



COUNCIL ON AGING OF CENTRAL OREGON Volunteer Coordination of Meals on Wheels & Congregate Dining

2021-22 Award \$40,000 (3% of project funding)
Amount Requested 2022-23 \$50,000

Cathy Hensel, a Meals on Wheels recipient in Sisters remarks, "I can't thank you, the Council on Aging, the chef, the many Meals on Wheels drivers and volunteers enough. You've brought peace of mind, energy, and nutritional health into my life. The meals truly changed both my physical and mental health. You truly are lifesavers to those of us in need." January 1, 2022

Community Need and Request for Increased Funding

- Even with COVID retreating, many older adults in Central Oregon are still isolated at home.
- We are still adding Meals on Wheels clients who request support, despite earlier wait lists. Every client gets shelf-stable foods as emergency backup, as well.
- Community dining (previously sit-down lunches) is still mostly drive-through hot lunch service in Bend, Sisters and La Pine three times per week. Redmond delivers as well.
- Our food provision has increased and so have uncertainties related to our food supply. In response, we have added a part-time cook to make hot food for Bend, La Pine and Sisters. We have been able to serve better, more nutritious hot food as a result, but we would like to be able to cook even more hot food and return to congregate in-person meals soon.
- We respectfully request \$50,000 to continue to employ a second cook and add a PT bakery cook so that we can further expand our food provision with more days and more meals. Previously our single cook was supported by volunteers and struggled to meet the nutrition needs of Deschutes County seniors. We have expanded to offer more days of community dining each week, better meal variety, and eliminated any waiting lists.

Impact of Current Investment Provide .6 FTE (of 3.2 FTE) to support nutrition programs (Meals on Wheels and congregate dining) and recruit, train, and coordinate volunteers.

- In the period of July 1, 2021 to Jan 1, 2022 (February and March 2022 numbers are not available until 3/5/22), COA coordinated more than **10,762 volunteer hours** and served/delivered more than **47,895 meals** to more than **991 unduplicated clients** in Deschutes County.

Comments On 3/12/22 the Omnibus Bill passed without the 10% increase in the Older American Act funding that was expected. The FY 23 fund increase was less than 2%. Without the CARES and ARPA fund windfalls of last year, and no increase in OAA funds, we may see a cap on services if we can't secure additional revenues in the next two years, hence our request for additional support in FY23. Your investment in helping expand our in-house cooking has allowed us to feed more hot, nutritious, and delicious meals to deserving seniors who look to us for nutrition and connection.



MOUNTAINSTAR FAMILY RELIEF NURSERY Therapeutic Early Childhood Classroom and Safety Net Projects

2021-22 Award \$20,000 (4% of project funding)
Amount Requested 2022-23 \$21,600

“Investments in high quality early childhood and family services are consistently shown to have the highest returns of any economic development project. We are so excited to be bringing these services into more communities in our county.” - Kara Tachikawa, Executive Director

Community Need and Request for Increased Funding

Deschutes County Data:

- There has been a dramatic increase in the number of children in DHS/Child Welfare.
- In 2019, there were 15.9 (per 1,000) children who were victims of abuse and neglect compared to 11 (per 1,000) in 2015 (*Our Children Oregon, most recent data*).

MountainStar Data:

- Average of 16 family “risk factors” (such as mental health or substance abuse issues, housing or food insecurity) for child abuse and neglect
- Parents have an average Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) score of 6 (ACE score scale is 0-10). An ACE score of 4 or more predicts adverse long-term health outcomes including a two- to five-fold increase in chronic disease state, six- to 12-fold increase in mental illness and addiction disorders, in addition to an increase in learning disabilities and behavioral disorders. In Central Oregon, there are over 5,000 children ages 0-3 considered at-risk. MountainStar currently serves just 6% of this population.

- 98% of our client families live in poverty and 100% meet the OR state definition of at-risk. Funding will support 0.3 FTE (of 3.0 FTE) Program Managers in our Relief Nursery Therapeutic Early Childhood programs in Bend, Redmond, and La Pine. The increase in funding will support programs and needs in Southern, Central, and Northern Deschutes County.

Impact of Current Investment Grant supports 0.4 FTE (of 3.6 FTE) to support Relief Nursery Therapeutic Early Childhood in Bend.

