

ANNUAL REPORT



Economic Opportunity Agency

2024



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Economic Opportunity Agency, Inc (EOA) is a community action agency dedicated to helping low-income households in the region succeed. EOA was established in 1965 and our mission is “empowering children and families to learn, connect, and succeed.”

EOA administers a range of programs designed to address the roots of poverty through a strategic multi-generational approach, connecting low-income families with the tools to achieve financial stability and break the cycle of poverty.

EOA has a vision of Northwest Arkansas as a resilient community where children and families experiencing adverse circumstances have the opportunity to thrive, become self-sufficient, and live an improved quality of life.

EOA is a proud partner agency of:



Letter from the Executive Director

As we reflect on the past year, we are pleased to share the 2024 EOA Annual Report which features program achievements, community impact, and Agency results. Inside, you will also find a summary of public, private, and in-kind resources entrusted to the Agency during the previous year. We believe in being good stewards of Agency resources, and our financial position positively reflects that practice.

Within the Agency, our largest department is Children's Services. We are proud of the EOA Head Start/Early Head Start Program which provides a quality early learning experience to prepare our children for kindergarten and beyond. Head Start was our very first program launched in the Summer of 1966, and it is still going strong. The EOA Children's House Program provides supportive services and a positive early learning experience for children who have been abused and neglected. Developmental delays caused by early trauma are common, and the EOA Children's House Program helps children to thrive.

The EOA Step Up Economic Stability Program continues to empower individuals to overcome obstacles that stand in the way of economic self-sufficiency. Case management services, financial coaching, and referrals help participants achieve milestones to improve economic conditions for their families.

The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program is a federally funded program designed to assist low-income individuals and families with home energy costs during the Winter and Summer. Without electricity, gas, or propane, some of our most vulnerable households, including the elderly or people with disabilities, could experience life-threatening situations without electricity or heat in the home.

The Bread of Life Food Pantry and LifeSource are our partners that distribute USDA Commodities to individuals and families, as part of The Emergency Food Assistance Program, to help alleviate hunger in our communities.

None of this tremendous work would be possible without our committed Board of Directors, Policy Council, staff and leadership team, volunteers, donors, community partners, and friends. Thank you for supporting our mission and recognizing the value and importance of "Empowering children and families to learn, connect, and succeed."

As always, thank you for your interest, support, and service.



Delia Anderson, CCAP
Executive Director



2024 Financial Report

Economic Opportunity Agency Revenue	
Head Start/Early Head Start	3,983,593
Head Start Expansion Grant	1,114,693
HS/EHS Response & Relief Support	350,325
USDA School Nutrition	365,411
USDA Commodities	33,970
Extended Day Child Care	247,263
CSBG	423,605
DCCECE Stabilization Grant	102,504
Local Donations	314,832
Other Revenue	54,660
SafeCare	282,546
VOCA	214,318
LIHEAP	694,063
LIHEAP Supplemental Funds	76,131
In-Kind	1,522,159
United Way	14,080
Total Revenue	9,794,153

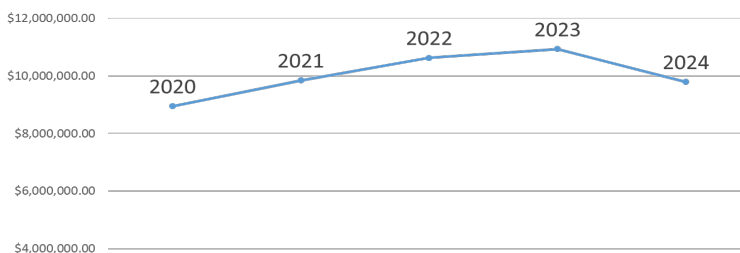
Economic Opportunity Agency Expenses	
Salaries	4,989,513
Benefits/Taxes	837,847
Travel	96,245
Occupancy	826,986
Supplies	1,095,112
Consultants	353,258
T&TA	99,783
Program Costs	1,098,983
Equipment	147,391
Other	206,329
Total Expenses	9,751,447

EOA Economic Impact

With **148** full-time employees in 2024, EOA not only provided services to improve the community, but also contributed to the local economy by providing quality employment for local residents.

Approximately **85%** of EOA's annual funds stay in the NWA community, contributing over **\$8.3** million to the local economy each year.

