improving Access to Dental Health Services – Dental Therapist
- 🔴 Funding of Early Childhood Education
- 🔴 State & Federal Tax Policies
- 🔴 Immigration Impacts
- 🔴 The Farm Bill & SNAP
- 🔴 Reauthorization of Children's Health Insurance Program(CHIP)
- 🔴 Reauthorization of Community Services Block Grant

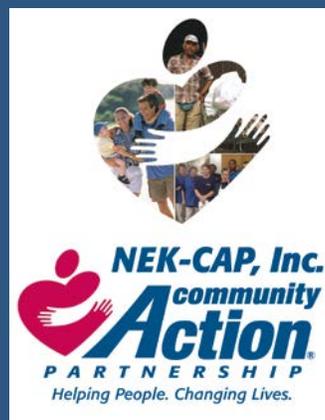
I urge your participation in our advocacy efforts and encourage you to devote effort in community engagement that focuses attention and aligns efforts to advance the collective well-being of all neighbors, friends and fellow Kansans.

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.



HUD Annual Point in Time Count

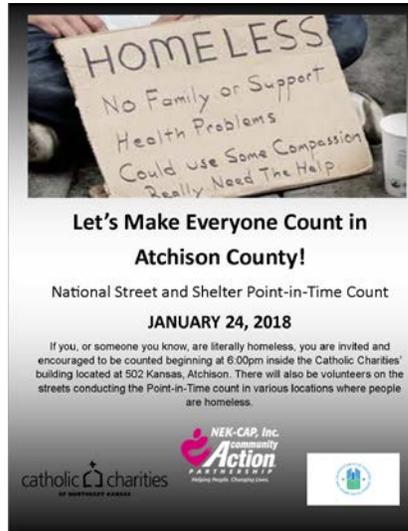
Submitted by Belinda Estes, Housing Continuum of Care Coordinator & Catholic Charities

Every year, the federal office of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) mandates that communities take a count of every person living in literal homelessness-on the streets, in vehicles, or other places not meant for habitation. Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas and NEK-CAP, Inc., two local agencies in Atchison County that provide services to families struggling with homelessness, will conduct the annual Point In Time (PIT) count beginning at 6 pm, Wednesday, January 24th, 2018.

If you, or someone you know, are literally homeless, you are invited and encouraged to be counted that evening inside the Catholic Charities' building located at 502 Kansas. There will also be volunteers on the streets conducting the PIT in various locations where people are homeless. The PIT count includes a survey that is completed with each individual, and typically takes place the last week of January.

"This event is truly vital for all of our communities, as the information gathered helps agencies apply for funds that help

families move out of homelessness into permanent housing," explains Tama Dutton, Emergency Assistance Manager, Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas.



If you would like to volunteer to help with the PIT count, please contact Tama Dutton, tdutton@catholiccharitiesks.org or Belinda Estes, bestes@nekcaph.org, by January 15th.

Why a Poverty Simulation??

Submitted by Linda Grier, Office/Data Coordinator

Poverty: it feeds into cycles of teen pregnancy, drug and alcohol abuse, poor health and nutrition, violence and incarceration.

Poverty is a reality for many individuals and families. But unless you have experienced poverty, it's difficult to truly understand. The Community Action Poverty Simulation (CAPS) bridges that gap from misconception to understanding. CAPS is an interactive immersion experience that educates everyone about the day to day realities of life with a shortage of money and an abundance of stress. It sensitizes community participants to the realities of poverty.

CAPS is not a game. It is based on real Community Action clients and their lives. CAPS exists to: Promote Poverty Awareness,

Increase Understanding and Inspire Local Change! It is a simulation tool that enables participants to view poverty from different angles in an experiential setting, while empowering low-income volunteers by allowing them an opportunity to interact with leaders from their community.

A recent participant said "this was one of the best exercises I have ever been involved with."

Interested in bringing the Poverty Simulation to your organization or community? For more information, please visit our website or contact Linda Grier, NEK-CAP, Inc. Office/Data Coordinator at 785-742-2222 x 135 or lgrier@nekcaph.org.