- In the period of July 1, 2021 to February 1, 2022 provided therapeutic early childhood classes, home visiting, parent support, and transportation for **47 children ages 0-3**, already exceeding annual goals. Safety Net/Outreach services (crisis intervention, home visits and basic needs support) for **47 children and their families**. 100% of children enrolled in these services remained safe from confirmed cases of abuse and neglect during this time frame.

Comments MountainStar raises \$1.2 in private investment for every \$1 of government funding. PSU documented a 4:1 return on investment (ROI) for the Salem Relief Nursery. Nationally, investments in early childhood are documented at a 12:1 ROI, which exceeds most other economic development projects. MountainStar Bend’s early childhood classes are rated 5-stars by the State. In FY 2020-21, 99% of the children served remained free from confirmed cases of abuse and neglect. MountainStar offers services in Bend, Redmond, and La Pine.



J BAR J CASCADE YOUTH & FAMILY CENTER Runaway & Homeless Youth Emergency Shelter Project

2021-22 Award	\$20,000 (6% of project funding)
Amount Requested 2022-23	\$20,000

“Cascade Youth & Family Center (CYFC) continues to be the sole provider of a comprehensive spectrum of prevention and intervention services targeting runaway, homeless and street youth, including victims of human trafficking, in Deschutes County and the greater region.” – Stephanie Alvstad, Executive Director

Community Need The total number of homeless in Central Oregon has increased by 85% since 2015 (Point in Time Count data: 594 – 2015; 1,099 – 2021). The number of homeless children and youth has also increased. The following are data for children and youth (up to the age of 24):

- Total homeless children & youth has increased by 43% (184 – 2015; 264 – 2021)
- **Unaccompanied children & youth has increased by 213% (55 – 2015; 172 – 2021)**

It is estimated that 30-40% of homeless youth are not identified. 2021 service totals include:

- Shelter – 5,967 nights for 96 youth (all programs emergency and transitional youth)
- 24-Hour Crisis Response – 1,314 hotline calls; 297 total youth served
- Street Outreach Youth Contacts (basic needs) – 1,508 youth; 1,115 hours (duplicated)

Shelter space continued to be limited during 2021 due to COVID-19 and social distancing requirements. CYFC has had to maintain mandated staffing ratios, despite many COVID+ staff.

Impact of Current Investment Provide support for .2 (of 3.8 FTE) Case Manager to support the Runaway and Homeless Youth Emergency Shelter.

- **86% of youth** who have accessed shelter and received crisis intervention and/or mediation, **were reconnected with family or transitioned to other safe and stable living environments** when leaving the program.
- In the period of July 1, 2021 to January 31, 2022 more than **654 nights of emergency shelter**, crisis intervention and family mediation were provided to more than **26 youth** ages 12-20.

Comments: CYFC’s goal is to shelter the most vulnerable youth to reduce risk and end chronic homelessness. Youth access shelter directly off the street. In 2021, 76 human trafficking victims (72 sex/10 labor/6 both) were identified and served. Homeless youth are at higher risk for physical and sexual exploitation, mental health and substance abuse - even death. It is estimated that 5,000 homeless youth die each year as a result of assault, illness, or suicide. RHY services are largely funded through federal and state grants and donations. However, grant funds require that 10-25% of the project cost be provided through matching funds.

Deschutes County grant funds continue to be crucial match funds for this project.



REDMOND SENIOR CENTER Food for Meals on Wheels & Congregate Meals Project

2021-22 Award \$9,000 (2% of project funding)
Amount Requested 2022-23 \$12,000

"I cannot shop for myself and look forward to getting my daily meal and visiting with my Meals on Wheels driver every day. God Bless you all." - Grateful Meals-on-Wheels Client

Community Need and Request for Increased Funding Over 25% of the population are 50 or older, and by 2025, this number is projected to be 35%. We are on our way to having an older adult population that is disproportional to the general population.

Following CDC and Governor directives including Center closure, the Center continued to provide Meals on Wheels, an essential service, to over 31,000 older adults using safe social interactions. Due to safety restrictions, we did not serve meals on site (congregate meals) during most of 2021.

