

Community Resiliency



Community Resiliency

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted every community in King County. The effects were both acute and diffuse. The immediate impacts—loss of employment, in-person instruction in schools, and disruption of daily routines—have had transformative effects on how people live, work, learn, and interact. While the full measure of the pandemic’s consequences on our communities is still emerging, there are clear deficits in community resources that need to be addressed, especially for communities of color, LGBTQ+ communities, people experiencing homelessness, and refugee/immigrant communities.

The programs in the Community Resiliency portfolio are designed to address a range of impacts and provide additional funding for needed interventions in the community. The current CLFR allocation for the Community Resiliency response is \$56 Million. Significant emphasis has been placed on deploying CLFR funds strategically to align with other local initiatives.

Investment Areas

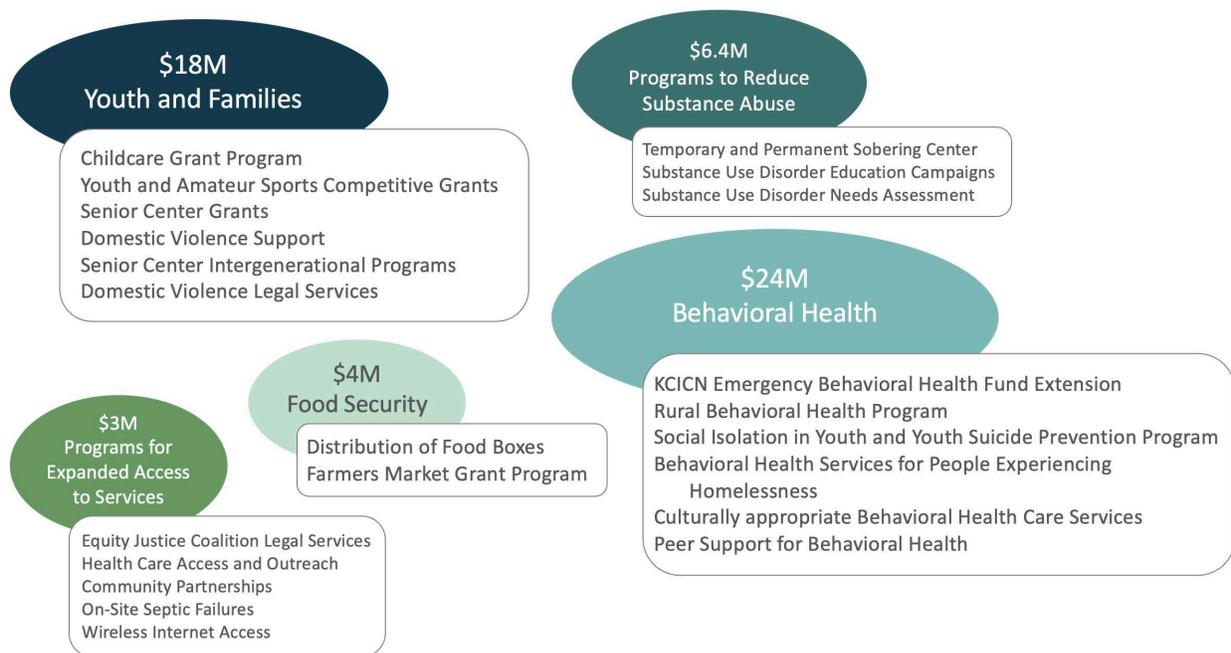


Figure 1: Investment Areas for CLFR funds in Community Resiliency. *The two largest areas of investment are behavioral health and youth and family programs. This figure details the current CLFR allocation amounts.*

- Several behavioral health investments have entered implementation. Many are particularly designed to reach priority populations and provide culturally appropriate behavioral healthcare services.
- A total of 690 families received subsidies from the CLFR-funded Childcare Grant Program, which provided childcare for nearly 1,000 children.
- The next phase of the Child Care Subsidy program launched in Fall 2022. This program, funded by local dollars, will provide care to 2,000-2,500 children annually. This investment is a direct result of the success of earlier iterations that were funded through federal COVID relief dollars.
- The Senior Center Grants Program's funding provided a total of 24 awards (13 program awards and 11 economic impact awards) serving older adults to address the needs of the community in their COVID-19 recovery efforts.
- The Food Security Assistance Program partnered with 35 community-based organizations, and food distribution has reached approximately 70,000 people.
- Numerous programs are designed to increase access to services for residents, including civil legal system assistance, health care access, digital access, improvements to internal services, and capacity building for local community-based organizations.

Behavioral Health

The Department of Community and Human Services' Behavioral Health and Recovery Division (BHRD) leads the county's efforts to support behavioral health in the community. Efforts include both supporting the regional behavioral health system and delivering behavioral health services in the community. CLFR funded programs address needs for both bodies of work.

The King County Integrated Care Network (KCICN) Emergency Behavioral Health Fund Extension provides procurements for assessment, technical assistance and investment in agency-level changes in service delivery, and network-level efficiencies. Program will support Medicaid-eligible populations who are low-income by stabilizing the community behavioral health system. Partners include 35+ KCICN agencies and technical assistance partners.