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Serving the counties of:
Atchison, Brown,
Doniphan, Jackson,
Jefferson, Jewell,
Leavenworth, Marshall,
Mitchell, Nemaha,
Osborne, Pottawatomie,
Republic, Riley,
Smith and Washington

services vary per county



Comments/Questions: please contact Linda Grier, Office/Data Coordinator, lgrier@nekcaph.org

Helping People, Changing Lives

Achievements ~ Accomplishments ~ Successes

Submitted by NEK-CAP, Inc. staff members

WITHOUT CONTINUAL
GROWTH AND
PROGRESS, SUCH
WORDS AS
IMPROVEMENT,
ACHIEVEMENT,
AND SUCCESS HAVE
NO MEANING.

Benjamin Franklin

NEK-CAP, Inc.'s Vision:

One by one
all families and communities
become self-reliant.

NEK-CAP, Inc. is an equal
opportunity provider
and employer.

Support NEK-CAP, Inc..

When you shop at smile.amazon.com,
Amazon donates.

Go to smile.amazon.com

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I had been a NEK-CAP, Inc. South Brown County Head Start employee for a little under a year when I realized just how important the skills I acquired during new staff orientation were. I was shopping when I heard some commotion in the front of the store and I decided to check it out. I found a woman on the floor having a seizure and her co-workers were unable to stay calm due to their emotional connection to their friend. The first aid training I received from NEK-CAP, Inc. came flooding into my head. I said "I know first aid, can I help?". I was able to remain calm and instruct an employee to call an ambulance, and another to move nearby shelves to ensure the woman didn't hit her head. I then began to time the woman's seizures, and keep the staff calm through simple conversation.

In talking to them I learned that the woman was prone to seizures so the employee I had asked to call an ambulance hadn't felt it was necessary. I informed them that the woman would not be charged for an ambulance unless the EMTs found it necessary to transport her to the hospital. I encouraged the staff to let the EMTs decide what was in the woman's best interest because none of us were medical professionals; they agreed. When the EMTs arrived they gathered some information and found that the woman had actually experienced a head trauma when a box fell on her head that morning and her seizure was most likely due to that, not her condition. The advice I was able to give based on my training from NEK-CAP, Inc. potentially saved a life that day! Submitted by Shellby Bevan, South Brown County Family Development Advocate

I recently started working with a mother whose baby was born nine weeks premature. When I started working with the family he was approximately three months old. She told me he was still eating two ounce bottles and all he did was cry and sleep. I told her I felt as if maybe he is hungry. They made him two more ounces and he ate it really fast. She said she was afraid to feed him more because he was so early. I discussed with her about discussing her concerns with her doctor. Since then he has gained weight and has become a happier baby boy. She said, she did have this discussion with her doctor and as long as he can handle the food to keep feeding him when he is hungry. Submitted by Katrina Killoren, South Brown County Child & Family Advocate

Comments/Questions: please contact Linda Grier, Office/Data Coordinator, lgrier@nekc.org

I have a family that bought a car last January, and then it had some problems, making the car unable to run. They now have that car working, making it much easier to go to the grocery store and doctors' appointments.

Submitted by Pam Wilburn, Atchison County Child & Family Advocate

Our Family Development Advocate was working with a family at risk of homelessness. The day before we were scheduled to sign the lease on a new home, the family was kicked out of where they were staying and became literally homeless. The nearest place the family could stay was almost 60 miles away. With the family's permission, the Family Development Advocate spoke with a local hotel that offered a discounted price and arranged for a local church to cover the cost so the family could stay locally for the night. The following day, the family met with the Family Development Advocate and landlord to sign the lease on their new home. It was the first time in almost four months the family was able to stay in their own home. Submitted by Kori Anderson, Jackson County Family Development Advocate

Jackson County Family Development Advocates and teaching staff enlisted the help of Greenbush and a KU doctoral candidate to help with translation. These two individuals came to Holton on November 20th to assure 100% of our non-English speaking families were able to participate in parent-teacher conferences. Submitted by Kori Anderson, Jackson County Family Development Advocate

Since the beginning of the school year, NEK-CAP, Inc. staff in Jackson County have successfully helped to get KanCare health insurance approved or renewed for more than 15 children. Staff are currently assisting with applications for about 15 more children that are still pending at the KanCare Clearinghouse. Submitted by Kori Anderson, Jackson County Family Development Advocate

Helping People, Changing Lives

Achievements ~ Accomplishments ~ Successes

Submitted by NEK-CAP, Inc. staff members

I have been seeing a family for about three months on my caseload. Our very first visit we didn't get any paperwork done because as we started talking she was on the verge of getting put out with four children, without a place to go. She didn't have a job (she quit five months ago because of family reasons and had been living off her savings until August of which they had run out). She was in tears so I closed my yellow folder with all of the orientation paperwork in it and picked up my phone. I made two phone calls, one to Catholic Charities and one to Wallula Christian Church.