Currently we face several critical issues: 1. We know a minimum of 35% more meals are needed in the greater Redmond area; 2. Since March 2021, food costs have increased an average of 20%; 3. Our number of volunteers must grow by a minimum of 50% to meet current and emerging needs; and 4. Our 30-year-old commercial kitchen is not functioning at full capacity and facing safety issues (the City of Redmond has committed \$250K toward a complete remodel and we are securing additional funding needed.) Without a tax-base, we are actively seeking additional partners to grow our funding, volunteer base, and social services to fulfill existing needs while planning for the future. We are requesting an increase in funding to:

- Continue to provide the current 120 meals per day and increase to a minimum of 162 per day by September 2022 with the intent to provide a minimum of 150 per day by March 2023 including costs associated with food purchases and staff support needed to prepare food and secure and train volunteers who deliver food.

Impact of Current Investment Support a minimum of 1.8% of the total annual cost for Meals on Wheels and home food delivery service for seniors.

Comments We feel we have "weathered the COVID storm" reasonably well by maintaining our commitment to provide Meals on Wheels, an essential service for those most vulnerable in our greater Redmond area. We are the only organization providing this service and rely on community support to ensure these meals are available. Federal funding for Meals on Wheels provides an average of 40% of the real cost. Our partners are our backbone to ensure vulnerable older adults have the basic need of food. BOCC has been a critical partner. Beyond COVID, we now face challenges of unprecedented older adult population growth, significant food costs, increased wages, and need for more volunteers. With BOCC and other partners, we are up for the challenge.



KIDS CENTER Child Abuse Medical Evaluation Project

2021-22 Award	\$30,000 (14% of project funding)
Amount Requested 2022-23	\$30,000

“During the past year KIDS Center experienced a dramatic increase in service referrals, and requests for our services are now close to pre-pandemic levels. In response to partner-identified need to expand rapid access to services, we hired two additional forensic interviewers and one medical examiner. KIDS Center continues to provide essential diagnostic medical and forensic interview services, family advocacy, therapy, and emergency aid to hundreds of local families.” - Gil Levy, Executive Director

Community Need KIDS Center serves children (birth to 18) who are suspected victims of physical or sexual abuse, neglect, drug endangerment, and witnessing domestic violence. KIDS Center is the Designated Medical Provider (DMP) for medical evaluations, as well providing forensic interviews, family advocacy, and therapy for children referred by law enforcement, DHS Child Welfare, therapists, and medical professionals.

- In 2021, KIDS Center served 1,573 unduplicated children and families, and conducted 342 evaluations, a 19% increase from 2020 and a rate close to pre-pandemic levels. All services are provided at no cost to the family.
- Medical examiners (MEs) field consult calls from medical providers in Deschutes County which result in work-up recommendations, referrals to investigative agencies, and direct referrals for an evaluation at KIDS Center. Last year, MEs trained 132 medical professionals on topics relating to child abuse and neglect.

Impact of Current Investment Grant supports .16 FTE (of 1 FTE) medical examiner to conduct consultations and medical evaluations of suspected victims of child abuse. In the period of July 1, 2021, to March 1, 2022:

- **Performed medical assessments for 100% of children referred (198).**
- **100% of child abuse assessments cross reported to DHS and Law Enforcement (184 law enforcement investigations).**
- **100% of cases accepted by the DA's office for prosecution are supported with expert witness testimony (20 cases accepted).**
- **Every child (and their family) served with a medical evaluation received additional services including family advocacy and a therapy referral (as appropriate).**

Comments: The staff positions we added have strengthened our center's ability to accommodate a rise in child abuse evaluation referrals, respond to our community partners' need for access to quality services, and to prevent burnout within our staff team. The steps we have taken combined with support from the BOCC will be tremendously helpful in ensuring our ability to respond quickly to incoming referrals and to evaluate each child in need of our services.



