

Achieving Self-Sufficiency

Annual Report 2021



AGENCY PROFILE

Racine Kenosha Community Action Agency, Inc. (RKCAA) has successfully operated anti-poverty programming in Racine County since 1967 and in Kenosha County since 1978. The RKCAA mission is "Stabilizing lives by providing supportive programs and access to community resources for individuals and families." RKCAA's vision is "Partnering in a thriving Community." The agency is governed by a tripartite Board of Directors, that includes representation from civic, low-income and government sectors of Racine and Kenosha Counties.

LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

I am proud to be associated with the work of Racine Kenosha Community Action Agency, Inc. (RKCAA). In my role as Chairperson of the Board of Directors, I am afforded the opportunity to vehemently support the two communities to which I am connected, Racine and Kenosha Counties.

I was especially pleased with the continuation and enhancement of services initiated the year prior, in response to COVID-19. The agency is better positioned to provide for the most vulnerable communities in Racine and Kenosha. Rental assistance programs served 2,931 households in efforts to stay evictions. This work is important to me, as it mirrors my work as a practicing attorney and Housing Priority Coordinator for Legal Action of Wisconsin, Inc.

The WIC Cooking Show continued to be filmed in the Teaching Kitchen in Kenosha, as a part of its work around food and nutrition. I was elated to see fellow Board member, Director Jerry Gulley, featured as a guest chef in one of these classes.

Thank you for partnering with us to advance the agency's mission. RKCAA Board and staff remain committed to providing essential services and other support to Racine and Kenosha County residents, and serving as a stronghold for individuals and families moving towards economic stability.



Carmen Ayers,
Board Chairperson

Racine Kenosha Community Action Agency, Inc. (RKCAA) provided critical services to individuals and families in Racine and Kenosha Counties in 2021.

Relying on dedicated staff, strong partnerships, phones, social media platforms, curbside and drive-through services, RKCAA served more than 67,000 individuals and families, enabling the agency to continue work that began fifty-four years ago.

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) and the Holiday Basket Program ensured that families and seniors were food secure, while providing educational resources online.

The Skills Enhancement Program supported adult students and their children, providing them with the supplies/assistance needed to complete academic studies. Additionally, the program distributed 350 backpacks filled with school supplies, to school-aged students in Racine and Kenosha, increasing the number of students prepared to start the new school year.

On behalf of the RKCAA team, thank you to volunteers, partners, donors and funders. Your continued support is appreciated and key in RKCAA's ability to provide services, support and advocacy to those seeking assistance.



Essie Allen,
Chief Executive Officer

HOUSING



Weatherization Program

The Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) is a partnership between Racine Kenosha Community Action Agency, Inc. (RKCAA), the State of Wisconsin and community partners. RKCAA provides services to low and moderate income households in Racine and Kenosha Counties. The goal of the WAP is to reduce energy costs for eligible households by improving the energy efficiency in homes. The annual average energy cost savings per home is \$350.00/per year.

The Weatherization Assistance Program served 654 individuals residing in 239 dwellings, increasing the number of households gaining access to cost saving energy measures. Additionally, the program provided emergency furnace repair services to 314 families enrolled in the Home Energy + Furnace Program, increasing the number of heated households in Racine and Kenosha Counties.

Kenosha Rental Assistance Program (K-RAP)

In an effort to decrease the number of households unable to pay rent, Racine Kenosha Community Action Agency, Inc. partnered with the City of Kenosha, Kenosha Rental Assistance Program (K-RAP) to assist eligible households in the City of Kenosha adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. An additional one hundred thirty-three (133) households remained shelter secure, resulting in fewer families experiencing homelessness. Benefits distributed totaled more than \$386,000.

Wisconsin Emergency Rental Assistance (WERA)

In an effort to decrease the number of individuals and families without a place to live, Racine Kenosha Community Action Agency, Inc. (RKCAA) worked with the State of Wisconsin and community partners to assist residents adversely effected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Through the Wisconsin Emergency Rental Assistance Program, 7,173 individuals and 2,755 families were able to find shelter or remain in their home, pay utility bills and gain access to additional services. Nearly \$8,883,000 in benefits were distributed to communities served by RKCAA.



