



Human Service Fund: A Collaborative City/County Partnership
2023 Year-End Report

Since 1990, United Community Services of Johnson County (UCS) has worked in partnership with cities* and Johnson County Government to support programs that improve the quality of life through human service strategies. This report provides an overview of programs supported by the Human Service Fund (HSF) during 2023. The HSF grant process saw funding requests exceed funding availability by more than \$45,000. For 2023, nineteen nonprofits, including three applicants in the Small Grants Program, were awarded \$412,040.

In 2023, life was returning to a new normal as contraction of COVID became less common and normalized. Grantees continued to adapt strategies for operations and outreach to support clients in accessing safety net services. Like many industries, HSF grantees providing regular case management and services, such as healthcare, continue to see gaps in the workforce. Many direct assistance agencies continue to see an increase in need among clients, related to high inflation and significant cost increases in rent, utilities, and groceries. Responding to the need, HSF grantees dug in and provided over 175,000 units of service to more than 58,000^ Johnson County residents. These “units of service” included a full spectrum of programmatic interventions designed to offer support and build self-sufficiency and well-being such as: medical, dental and mental health appointments, nights of safe housing, counseling programs, emergency rental and utility assistance, food pantries, hours of case management, employment training and counseling, and more.

Human Service Fund (HSF) Priorities:

Programs funded by the HSF must deliver measurable outcomes which benefit Johnson County residents and, in the long-term, benefit local governments by avoiding, deferring, or preventing costs that otherwise might be incurred by local government. Programs funded by the HSF must fit the definition of “Safety Net or Work Supports.” Priority is given to programs that:

- address emergency aid and shelter, adequate housing, child/adult abuse, child welfare, health and mental health, work support services such as transportation, childcare and early childhood development, and job training.
- serve individuals and/or families with income below or near the federal poverty level.
- demonstrate innovation and/or collaboration in program delivery.
- are consistent with an evidence-based program, best practices, or promising practices, or replicate a successful model.
- build the capacity of neighborhoods and local jurisdictions to support equity in the social determinants of health.

The UCS board of directors, funded programs and program participants thank the Board of County Commissioners, and Mayors and Council Members who make these funds available. For additional information, contact Erika Garcia Reyes, Director of Resource Allocation, erikag@ucsjoco.org.

2023 Funding	
Johnson County Government	\$151,500
14 Cities	\$287,540
Total Dollars	\$439,040
UCS Administration	-\$27,000
Grant Awards	\$412,040

*Participating cities include De Soto, Edgerton, Gardner, Leawood, Lenexa, Merriam, Mission, Olathe, Overland Park, Prairie Village, Roeland Park, Shawnee, Spring Hill, and Westwood.

^This figure represents unduplicated client counts for each grantee, combined.

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HSF Small Grants Recipients - \$14,898 in grants

HSF Small Grants were developed and launched in 2022, after consultation with and agreement of contributing jurisdictions. HSF Small Grants are for amounts less than \$5,000 for agencies that are new, growing, or grassroots and working to build their footprint and grant capacity in Johnson County. Like regular HSF applicants, these nonprofits must meet Human Service Fund guidelines, including funding priorities, eligibility criteria, and reporting requirements.

Community Center of Shawnee

Johnson County Residents Served: **3,132 with emergency services**

Award: **\$4,900**

Community Center of Shawnee provides year-round transportation assistance and food pantry services to decrease food insecurity and increase self-sufficiency of Johnson County residents. Their emergency assistance program includes food, clothing, holiday meals, school supplies, transportation assistance, and shelter supports. Community Center of Shawnee serves low-income clients. Transportation is a recognized barrier to employment and healthcare access in Johnson County.

Outcomes achieved during 2023: Community Center of Shawnee served a total of 8,105 individuals, including 3,132 Johnson County residents. Food insecurity was reduced for 300 and 325 families, respectively, through Thanksgiving and Christmas box distributions. To assist with transportation needs, the Center provided \$30 gas gift cards to an average of 60 households per month and assistance to 6 households with car repairs. Transportation assistance supported households in maintaining employment, accessing healthcare, and securing shelter.