LATINO COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION Healthy Families & Family Empowerment Programs

2021-22 Award	\$30,000 (8% of project budget)
Amount Requested 2022-23	\$35,000

“Deschutes County funding support is absolutely critical to sustain our services to our underserved immigrant families and to demonstrate the County’s commitment to equity, which lends credibility to our mission and leverages over \$500,000 and 200 volunteers.” — Brad Porterfield, Executive Director

Community Need and Request for Increased Funding We are requesting a slight increase in funding in order to sustain our recent move to our Family Empowerment Center, so we can continue to meet the growing demand for our culturally-specific services and advocacy role. Immigrant Latino families in our communities are one of our most vulnerable and underserved populations. Key data indicators for Deschutes County Latinos include:

- Fastest growing (increased by 47% since 2010 in Deschutes County) with the . . .
- Lowest median age at 26 (compared to 47) and 36% being under 18 years old; the . . .
- Highest rate of labor force participation (78%), yet also with the . . .
- Lowest average per capita income (\$17,267) and the . . .
- Highest rate of uninsured (20.3%) referring to health insurance coverage.

Immigrant Latino families face unique barriers such as English proficiency and they continue to be under heightened stress due to the federal administration’s perceived need to be tough on the immigration issue. In September 2021, we moved to a 5,700 square foot office and community center in Bend to expand our services to families and continue to realize our vision to build a welcoming community across cultures. This move increased our annual facility costs by \$67,000. We now have space for our English and Citizenship classes. We hosted vaccination and testing clinics and have rented our community room to families for baby showers and birthdays. And we now have offices for our growing staff team, including our Workforce Navigator, Volunteer Coordinator, Youth Rising Manager and just-hired Advocacy & Leadership Coordinator.

Impact of Current Investment Support 8% of Healthy Families & Family Empowerment program costs.

- Health insurance and COVID wraparound assistance for a **minimum of 300 clients**
- Low-cost dental services for **50 clients**
- Coordinate **information & referrals for a minimum of 350 clients**
- Provide minimum **100 free legal consultations**
- Provide citizenship assistance for a **minimum of 25 clients**

Comments We are concerned that a post-pandemic period of fiscal austerity will occur precisely when the challenges and opportunities immigrant families face are growing including employment, housing, childcare, health and more. Deschutes County’s support will help ensure we are resourced adequately to meet the needs AND build community.



BETHLEHEM INN

Volunteer Coordination of Emergency Meals

2021-22 Award	\$40,000
Amount Requested 2022-23	\$42,000

“Our ongoing partnership with Deschutes County improves the overall health of our community. This continuing collaboration is all the more imperative in the upcoming year as the Inn serves additional people in its Redmond location, which will help address the rapidly growing, urgent needs of adults experiencing homelessness.” - Kim Fischbach, Dir. of Philanthropy

Community Need and Request for Increased Funding We respectfully request BOCC grant funding to help support the continuing service delivery of nutritious meals as part of our Meal Program. This is *especially critical now that the Inn has opened its second shelter location in Redmond*. As the region's leading emergency shelter provider, the Inn serves as a critical safety net in our region. Without access to services uniquely provided by the Inn, economically disadvantaged adults and families are at greater risk of chronic poverty with limited alternatives as the region slowly recovers from the devastating impact of the pandemic.

The region continues to experience an increase in the number of adults/families, who have lost their income, may no longer have a safe place to live and will be seeking support from the Inn. It is essential for the Inn to address extreme hunger and nutrition-related health conditions to mitigate reduction in cognitive abilities, which make it even more difficult for homeless individuals to find and hold jobs.

Since March 2020, the Inn has been required to reduce its resident capacity by over 60% to comply with CDC guidelines. That guideline continues today; however, a projected return to 100% capacity is expected by the early 2023. While the demand for nutritious meals was great before COVID-19, it is projected to be even more significant as we transition into the post-virus months.

Bethlehem Inn respectfully requests \$42,000 for FY 22/23 to support our Meal Program in Bend and Redmond, which will serve a projected 80,000 nutritious meals to an estimated 800 children and adults next year. Funding will help support fixed staffing costs regardless of resident count: 1 FTE Kitchen Mgr, 2-FTE Kitchen Staff. Matching funds will help support 2 FTE Kitchen Staff, 2-.50 FTE Kitchen Staff and 1- .25 FTE facility assistant to support food inventory and facility needs.

Impact of Current Investment Provide support for .73 (of 1 FTE) kitchen manager and .16 (of 1 FTE) kitchen steward to prepare and serve meals as part of the Meal Program.