ASSET ATTAINMENT

Skills Enhancement Program (SEP)

The Skills Enhancement Program provided opportunities for individuals to move closer to becoming self-sufficient, by offering financial assistance for tuition, books, transportation, childcare and other unmet financial obligations not covered by financial aid.

One hundred percent (100%) of the individuals, four (4), successfully exiting the Skills Enhancement Program are working in chosen fields, with an average hourly increase of \$4.76/hr. or \$10,076 annually, increasing their ability to provide for themselves and their families.

A single mother of four (4), entered the program as a store clerk in 2019, earning \$9.00/hr. She encountered childcare issues and had to drop out of the program. However, one year later she re-entered SEP and received her Associate of Arts Degree in Human Services from Gateway Technical College. She now earns more than \$16.00/hour, and has access to employer-sponsored healthcare.



Pictured "The Skills Enhancement Program helped me not only get my degree, but it helped me get myself together. The program allowed me to use other funds to help my children. When the opportunity is there, people should utilize these resources. I owe so much to this program for my success". Kassi Kramer

FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION



RKCAA implements direct service programs and convenes stakeholder groups that are focused on impacting the health of residents in Racine and Kenosha Counties.

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

To ensure Kenosha WIC families had access to optimal nutrition and health resources, RKCAA provided WIC services to 5,194 unduplicated individuals, resulting in monthly food benefits, nutrition and breastfeeding education and linkages to community resources to ensure Kenosha families get the best start to a healthy life.

To improve the intake of fruits and vegetables, RKCAA provided nutrition education, cooking classes and WIC farmer market checks, resulting in 1,335 WIC clients having access to local produce.



The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)

RKCAA serves as the lead Emergency Feeding Organization (EFO) for Racine and Kenosha Counties. The agency administers programs that assist food-insecure households, focusing on access and nutrition. Food is a necessity; healthy food is key to overall health and wellness.

To increase the number of shelters, food pantries and meal sites having access to state commodities, RKCAA partnered with the State of Wisconsin, Racine County Food Bank and community partners. In 2021, host sites distributed approximately 3,101,123 pounds of food to 27,389 families, resulting in 80,236 individuals gaining access to nutritious food. In addition, the program provided 175,597 meals to individuals and families through shelters and meal sites.

Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)

RKCAA partnered with the State of Wisconsin's Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), Festival Foods, The Potato King, Inc. and the Shalom Center, Inc., enabling seniors to gain access to healthier food options, resulting in an average of 805 additional seniors per month receiving nutritious food boxes in Racine and Kenosha Counties.

Holiday Food Basket Distribution

To ensure that eligible residents in Racine and Kenosha Counties could prepare healthy meals during the holiday season, RKCAA worked with community partners, providing approximately 2,000 holiday food boxes to disabled individuals, senior citizens and others.

Kenosha Senior Veggie Voucher Program

To support low-income Kenosha senior citizens in accessing fresh produce, RKCAA provided Kenosha veggie vouchers during the months of June – September, resulting in 686 seniors having access to local produce from area farmer markets and approved farm stands, ensuring resources for nutritious food to improve and maintain their health.

To encourage an increase in the consumption of fruits and vegetables by senior citizens, RKCAA provided veggie vouchers and information on community food resources, resulting in a 79% redemption rate of the veggie vouchers and greater access to healthy food options.

Health

Fit Families

In an effort to decrease childhood obesity, RKCAA's Fit Families coach provided monthly support and tools, resulting in 148 families implementing behavior change strategies such as limiting sweetened beverages to 6 ounces per day, and encouraging 60 minutes of daily activity for lifelong health and wellness.

To support families in adopting a healthy lifestyle, RKCAA's Fit Families Program provided monthly one-on-one coaching, nutrition education reinforcement items and Zoom classes, resulting in an increase in the number of children consuming 4 or more servings of fruits and vegetables daily. Fruit and vegetable intake increased from 30.7% to 48%, whereby positively impacting their health and wellness.