We got into the van and left, we went to Wallula first. The lady we met wasn't the lady that I talked to over the phone, she stated she wasn't sure what they had but, whatever it is it wasn't much. My new mom stated that she would take whatever they had. The lady softens and allows her to fill out the application. She then said that someone would call her back. We then went to Catholic Charities where Michelle stated that she would need more info. But, she allowed her to fill out the application. She told her that she would need her apartment complex to fax some info over but she would hold \$200.00 for her. Well a week later her manager in the complex had sent them what they needed but, told my mom that she had. Needless to say they had to give the money to someone else. Her apartment management started eviction proceedings and she had to go to court because of the non-payment. While all of this is going on I talking to Belinda (our Housing Continuum of Care Coordinator), and she is schooling me on what to do. We also talked about the new homeless program in Leavenworth County. Belinda told me that since she had been to court, Catholic Charities should now be able to help her with money from HUD, and that she would send Linda from Catholic Charities an email as a heads up. I was soooo happy that we could hopefully save her home.

When mom answered the door at our next home visit she was over the moon, she told me that she did get the job with LVPD as a records clerk, the manager at the apartments finally was willing to talk to her, and made an arrangement for her

to pay the full amount (which is over \$1200) by Dec. 6th and they could make arrangements for the December's rent. I then told her what Belinda told me and she was in tears. We did our visit and I told her that I would pick her up after my next visit. We got to Catholic Charities at 3:50pm and they close at 4:00pm (I didn't know they closed so early). When we got there one of the ladies that worked there met us on the sidewalk to tell us that they were closed. We had to see Linda today because mom started her new job tomorrow from 8- 5 for training and couldn't come back. Mom's face drops and she says we were so close what'd we do how? I told her I have a hard time with no and turned around and saw another man walking to the door that they let people out who got help with food. He asked if there was something we needed and at the same time a lady opened the door, and asked can I help you? I told her who I was, what we needed, that mom had a job that she would start tomorrow therefore she couldn't come back tomorrow, and that Belinda had sent an email to a lady here and that I thought her name was maybe Linda, or Shelly. She said yes we are about to close but, wait, go to the front door and I'll come and open it. The nice lady's name was Linda; the same Linda that Belinda has emailed for us. She took all the info. that she needed, heard mom's story, and gave no promises except one... that she had a meeting the next day and that she would fight for her and her family, and that if they could they would pay the whole bill even December's rent.

At our last visit mom stated that because her apartment complex was HUD they couldn't help her BUT, Linda said that she would make sure she gets help for Christmas and they would pay a good chunk of her rent but, she couldn't do it until after Thanksgiving. The success from this story is that mom now has a job and has been able to get \$1100 of that bill paid, and this is before Catholic Charities has help. Mom is in a much better place even though she has more work to do to get back on even ground. Submitted by Shannon Hudson, Leavenworth County Child & Family Advocate

Comments/Questions: please contact Linda Grier, Office/Data Coordinator, lgrier@nekc.org

What your child learns
before age 5
is the key to
success!

Enroll your child
now in
NEK-CAP, Inc.
HeadStart!!

Applications always
accepted!



Helping People.
Changing Lives.

Helping People, Changing Lives

Achievements ~ Accomplishments ~ Successes

Submitted by NEK-CAP, Inc. staff members



In November 2017 the Family Self-Sufficient Program graduated another participant from the program. The FSS program is a program meant to assist families and individuals participating in the Housing Choice Voucher / Section 8 program become increasingly self-sufficient. The program provides resources to families around employment, education, and financial education. When I asked the participant What home means to you? she quickly responded with this

"A home to me is a place where I can come together with my family and forget all about the troubles and worries of the world. One piece of advice I would have to share is to not settle. Don't settle for the house that is barely going to pass inspection, don't settle for the job. Always aim higher and never stop trying to better yourself or your life. Don't wait til next month or next year to accomplish a goal because next month or next year turns into years. I wish I could have participated more in all the programs that were offered to become better informed and educated". *J. Holton, KS.*