Gateway of Hope

Johnson County Residents Served: **216 with 2,110 hours of free or sliding scale mental health and behavioral health services**

Award: **\$4,999**

Gateway of Hope provides sliding scale and free quality mental health and behavioral healthcare to low income, under- and uninsured women in Johnson County. HSF funding subsidizes the Sisters of Hope/Hermanas en la Esperanza program, which focuses on access to care for Latina women and other women of color. Services are provided in English and Spanish and include individual counseling, small group counseling, and support groups. Access to mental and behavioral healthcare services is an acute need for low-income women in Johnson County.

Outcomes achieved during 2023: Gateway of Hope's services support clients in reducing levels of trauma-related depression, increasing or improving work productivity, and experiencing life improvement. Based on an initial review of the Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD) and Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ) results, approximately 75% of respondents indicated a reduction in depression and/or anxiety levels. Patient data indicated that approximately 70% of respondents indicated a reduction in the number of days off work due to poor mental health.

Pathway to Hope
Johnson County
Residents Served:
**166 with 11,590
hours of
supportive
services**

Pathway to Hope is the local chapter of a national program, Reclamation Clubhouse (RC), which provides a day program, free education and employment training, as well as work tools, clothing, and transportation for adults with a diagnosis of serious mental illness to support stable employment and self-sufficiency. Pathway to Hope supports club members in obtaining employment skills, and obtaining and maintaining employment through job identification assistance, work tools and attire, transportation assistance, and more.

Outcomes achieved during 2023: 15 clients are participating in supported or independent employment. 35 members participated in RC’s work-ordered job simulation day.

Award: **\$4,999**

HSF Regular Grants - \$439,040 in grants

**CASA of Johnson
and Wyandotte
Counties**

Johnson County
Residents Served:
**448 children
through 15,909
hours of support
and advocacy**

CASA’s (Court-Appointed Special Advocate) Child Advocacy Program is a court-ordered program that serves children involved in cases where conflicting case information has been presented to the judge, there is extreme neglect or abuse, or there are concerns about implementation of services. A trained CASA volunteer advocate focuses on the child’s needs. The volunteer gathers information from significant adults in the child’s life, and with a CASA supervisor, submits a report to the judge who is then able to make a more informed decision regarding the child’s future. Trained CASA advocates provide an average of 12,000 hours of advocacy time per month on behalf of children in need of care. Their court reports support judges’ critical decisions about where children should live and what services should be court-ordered.

Award: **\$45,000**

Outcomes achieved during 2023: The presence of a stable adult is a key factor in building resilience from a history of trauma. 98% of children served by CASA had the same CASA volunteer advocate throughout their court involvement. While assigned to a CASA advocate, 100% of children served did not have an additional affirmed or substantiated report of abuse to Kansas Department for Children and Families. Of the CASA-served youth eligible for graduation or working towards obtaining a GED, 100% were successful (graduated or awarded a GED). This percentage for academic milestones far exceeds the state average for children in foster care.

**Catholic Charities
of Northeast
Kansas**

Johnson County
Residents Served:
**21,339 through
53,941 service
encounters**

Through two centers in Johnson County, Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas’ emergency assistance and supportive housing program provides direct assistance and strengths-based case management, without regard to religious affiliation, to families living at or below 150% of federal poverty guidelines. Emergency Assistance services include those that meet residents’ basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter, as well as financial assistance with prescription medication, medical supplies, utilities, childcare, and transportation. The case management delivery model emphasizes practices to achieve self-sufficiency, including asset development/financial literacy, workforce development and job-seeking assistance, life skills, and referrals to other available community resources.

Award: **\$68,500**

Outcomes achieved during 2023: Catholic Charities’ programs far exceeded the anticipated number of clients served and units of service, increasing by 51% over 2022

levels. Direct financial assistance enabled 658 individuals to maintain safe housing for at least 30 days; and 887 individuals benefited from utility service assistance which enabled them to sustain utility services for 30 days. 98% of households receiving direct financial assistance completed a financial assessment with their case manager, and 76% increased their financial well-being and capability through program activities.

El Centro, Inc.