- 100% of residents provided three nutritious meals daily
- In the period of July 1, 2021 to February 28, 2022, **298 residents and 37,644 meals served.**

Comments BOCC funding will help support the increasing fixed kitchen staffing costs due to competitive job market and need to increase salaries to retain/recruit staff regardless of # of residents served.



FAMILY ACCESS NETWORK Juniper Elementary FAN Advocate Project

2021-22 Award

\$17,500 (49% of one school project funding)

Amount Requested 2022-23

\$17,500

"On a professional note, our advocate always does everything by the book. She is very diligent in making sure I understand the resources being offered and helps me through the process step by step. On a personal note, our advocate has been extremely courteous. It's not easy being in a humbled situation, and you always feel like people may be pre-judging you; but with our advocate, I have never felt this way." - A FAN parent

Community Need The Family Access Network offers assistance, possibility, and hope to Central Oregon families in need by connecting them with crucial resources that help children flourish in school and in life. Our advocates *serve nearly 8,000 children and family members each year*, connecting them to a diverse array of assistance. Our work over the past 24 months has been challenging, yet our advocates have risen to the occasion with creativity and grace. FAN is working hard to support children and families during this uncertain time and make sure they have access to basic-need resources including nourishing food, safe shelter, health care, childcare, and much more.

We have been fortunate to have FAN advocates physically back in the schools this year, supporting our students and families. After addressing an initial, specific need for a family, like basic school supplies, advocates often learn of related needs, like food, clothing, or rent assistance, which they are able to take care of quickly thanks to FAN's 100+ community partners. Our advocates' years of face-to-face relationship-building with their communities has helped us to successfully pivot and stay flexible within the current environment of rapidly changing circumstances. As we continue to adapt to this dynamic situation, our vision of a community where children flourish and families thrive remains consistent.

Many FAN families live above the Federal Poverty Level, but do not earn enough to afford basic necessities in their communities, making them especially vulnerable to falling into poverty through sudden job loss. In addition, Central Oregon as a region includes many rural areas, where barriers to assistance—like lack of transportation, health care, and technology limitations—are increased. These funds will help us meet the intensified needs of those disproportionately affected by our rapidly changing circumstances, supporting our most vulnerable children, breaking down barriers and helping them thrive in school and in life.

Impact of Current Investment Grant supports .37 FTE (of .47 FTE) FAN advocate at Juniper Elementary School to connect children and family members to basic-need resources.

- In the period of July 1, 2021 to March 1, 2022 connected **241 children and family members** to basic-need resources, already exceeding annual goals.
- During the fall client survey, **96% of families reported that FAN improved their situation**



SAVING GRACE

Mary's Place Supervised Visitation & Safe Exchange Center

2021-22 Award	\$20,000 (3% of project funding)
Amount Requested 2022-23	\$30,000

"I am so thankful for the support, safety planning and care for my children from Mary's Place. The entire team has met us where we were at and have instilled confidence back in my children while keeping them safe." – Mary's Place client. "Mary's Place provides important supervised visit and exchange services that allow families to safely engage in parenting time." - Deschutes County Circuit Court.

Community Need and Request for Increased Funding During FY20-21, victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and/or stalking in the County received 10,759 vital safety services from Saving Grace (SG) including shelter, 24-hr hotline, group and individual counseling, and legal assistance. Of victims receiving these SG services, 52 were referred by law enforcement after screening in as high lethality cases. In Deschutes County Circuit Court, in calendar year 2021, 463 restraining orders were filed by victims seeking safety. The majority of the 64 families served by Mary's Place (MP) between 7/1/21 and 3/1/2022 were referred for services in connection with restraining orders granted to protect the adult victim and children from further harm from an abusive parent/partner.

- Demand for MP has continued throughout the pandemic. The program provided 910 visits and exchanges from 7/1/2-3/1/22 and supported families with challenges of COVID-19 including gas, groceries, and housing assistance.
- MP remains the sole provider of free domestic violence-specific supervised visits and safe exchanges including case management east of the Cascades.
- Requested funds would support .47 of 4.42 FTE for staff who provide supervised visits, safe exchanges, and advocacy services for MP families & for staff supervision.

Impact of Current Investment Provide .25 FTE (of 1.39 FTE) to supervise staff who facilitate supervised visits and safe exchanges for families that have experienced domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and/or child sexual abuse.