The FSS Program is a five year program, completely volunteer to families who are in the Housing Choice Voucher Program. The program encourages goal setting and planning for the next five years; one of the great benefits for participants as they increase their earned income through employment is their ability to save money into an escrow account. Over the course of five years participants are able to graduate the program and many have taken large savings into their next five years, we often discuss using the additional money for large items such as down payment on a house, purchase of a car, or continued education. This participant was awarded a check over the amount of \$2,000 Congratulations on all your new endeavors and we here at NEK-CAP, Inc. wish you well. "Self-Sufficiency is the greatest of all wealth" (Epicurus) "Life is a journey and only you hold the key" *Submitted by Mary Schreifels, FSS Program Coordinator*

Jackson County Family Development Advocates have been working closely with the YWCA and Jackson County Victim Services to assure victims of domestic violence in our

community have a supportive team to help them navigate financial, housing, and other obstacles they might face. *Submitted by Kon Anderson, Jackson County Family Development Advocate*

Family Development Advocate was working with a mother who suffered from dental pain. With the help of the Multi-County Health Department in Holton and a local dentist, we were able to get her an appointment and a prescription for the infection. *Submitted by Kori Anderson, Jackson County Family Development Advocate*

Elizabeth, a Head Start parent for two years had been working towards getting her driver's license for the last year. She completed her written exam in June and just this month she proudly completed her driving exam. This was a goal that was set for her in August to get it completed by the end of the year. With much support and encouragement Elizabeth got it done! She called us as soon as she passed to tell us the good news! We are thrilled she can now legally drive her and her family around town. Below is a picture of Elizabeth proudly showing her paper license waiting on her real one! *Submitted by Barb Holland, Nemaha County Family Development Advocate*





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Helping People, Changing Lives – Follow-up

Achievements ~ Accomplishments ~ Successes

Submitted by NEK-CAP, Inc. staff members

I always love follow-ups and having a chance to hear or speak with past graduates of the Family Self-Sufficiency Program; it is always so very exciting for me. It gives me a chance to see families grow and hear all the new and exciting things they have going for themselves and their families. As you may know the FSS Program is for Housing Choice Voucher / Section 8 participants and encourages families to increase their earned income. In doing so, families have the opportunity to save money as their earned income increases, a percentage between their initial rent and their new rent is placed into an interest bearing account set up by NEK-CAP, Inc. This incentive assists families in saving money and setting goals, which may help them in achieving financial stability.

The FSS program continues to open doors and provides families with stepping stones to open the doors into another season, another direction, and another journey. In 2016, Melanie said to me when I asked what she thought about the FSS Program, "It's easy; all you have to do is try". Well, Melanie continues to move forward on her journey and I could not be more proud to report this year I had the pleasure of re-connecting with her, today her life continues to be different. Melanie is working towards being an Author of children's books. Though she is not exactly where she wants to be, she is well on her way. This year she has begun doing freelance writing, and is available to do content writing, ghost writing, copy writing, presentations, newsletters, research, editing/proofing, grant writing, and collaborative writing. Melanie works during the day and in her spare time writes, despite having a full plate, she still finds time to be a wonderful role model for her family. Recently, she told me she began writing about local events for her community newspaper and she is working on increasing her network in and around her community and is attending Chamber socials, which has led to opportunities to grant writing. In fact while we spoke Melanie handed me her business card. Just in case!

Melanie has five beautiful children; two are attending college where she went to college, for their Music degrees. It was important to her that her children received their education and they are, she said, "I could not be more proud of them" and "I want more for my family", Melanie's desire to provide more for her children is very apparent by her actions, her growth, and her movement forward. Melanie said she owes her strength to God and to her Mother and Father as they have given her so much emotional support.

I am so very proud of Melanie and I can only hope that when she gets those children's books written, well, she might send me a signed copy. If you would like to reach out to Melanie for any assistance with your writing needs, here's her contact information: email: Melaniedavis1@gmail.com or her website: www.melaniewrites.org or contact Melanie at 816-689-9060. *Submitted by Mary Schreifels, FSS Program Coordinator*





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