Johnson County residents served: **2,298 through 3,357 service encounters**

Award: **\$25,000**

El Centro's Johnson County Family Services Program provides a set of safety-net services to low-income, under-insured and uninsured Johnson County residents. Services include emergency assistance, assistance filing taxes, financial literacy classes, individual financial counseling, and access to healthcare (health navigation and promotion). Tax filing assistance is delivered through El Centro's Overland Park Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) site. Other services are provided in El Centro's Olathe office.

Outcomes achieved during 2023: Clients' immediate basic needs were met: 75 households received utility assistance and 74 households received rent assistance. 200 individuals completed financial coaching to support long-term financial stability. 102 people were assisted with Individual Tax Identification Number requests; 1,214 people were assisted in filing their taxes. 189 individuals were assisted with applying for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and received benefits; 512 enrolled in KanCare with assistance. 639 individuals were referred to a community healthcare resource. 152 individuals completed a class about eating healthy on a budget.

FosterAdopt Connect

Johnson County residents served: **82 through 161 service hours**

Award: **\$10,000**

FosterAdopt Connect's new Fostering Prevention effort is an intensive in-home support program that utilizes Motivational Interviewing and the Nurturing Parenting Program model to increase the capacity of at-risk families to meet the needs of their children with the intent to stabilize housing placement and reduce the need for foster care. As of May 2022, Johnson County had nearly 600 children in foster care with an average stay of 22 months. Supporting families and avoiding the cost of foster care brings a significant return on investment on the overburdened foster care system and improves long-term outcomes for children and families.

Outcomes achieved during 2023: 100% of Fostering Prevention children living with their parent/caregiver during the service period maintained placement stability. 80% of parents who completed an initial and post (Adult Adolescent Parenting Inventory) Assessment improved their parenting skills in one domain by an increase of at least 1 point.

Growing Futures Early Education Center

Johnson County residents served:

HSF funding supported Growing Futures Wrap Around Care Program (WAC). WAC complements the Head Start program, providing full-day care and education from 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. 2021 research by The Family Conservancy and Mid-America Regional Council indicates that affordable childcare is an acute need in Johnson County and the surrounding region in order to support return to full-time employment by primary caregivers. Due to COVID shutdowns in 2020, Johnson County permanently lost 1,084 childcare slots.

**233 through
4,530 hours of
care**

Award: \$19,398

Families served by Growing Futures are living at or below federal poverty guidelines. The majority of Growing Futures families speak English as a second language and half of families are single parent households. Through the HSF grant, childcare scholarships help low-income families experiencing financial hardships who are unable to pay their share of childcare fees and who are working or going to school for at least 30 hours per week. Scholarships allow for continuity of early childhood care and education while parents are working or attending school. Growing Futures also provides resources and support for the family to support self-sufficiency including connection to health, nutrition, social services, mental health services, parental education and parenting events.

Outcomes achieved during 2023: Average 2023 attendance in WAC was 82.3%. 6% or two children, left the program because they were unable to pay; one was transferred to another Growing Futures program and only one left completely. 60% of the assisted families achieved steps toward the completion of a large family goal, such as maintaining employment, learning English, purchasing a first home, or working toward a GED.

**Health
Partnership Clinic
of Johnson
County**

Johnson County
residents served:
**8,245 with 19,575
healthcare visits,
screenings, and
vaccine
appointments**

Award: \$49,500

Health Partnership Clinic (HPC) provides primary and preventative medical care at their primary care office in Olathe, a pediatric clinic in Shawnee Mission, and a school-based clinic in Merriam. HSF funding supported a Nurse Practitioner providing care to uninsured patients at the Olathe Clinic. HPC's patients are primarily low-income and the majority are uninsured or publicly-insured. HPC is Johnson County's largest safety-net clinic and only Federally Qualified Health Center; it utilizes a medical home model which emphasizes prevention and health maintenance while providing a broad scope of services including care for patients with chronic diseases. HPC also provides dental and behavioral health services, and delivers onsite health care services and case management in partnership with homeless shelters. Specialty care is provided through a network of providers.