EOA 5-Year Revenue



Annual Independent Financial Audit Results

According to an independent audit report by EGP, PLLC dated January 30 2025, EOA of Washington County, Inc. had no findings or deficiencies noted for the fiscal year ending October 31, 2024.

EOA relies on public and private funding sources to administer its programs. All programs aim to address the roots of poverty and empower low-income families to succeed in Northwest Arkansas.



The number of unduplicated
families the EOA LIHEAP
Program
assisted in 2024:

3,571

The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is crucial for helping low-income households manage their energy costs and improve their living conditions.

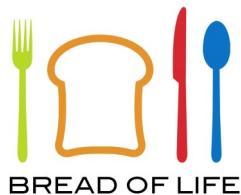
It provides financial assistance for heating and cooling bills, emergency energy assistance, and weatherization services, helping to reduce energy burdens and improve health and safety.

In 2024, LIHEAP provided **\$1,127,145** in assistance.

289,336

Pounds of food distributed in 2024

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) distributes United States Department of Agriculture donated foods (commodities) to organizations in order to provide nutritious foods to low-income households. Commodities help support healthy, independent living for vulnerable populations. To store and distribute these foods, EOA has had a long-time partnership with the Bread of Life in Springdale and LifeSource in Fayetteville.



The Emergency Food
Assistance Program
(TEFAP)





The EOA Children's Services program is federally funded through Head Start and Early Head Start grant awards and designed to help break the cycle of poverty by providing infants and preschool children of low-income families with a comprehensive program to meet their emotional, social, nutritional, and psychological needs. EOA Children's Services conducts a community assessment of Washington County, Arkansas every five years. The community assessment considers the current deficits and needs within in the community to better serve the area. The assessment highlights strengths of the program and the service area, as well as challenges and areas of need. Our most recent community assessment concluded that increased income-inequality and scarcity of resources for children in the area are prevalent issues that should be addressed

thoughtfully and effectively. Investing in the young children of this community enhances their ability to thrive and succeed, which in turn, positively impacts the community at large. Awareness and collaboration are key ingredients in successfully pursuing this mission.

8 Child Care Centers in Washington County

Ellen Smith, Fayetteville

Ivory M. Conley, Fayetteville

North Street, Fayetteville

Old Farmington Road, Fayetteville

Pat Walker Center for Children, Springdale

Oak Avenue, Springdale

Springdale Airport, Springdale

West Washington County, Lincoln



**1,749 Followers on the
EOA Head Start Facebook page,
5% Increase in 2024!**



23,192 In-Kind Hours Dedicated to Family Engagement Initiatives in 2024!

Initiatives Include:

Reading at Home, Fall & Spring Reading
Races, Home Learning Logs, Family
Learning Parties, Family Days, Policy
Council Meetings, Parenting Classes, and
Volunteering in the Classroom.

**3,166 books were
distributed to start or
enhance home
libraries**

Family Services Approach

Research shows that strong parent/child interactions promote school readiness and life-long learning. Our first goal anchors family engagement work around the fundamental core premise: we must build partnerships with **all families** to enhance parent/child interactions.

Building on program development and research done through a partnership with the Harvard University's Center on the Developing Child's Frontiers of Innovation network, *Shine on, Families* is a researched-based curriculum which utilizes a PEER mantra- Pause, Engage, Encourage, and Reflect- to promote family interactions that build executive function, a foundational skill for school readiness. *Shine on, Families* extends our classroom curriculum into the home and encourages parents as their child's first teacher.

The curriculum guides families through daily learning activities that are fun, interactive, and easily integrated into home routines. This creates a shared language between staff and families, which strengthens child outcomes. *Shine on, Families* strategies are also informed by research on adult learning, with a strong focus on providing multiple venues for modeling, coaching, practice, and reflection.

319 families received specialized family services in 2024:

Crisis Intervention * Housing Assistance * Mental Health Services * ESL Training * Adult
Education Assistance * Job Training * Substance Abuse Prevention
* Substance Abuse Treatment * Child Abuse & Neglect Services
* Health Education * Parenting Education

**137,497 nutritious meals were served in 2024,
reducing food insecurity.**

EOA Head Start/ Early Head Start Revenue		
Federal Grant		3,983,593
USDA		303,291
Local Donations		2,500
In-Kind		1,028,540
Total Revenue		5,317,924
EOA Head Start/ Early Head Start Expenditures		
	Budgeted	Actual
Salaries	2,505,670	2,588,072
Benefits	588,056	511,689
Travel	38,200	38,250
Occupancy	266,157	240,815
Supplies	156,817	173,324
Consultants	175,654	175,607
Food Unreimbursed	70,000	71,633
Food Reimbursed	290,000	303,291
T&TA	57,515	53,748
Other	176,982	132,955
In-Kind	985,688	1,028,540
Total Expenditures	5,310,739	5,317,924