Kenosha County Public Health

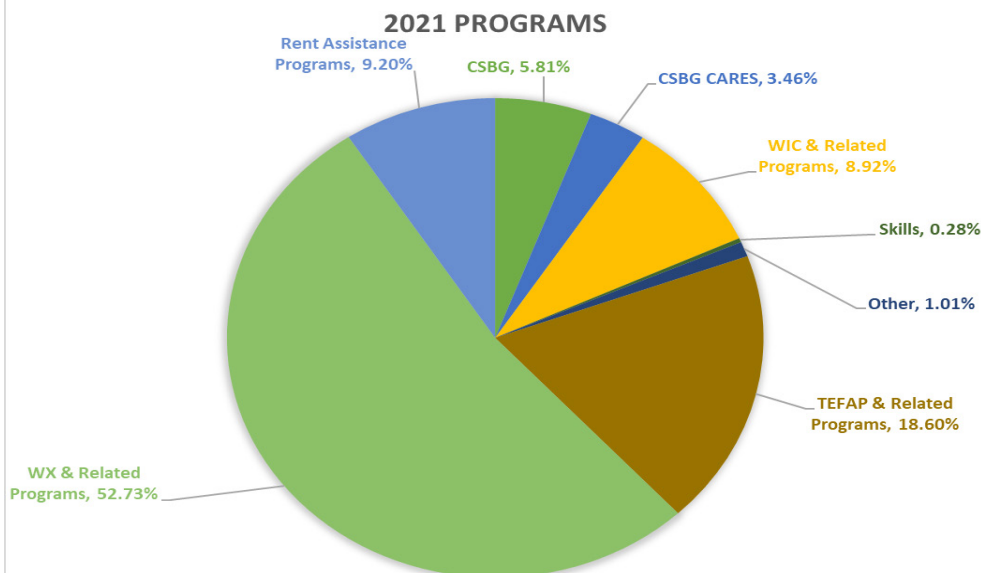
The KCPH uptown clinic, located on the second floor of the RKCAA's Kenosha Office, ensured access to preventative health services for WIC families and the Kenosha community, resulting in improved health outcomes.

Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Program Highlights



In an effort to support WIC families who experienced financial hardship during the pandemic, RKCAA provided 3,296 packs of diapers for WIC infants and children, assisting families adversely affected by COVID-19 meet their monthly expenses. To encourage fruit and vegetable consumption during the winter months for food-insecure senior citizens, RKCAA provided 526 Access Produce gift cards to redeem for fruits and vegetables at local Festival Foods, resulting in senior citizens gaining access to healthy food during the pandemic.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION



Racine Kenosha Community Action Agency, Inc. receives federal, state, local and private funding. RKCAA's Finance Department records all funds in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and funding source requirements. An independent Certified Public Accounting firm performs annual audits and funding sources perform required regular fiscal and program monitoring. During 2021, the agency managed twenty-seven (27) programs in Racine and Kenosha Counties, totaling \$9.5 million.

DONORS AND FUNDERS

Anthem Inc.
 Associated Bank
 City of Kenosha
 City of Racine
 CNH Industrial Foundation
 Covenant Presbyterian Church
 Democratic Party of Racine County
 Division of Workforce Development
 DJK Foods LLC (Piggly Wiggly)
 Educators Credit Union
 Equus Workforce Solutions
 Festival Foods
 Gruber Law Offices LLC
 IDental
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 Kenosha Achievement Center
 Kenosha Area Family & Aging Services, Inc.
 Kenosha County Department of Human Services
 Kenosha County Division of Health
 Mosby Housing Services LLC
 Piggly Wiggly

Progressive Missionary Baptist Church Racine County
 Racine Interfaith Coalition
 Racine P H Shrine Club
 Racine Unified School District
 SEWRPC
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 State of Wisconsin, Department of Administration
 State of Wisconsin, Department of Children and Families
 State of Wisconsin, Department of Health Services
 Supermercado Gran Morelos LLC
 The Corn King LLC
 The Main Project and Cafe LLC
 The Potato King, Inc.
 UBS Financial Services Inc
 United Mechanical Inc
 United Way of Kenosha County
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 Wisconsin Community Action Program Association (WISCAP)
 XPO Logistics

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