Outcomes achieved during 2023: HPC served 10,282 patients in and outside of Johnson County in 2023. HPC quality indicators include 60.3% of diabetic patients have an A1c level of 9.0 or below and 51.3% of patients diagnosed with hypertension have blood pressure readings less than 140/90. HPC participates with the American Heart Association on a National Hypertension Collaborative and is planning to utilize self-monitoring blood pressure devices to assist patients in improving results. HPC's dental outreach program also provides a significant service to the community, providing screening services to 5,321 students during the 2022-2023 school year. Over 93% of patients surveyed indicated they were either satisfied or very satisfied with the overall care they received as a patient.

**Habitat For
Humanity Kansas
City**

Johnson County
Residents Served:
**39 with 37 units
of Home**

Habitat for Humanity Kansas City's Neighborhood Revitalization, received HSF funding for its Home Preservation Program, which supports home retention and safe and adequate housing through home maintenance assistance. The Home Preservation Program provides minor home repair, critical home repair, and home weatherization. All clients are low-income and engage in "sweat equity" as well as financial literacy counseling as part of the program. This program also provides energy audits and education. Retention of existing housing stock through home repair and modification is highlighted as a need in Johnson County in the Johnson County Housing Study. Currently, Habitat has a waitlist of more

Preservation services

than 125 Johnson County families in need of assistance from the Home Preservation Program; Habitat is a member of the Johnson County Home Modification Coalition and has a 5 year strategic plan to address home repair needs in the region.

Award: **\$5,000**

Outcomes achieved during 2023: 100% of Home Preservation participants reported that their home is a healthier place than before repairs were performed and reported improved quality of life, health, and well-being. 100% of participants remained in their homes six months after services were provided.

Hillcrest Transitional Housing

Hillcrest’s Transitional Housing – Homeless Youth and Families Program – provides transitional housing for homeless youth, up to age 24, families with children, and single adults in seven apartments located in Overland Park. Hillcrest uses either the U.S. Housing and Urban Development or McKinney-Vento definition of homeless and clients are at or below federal poverty guidelines. The program provides housing and food, case management, budget counseling and connection to community services to address immediate and ongoing needs, such as medical, dental, vision, mental health, substance abuse treatment, employment training, tutoring, and mentoring.

Johnson County Residents Served: **17, with 1,213 nights of transitional housing**

Outcomes achieved during 2023: 17 Johnson County residents were served through 1,213 nights of transitional housing. 5 homeless youth and 8 homeless adults have received an individual assessment and have achieved at least one goal from their assessment plan. 3 youth applied to and were accepted into college/trade school. 4 adult households completed the program and moved on to permanent housing. 4 youth have worked toward their educational goals. Over the course of the year, 10 adults maintained employment, and 5 of 10 improved employment/received better wages. Over 12,000 volunteer hours were recorded and \$30,000 in-kind donations were received in 2023.

Award: **\$10,000**

Johnson County Interfaith Housing Network

JoCo Interfaith Housing Network (IHN) provides shelter, meals, transportation and case management for families and single unaccompanied females experiencing homelessness. Area congregations provide shelter and meals at congregational sites on a rotating schedule while IHN staff helps families regain self-sufficiency and independence. Human Service Funds are used to support case management which includes assistance with transportation, referrals to other community resources, assistance with budgeting, money management, and job and housing searches. IHN has over 3,000 volunteers and partnerships with 36 faith congregations.

Johnson County Residents Served: **51 with 2,704 days of shelter/case management**

Outcomes achieved during 2023: IHN utilized the funding support to provide professional strengths-based case management for homeless families and homeless single unaccompanied females. A total of 51 Johnson County residents were supported through this program in 2023. 33% of families moved to homes of their own, or transitional housing within four months of entering the network. 80% of families increased economic resources by 25% during their time in the network. IHN held in-person volunteer trainings in 2023 with 90% of volunteers reported increased awareness of human service needs in our community after attending a volunteer training.

Award: **\$8,000**

Kansas Children’s Service League

Johnson County Residents Served: **150 with 1,176 client visits**

Award: **\$20,340**

Kansas Children’s Service League (KCSL) Healthy Families is a child abuse prevention program which provides intensive home-based parent education, support, and case management to first and second-time parents who have been identified as being high risk for child abuse and neglect. Eligibility is based upon risk factors, not income, however, most of the families are low-income. Participants receive routine at-home visits, case management, referrals to community resources and services, child development and parent education, and linkage to health care services. HSF funding also covered the annual cost of webhosting the Johnson County Early Learning Collaborative, a collaborative of organizations (including KCSL) which serve young children. The website is used to connect caregivers and providers with programs that serve children, and as a link to My Resource Connection when other services are needed.