EOA Early Head Start Expansion Revenue		
Federal Grant		1,14,693
USDA		58,205
CARES Funds from 2022		24,477
In-Kind		199,119
Total Revenue		1,396,494
EOA Early Head Start Expansion Expenditures		
	Budgeted	Actual
Salaries	664,914	777,458
Benefits	162,070	126,341
Travel	2,330	8,716
Occupancy	75,823	19,169
Supplies	52,430	45,499
Consultants	35,317	36,234
Food Unreimbursed	6,077	14,719
Food Reimbursed	50,000	58,205
T&TA	20,844	14,822
Other	24,477	24,477
In-Kind	199,119	199,119
Total Expenditures	1,297,617	1,396,494

Preparing Children for Kindergarten

Our program's curriculum model is built on a foundation of *The Frog Street Curriculum*. Our classroom teaching teams use Shine Early Learning's Curriculum Plans to implement units around a set of universally meaningful themes. Weekly lesson plans and supplemental materials provide strong support for intentional teaching, meaningful small-group activities, and engaging read-alouds.

In this model, *The Frog Street Curriculum* continues to serve as the foundation, providing the philosophical orientation to how children learn, and guiding teachers in setting up the learning environment. *The Frog Street Curriculum* approach is developmentally appropriate and supports children's learning in all domains included in the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Frameworks: Ages Birth to Five, as well as Arkansas Child Development and Early Learning Standards: Birth through 60 months. In addition, curriculum plans are designed and can be modified to support our program's School Readiness Goals, encompassing social-emotional, approaches to learning & play, language & literacy, math & science, social studies, the arts, and physical development.



2024 Head Start and Early Head Start		
Total number of children served	224	257
Total number of families served	200	224
Average monthly enrollment	136	142
Percentage of categorical/income eligible children served	91%	95%
Percentage of children that received medical exams	93%	72%
Percentage of children that received dental exams	74%	36%

EOA Head Start/ Early Head Start American Recovery Act Funds Revenue		
Federal Grant		597,286
Total Revenue		597,286
EOA Early Head Start Expansion American Recovery Act		
	Budgeted	Actual
Salaries	200,000	101,278
Benefits	20,000	9,916
Equipment	125,000	116,483
Repairs/ Improvements	60,000	51,766
Total Expenditures	597,286	447,129
Deferred Rev to FY2025		150,157



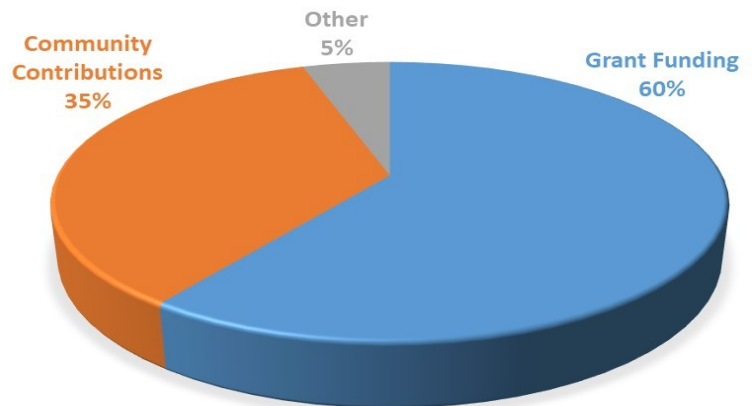
**2,781 followers on the
Children's House
Facebook Page!**



Children who have been abused or neglected typically have delayed development of approximately 18-months, depending on the severity of their trauma. The goal at EOA Children's House is to work with each child to achieve age-appropriate developmental milestones so that when they enter Kindergarten, they are at the same developmental level as their peers. EOA staff work with community partners to assess for therapy needs, including special education, speech therapy, occupational therapy, and/or physical therapy services.

EOA Children's House was founded in 1978 as a program providing services and care to children under the age of five who have been abused, neglected, or have faced adverse childhood experiences.

These services include mental health counseling, preschool education curriculum, nutrition services, and family support services.