- In the period of July 1, 2021 to March 1, 2022 MP served **64 families, exceeding families served in the same timeframe during FY 20-21 by 28%. Facilitated 600 supervised visits** (on average 2.5 hours per visit/family/week) and over **300 safe exchanges** (multiple times week to several times/month) for families that have experienced domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, or child sexual abuse.

Comments Starting in July 2021, MP returned to in-person visits while keeping protective measures in place re: COVID 19. The pandemic and its related impacts have continued to be a source of stress for MP staff and client families. Overall, the severity of violence and high-risk factors including strangulation have increased in the cases served by MP over the prior FY, a trend which law enforcement and prosecution have also observed across the County. Due to high demand, families must wait on average one month to begin MP services.



CENTRAL OREGON VETERANS AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH Homeless Outreach Coordinator

2021-22 Award

\$30,000 (23% of project funding)

Amount Requested 2022-23

\$30,000

“For 17 years our Outreach Program has been a lifeline for the hardest to reach and hardest to serve. The number of those without housing continues to grow, but the needs of those who are “homeless” never changes. We help people survive and strategize, keeping hope in front of them.” - JW Terry, Executive Director

Community Need Despite COVID-19 impacts on service provision - cases increasing in homeless camps, staff safety, significantly fewer volunteers - Central Oregon Veterans Outreach (COVO) saw an increase in the number of people served in 2021 as compared to 2020. Households (singles or multiple persons) served increased from 1,264 to 1,519; 826 of those were new to our services. Total client contacts rose from 6,248 to 6,580; Outreach Center contacts went from 3,840 to 4,167; homeless camp contacts from 1,936 to 2,247; and served 244 veterans experiencing or at-risk for homelessness (74 of these new or returning after several years). Despite a concerted, ever increasing effort by COVO and other service providers, the numbers of persons living unsheltered continues to rise in Deschutes County.

COVO respectfully requests \$30,000 to continue funding a portion of the outreach coordinator to oversee camp and street outreach efforts, and to train and support outreach volunteers. The manager works with community partners to enhance collaborative efforts for best addressing service to the homeless in Deschutes County.

COVO is a key partner in the Homeless Leadership Coalition/ Central Oregon Continuum of Care (CoC), Coordinated Entry System (CES), the CoC’s Built for Zero project, and the Emergency Homeless Task Force convened by Deschutes County and the City of Bend. In 2021, COVO added two more units to our housing inventory for Veterans, and in partnership with Deschutes County and others, opened the Veterans Village. The team of the Outreach Coordinator and Outreach Specialists is key to these county-wide projects. In 2021-22, three priorities are to increase outreach to areas of Deschutes County less served because of accessibility (in 2021, we added another donated off-road vehicle for this purpose), and to increase outreach to women Veterans and aging/disabled persons experiencing or at risk for homelessness.

Impact of Current Investment Provide .6 FTE (of 1.5 FTE) Outreach Coordinator

- In the period of July 1, 2021 to March 1, 2022, made **2,243 contacts** with homeless and low income people visiting the center, **1,403 contacts** with homeless people in camps, and served **47 veterans** not currently served by COVO, soundly meeting annual goals.
- Coordinated **more than 1,200 volunteer hours assisting services and outreach** to homeless and/or low income people.

Comments COVO continually seeks practical solutions to address homelessness in Deschutes County, for both Veterans and non-Veterans. We do this in partnership with our network of extraordinary community partners, believing in strength in collaboration. COVO fills a unique niche in services for those experiencing homelessness, providing affordable housing, and now shelter, and for Veterans of all eras.



COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATES OF CENTRAL OREGON CASA

2021-22 Award	\$30,000 (4% of project funding)
Amount Requested 2022-23	\$35,000

"The number of foster children in Deschutes County has increased significantly, likely because of the additional stressors placed on families during the pandemic. Now more than ever foster children in Central Oregon need a CASA volunteer who cares. I have personally seen the incredible success stories of children whose lives were directly improved by the advocacy of a CASA." - Michelle K Brenholdt, Director of Emergency Services St Charles Health System and CASA Board Chair

Community Need and Request for Increased Funding The COVID-19 pandemic brought immense stress on children and families in Central Oregon. It has been widely reported that that there has been an increase in substance abuse, drug overdoses, and domestic violence in the last few years. This has resulted in an increase in the number of children in Deschutes County who spent time in foster care since the beginning of the pandemic. On January 1, 2020, there were 172 children in foster care in Deschutes County. On January 1, 2022, there were 224 children in foster care, a 27% increase over the time of the pandemic.