Outcomes achieved during 2023: 95% of families served by the program remained free from substantiated abuse and neglect while in the program. By the end of the year, 97% of children enrolled in the program for at least six months had health insurance and 91% of currently enrolled children had a developmental screening within the past 6 months, supporting immediate and long-term health and educational attainment of the children and families.

Kansas Parents as Teachers Association (KPATA)

Johnson County Residents Served: **18 with 575 hours of client visits**

Award: **\$5,000**

Kansas Parents as Teachers Association (KPATA), first-time grantee, received HSF funding for its Bright Futures program, an intensive in-home program providing developmental, social-emotional, health screenings for children, and connection to resources for at-risk families referred by the Department of Children and Families. Regular home visits provide over 105 hours of in-home support per year per family. This program supports family health, helps alleviate poverty, and reduces child abuse and family displacement. It reduces the burden on the foster care system by reducing costs to the legal system of increased Child in Need of Care cases, and resulting in better outcomes for families and children.

Outcomes achieved during 2023: 75% of children enrolled in Bright Futures were screened on the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ3) within 90 days of enrollment. 50% of families connected with one resource given by their Bright Futures parent educator within 60 days of enrollment. 31% of families set and achieved a goal within 120 days of program enrollment.

KidsTLC

Johnson County residents served: **282 through 833 service encounters**

Award: **\$17,500**

KidsTLC Thriving Families program offers resource referral, parent support groups, and health care navigation to families who face behavioral and mental health issues with their children. The program serves families in the community and families who have children in one of KidsTLC’s programs. Eligibility is not based upon income, however, most of the families are low-income (58% of KidsTLC’s clients are living below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level). The program serves as the navigation arm for the agency, helping families find mental health/health care, housing and community resources/support. It also provides education and support to Spanish-speaking families. The program is a health navigation resource for schools and participates in Olathe and Shawnee Mission School Districts’ IMPACT Olathe and Project Home programs which serve youth and families who

are at-risk for homelessness. The goal of Thriving Families is to educate families about health issues, trauma, and raising healthy children; and provide health navigation resources so parents can raise healthy children. KidsTLC served a total of 382 individuals with 1,013 service encounters in and outside of Johnson County in 2023.

Outcomes achieved during 2023: 100% of new KidsTLC clients completed an intake/evaluation upon program admission. 84% of clients referred to outpatient medication or behavioral management treatment kept their initial appointment. 70% of clients referred to a health provider remained in services for 30 days. 51% of clients were receiving public assistance benefits by year end.

NCircle

Johnson County
Residents Served:
**90 through 6,027
hours of case
management and
training**

Award: **\$19,696**

NCircle’s Digital Literacy and College of Trades programs provide skills training, certification instruction, financial education, job placement, and mentorship for individuals in Johnson County Department of Corrections Adult Residential Center (ARC) and Therapeutic Community, as well as adults on probation upon release from the ARC. In an expansion of this program, NCircle collaborates with partners and Johnson County Community College to provide college credit courses and community college support for clients. Through these programs, new life skills, employment training, and case management resources are provided to clients (most of whom return to Johnson County upon completion of sentence/probation period). Program participants demonstrate increased rate of employment, increased income, decreased recidivism, and decreased new charges.

Outcomes achieved during 2023: Clients who have participated in the College of Trades show marked improvement in Employment Readiness as indicated by pre/post Employment Readiness Scale assessment. Assessments indicate a 27% client improvement in career decision-making, a 29% increase in their ability to do a job search, and 20% increase in clients’ ability to effectively manage their career even when unexpected changes happen. In 2023, 64 Johnson County clients received a total of 107 trade certificates. Johnson County residents took and passed tests for 443 Northstar Certificates. Pre/Post Employment Readiness Scale indicates clients showed a 25% improvement over the pretest in Self Efficacy, a 25% improvement in understanding social networks and supports, and a 19% improvement in understanding what it takes to keep and maintain employment.