CHILDREN'S HOUSE FUNDING



CHILDREN EOA SERVED IN 2024:

12 children were in Foster Care
8 children were homeless
60 children had an identified disability
31 children were referred from
child welfare agencies and Juvenile Court



The EOA Step Up Economic Stability Program empowers individuals to overcome obstacles that stand in the way of economic self-sufficiency.

Program Participants establish a budget plan and set attainable goals in the areas of employment, education, and income management. Case management, supportive services, resources, and referrals are provided to help participants make progress toward achieving their goals.

2024 Results:

- A total of 41 participants participated in the program in 2024 with 100% receiving financial counseling, establishing a household budget, and improving income management skills.
- Three participants increased their savings and received a 2:1 incentive match of \$800 to add to their savings of \$400. This match bolstered household savings and strengthened their economic stability.
- This program removed the obstacle of housing instability by providing rent and utilities assistance for 32 families.
- Three participants increased household income through higher salaries and new employment opportunities.

The EOA Step Up Economic Stability Program was launched in May 2022 and is funded by the Community Services Block Grant and private grant funding.

EOA Health & Wellness

EOA promotes health and wellness throughout the year through several health initiatives. By creating a culture of health and wellness among the staff, our employees not only feel better about themselves, but it can also lower agency costs such as insurance, workers' compensation claims, and reduce absenteeism.

2024 Health Initiatives:

Wellness Coaching

This year, we prioritized staff health and well-being through targeted coaching and wellness initiatives to reduce stress, burnout, and absenteeism. By supporting the employee's physical, mental, and emotional health, we strengthened their capacity to provide high-quality care and foster nurturing environments that benefit children's development. Our commitment to well-being also enhances retention, boosts morale, and reinforces a positive workplace culture where both staff and children can thrive.

Dr. Rhonda S. Ellis, a board-certified health coach and certified leadership development coach, led the well-being initiatives and coaching.

44 staff members participated in the monthly wellness coaching.

Walking Challenge

Regular walking offers numerous health benefits, including improved cardiovascular health, weight management, and mental well-being. It also strengthens bones, improves sleep, and can reduce the risk of certain chronic diseases.

54 staff members participated in the challenge to walk more steps daily. 11,146,373 steps were logged during the 30-day initiative.



HWOA Executive Director Margarita Solorzano presented the Community Excellence Award to EOA Executive Director Delia Anderson and EOA staff and board members.

EOA was awarded the Community Excellence Award in 2024 by the Hispanic Women's Organization of Arkansas.

This award recognizes an organization that through its leadership, actions, work, influence, and attitude has demonstrated excellence in their service, promoting advancement for all.

EOA 2024 Major Donors

Individuals:

Delia Anderson	Jane Hunt	Reid & Sarah Phillips
Jeff Beckham	Brian & Faye Jones	Jerry Roller
Larry & Nancy Bittle	Kyle & Laura Kellams	Jim & Beverly Rouse
Marie Breuer	Hazel Keller	Tim & Debbie Self
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Charles Horne	Donald & Kathryn Pederson	Marsha West
Mary Howard	Larry Perkin	Linda Wray
Derek Hudson		Ann Marie Ziegler

Thank You!

EOA 2024 Major Donors

Corporations & Foundations:

AAA Business Systems, Inc.	First United Presbyterian Church
Adventure Subaru	Fred J. Brunner Foundation
Ale-Truism	Impressions Online Boutique
Arkansas Community Foundation	JH Computer Group
C.A.R.E. Initiative	K&K Vet Supply
The Carpenter Foundation	United Way of Northwest Arkansas
Diageo	Willard & Pat Walker Charitable Foundation

Thank You!

In-Kind Support:

Bamboo HR	Great Gift Exchange	Sharp's Lock & Alarm
C.A.R.E. Initiative	INTOUCH Coaching	Sources for Community Independent Living
City of Fayetteville	JH Computer Group	Springdale Public Schools
City of Lincoln	Junior League of NWA	The Cockpit Catering Co.
Crye-Leike Realtors	K&K Vet Supply	University of Arkansas
Dickson Street Bookshop	Methodist Family Health	Walmart Optical
Google	Pi Beta Phi	Washington County
Great Gift Exchange		



Economic Opportunity Agency

*"Empowering children and families to
learn, connect, and succeed."*

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Megan Cuddy, Director of Advancement

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