CASA respectfully requests \$35,000 for FY 21-22 to fund .6 FTE of a Program Coordinator position. This calculation reflects wages and benefits for a Program Coordinator to support approximately 40 volunteers. This is an increase to last year's request, which reflects the additional costs of staffing this position. In 18-19, a \$30,000 grant from the BOCC funded .7 of a Program Coordinator position earning \$17.00/hr. In order to provide a competitive salary for a college educated professional in Central Oregon, this position will earn \$22.50/hr in the next year.

Impact of Current Investment Provide .5 (of 7.1 FTE) program staff to train/support CASA volunteers for children birth through age 18.

- In the period July 1, 2021 to March 1, 2022 there are 280 **unduplicated Deschutes County children in foster care**. During the same period an average of **239 of children referred by the court have an assigned CASA**. We estimate that there will be approximately **295 children in foster care from July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022**.

Comments CASAs have reported that the pandemic put even more pressure on children in foster care and their foster families, so volunteer advocates were essential to make sure that children were connected to additional resources for online education, telehealth therapy, and respite care.

National studies have shown the CASAs are effective. Children with CASAs tend to do better during their time in foster care: 1) they transition into a safe, permanent home more quickly than children without a CASA's advocacy; 2) they do better in school; 3) have fewer disciplinary problems, and; 4) receive more services to heal from trauma and thrive. County support has never been more vital to give children in foster care a volunteer advocate. This grant ensures that our organization will have professional staff to support every volunteer as they advocate for children in a rapidly changing environment.



HEALTHY BEGINNINGS

4 b4 5 Preschool Developmental Screening Project

2021-22 Award \$20,000 (30% of project funding)
Amount Requested 2022-23 \$25,000

Community Need Oregon estimates that 40% (4 out of 10) of children enter kindergarten with barriers to their success. Healthy Beginnings' goal is to reach more of the 13,133 children in the county ages 0-6 that miss receiving a developmental screening. With increased demands on working families in Central Oregon, preschool screenings are an innovative solution to provide developmental screenings for children in a preschool setting.

In FY20-21, Healthy Beginnings screened 287 children in Deschutes County through the preschool screening program. The program identified concerns in 43 children, providing referrals and personal follow up to connect them with services in development, hearing, and vision. With the reopening of schools and businesses in 2021, HB was able to reactivate the preschool screening program and is once again operating at pre-COVID levels.

In response to growing concerns regarding the developmental impact of COVID-related issues on children under five years, Healthy Beginnings is planning for the following increase in service:

- The addition of a 'COVID impact assessment' to our screening protocols, for the purpose of 1) identifying new issues that appear to be related to COVID, and 2) evaluating pre-existing issues that appear to have been exacerbated by the pandemic.
- Offering repeat screenings for children who were screened prior to the pandemic, but who are now exhibiting concerning behaviors and learning issues. Provide comparative 'before' vs 'after' assessments.
- During the past 12 months, the referral rate for screened children has significantly increased. The average referral rate during FY19 was 21%, but for FY22 (year to date) that rate has increased to 36%. This increase in screenings and treatment referrals is resulting in an increase in staffing as we provide effective parent consultation and referral follow-up.

Impact of Current Investment

- In the period of July 1, 2021 to March 1, 2022, provided **256 evidence-based screenings** in development, behavior, hearing, and vision at preschool sites; on pace to exceed projected annual goal of 400 screenings.
- Screening results sent to the medical provider, family, and shared with the preschool teacher to ensure closed loop communication between family, medical home & school. Since July 1st, **91 referrals** have been made.

Comments Healthy Beginnings is a sole source provider of evidence-based preschool screenings in the region. We have strong partnerships with other local service providers, Deschutes County WIC, Healthy Families of the High Desert, High Desert ESD, Early Learning Hub of C.O., Mosaic Medical, Head Start and Early Head Start programs.