Safehome

Johnson County
Residents Served:
**99 with 6,589
nights of shelter
and service
encounters**

Award: **\$22,310**

Safehome provides shelter and other assistance to those fleeing domestic violence, including assistance in addressing finances, such as direct financial assistance, financial literacy courses, assistance budgeting and improving credit, identifying barriers to employment, referrals to Workforce Partnership, and supporting employment. Through education, support, and referrals to community agencies, this program assists clients in taking control of their finances and moving towards financial independence as they work to rebuild their lives. In 2023, Safehome served 227 individuals in and outside of Johnson County, through 15,674 nights of safe shelter and service encounters, including therapy, case management, and other services.

Outcomes achieved during 2023: 73% of Safehome clients reported looking for work while in shelter, 72% of clients in residence for at least four weeks working on a budget and 73% making a plan to pay off past due bills. 92% of clients in shelter reported knowing more ways to plan for their safety and 68% of clients who spent at least four sessions in therapy showed a decrease in symptoms, based on the PHQ-SADS Screener. 79% of clients who resided at Safehome for at least 90 days transitioned from the shelter and into permanent housing, with 33% of those clients reported remaining housed six months later.

The Salvation Army, Olathe

Johnson County Residents Served: **88 with 20,265 nights of shelter, meals, and hygiene kits**

Award: **\$25,000**

The Salvation Army Johnson County Family Lodge assists homeless and near homeless families with shelter and food at their Olathe campus. In most cases, the Lodge provides up to 90 days of shelter (with a maximum stay of 180 days in some circumstances). Residents meet weekly with a case manager who utilizes the strengths-based case management model. Classes and/or skill building opportunities include parenting, financial literacy, maintaining employment, housing searches, daily living/life skills, developing a support system, and navigating mainstream resources. In 2023, the Family Lodge became a licensed childcare provider of before and after-school, and summer in response to the shortage of affordable, qualified facilities in the region. Services are provided at no charge for families participating in Salvation Army programs.

Outcomes achieved during 2023: In 2023, 95% of families transitioned from the Family Lodge into permanent housing, and 96% of families increased their income and decreased their housing debt to support living in permanent housing. Ten children were served through childcare tuition supports.

Sunflower House

Johnson County residents served: **21,853 through various education programs**

Award: **\$46,898**

The Human Service Fund supported the Sunflower House child abuse prevention program – the Personal Safety Educational program. Sunflower House provides child-based education and mandated reporter training free of charge; without grant support, these programs are not sustainable. The program includes: 1) *Happy Bear*, an interactive drama in Spanish and English for children ages four to seven enrolled in public and private early childhood centers and elementary schools; 2) *Think First and Stay Safe*, a curriculum for grades PreK-5 that reinforces personal and digital boundaries and emphasizes that bullying and sexual abuse are against the law; 3) *E-Safety*, provides middle school students with information about how to protect themselves from online predators, and includes safety topics such as sexting, bullying, child exploitation, and social networking; 4) *Keeping Kids Safe Online*, a workshop for parents and caregivers provided in partnership with the FBI Cyber Crimes Unit; 5) *Stewards of Children*, a child sexual abuse prevention and education training for adults; 6) *Mandated Reporter Training* which teaches attendees to recognize signs of sexual abuse, correct procedures/laws for reporting, and how to handle a child’s disclosure; and 7) *Child Protection Project*, a presentation designed to raise the awareness of child sexual abuse among parents and caregivers, and give them tools needed to be proactive in protecting children. In 2023, Sunflower House served 37,289 individuals in and outside of Johnson County.

Outcomes achieved during 2023: In 2023, the Sunflower House Education Team secured MOUs with several school districts for the 2023-24 school year and began a new partnership with the Girls Scouts of NE KS/NW MO. Throughout the year, 33,089 children received personal safety information. A total of 4,224 adults, including 1,174 within the special needs community, received child abuse prevention education, and 98% of participants indicated they gained new information from the training. 95% of adults who attended *Keeping Kids Safe Online* indicated they will more closely monitor the electronic communications of children in their care.