The Rural Behavioral Health, Culturally Appropriate Behavioral Health Care Services, and Peer Support for Behavioral Health Programs are all designed to foster greater access to services and better meet the needs of communities that have been historically underserved. The programs will partner with local providers and non-profits to deliver services to residents. Partners selected for funding are intentionally selected for their ability to reach and prioritize services for those populations that have historically faced the greatest barriers to service.

The Social Isolation in Youth and Youth Suicide Prevention Program may provide identification of and support for youth (ages 13-24) feeling the effects of social isolation, withdrawal, depression, or anxiety that may manifest into suicidal ideation that has increased since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The program reach is broad and ranges from community-focused services to individualized support. The purpose is to develop and deliver an overarching strategy involving ongoing and new youth isolation suicide prevention initiatives including convening a regional Suicide Prevention Coalition.

BHRD is also developing and implementing several programs that work in tandem with King County's Homelessness Response efforts. These include providing services at select Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) sites and Health Through Housing (HTH) Facilities, including Mobile Intensive Case management services. PSH sites offer support and services for those in supportive housing that are not currently engaged in behavioral health services. The Health Through Housing Initiative's Facilities include housing units acquired from former hotels, nursing homes, and other similar properties. Bringing case management, mental health and behavioral health substance use disorder services directly to individuals, reduces the multiple barriers that people often encounter when trying to access support. Implementing this low barrier model, offers a person-centered approach to delivering services, ensuring that we are providing tailored assistance in meeting a person's individual needs and goals, and offers autonomy and choice in engaging with clinical supports.

Youth & Families

The Community Resiliency portfolio has several key programs for supporting youth and families. These programs span several King County agencies and are designed to meet a wide array of needs.

The Children, Youth, and Young Adults Division (CYA) of the Department of Community and Human Services established a grant program for urgent provider needs by providing funding for childcare. This program was designed to provide both assistance to families in affording childcare and to provide funding that stabilized local providers. As a result, over 2,000 children have received subsidized care. The first iteration of the program was funded with CRF, and the program continued under CLFR. Its success, along with the high demand and continued need, resulted in its inclusion in the next phase of the Best Starts for Kids, King County's Starts) community-driven initiative to support every baby born or child raised in King County, so they reach adulthood happy, healthy, safe, and thriving.

King County Parks (KCP) has partnered with the King County Play Equity Coalition in a community-centered participatory grantmaking process to design, develop, and implement this Youth Sports & Outdoor Recreation Relief Fund program to distribute CLFR funding to nonprofit organizations providing programs and facilities that support youth access to physical activity. Physical activity is vital to youth development, physical health, mental health, and social emotional learning, and is also associated with better educational outcomes. The "[State of Play](#)" report¹, published in 2019, assessed the availability of sports and other physical activity for youth in the county and found that only 19% of youth receive 60 minutes of physical activity per day and access, particularly for organized sports, is limited by financial and cultural barriers. The importance of increasing access to physical activity while addressing the stark inequities were paramount factors in the design of the grant making process. King County Parks will administer a one-time investment of \$4 million to organizations most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic who serve youth furthest from play equity.

¹ <https://www.aspeninstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/2019-SOP-Seattle-KingCounty-Web-FINAL.pdf>

Two programs are designed to provide support for senior centers. The intent of the Senior Center Grant program is to strengthen the capacity for senior centers whose budgets and abilities to meet the needs of older adults in King County have been most severely impacted by the COVID-19 public health emergency. The funding has been awarded and implementation is beginning. The second program is designed to deliver resources to intergenerational programs that strengthen authentic community support and connections across generations. The goal is to lessen the behavioral health impacts of loneliness and social isolation on youth and seniors in communities with emphasis on providing services in the communities that have been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. These grants have been awarded and programming is underway.

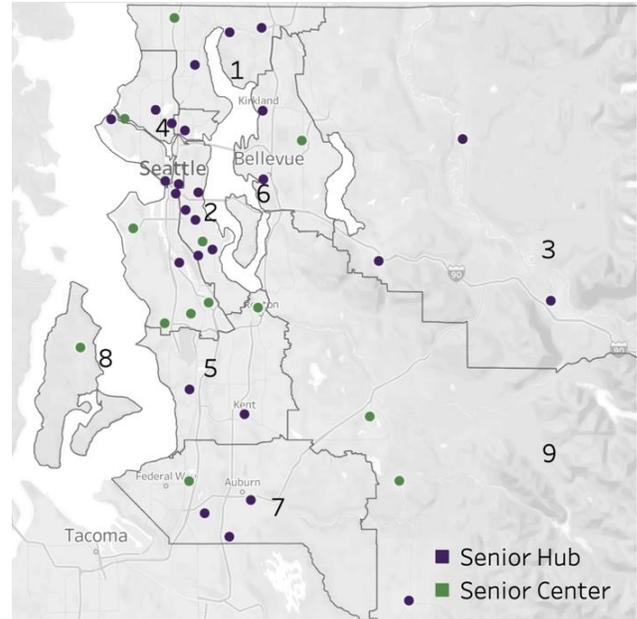


Figure 2: King County-funded Senior Center and Senior Hub locations.



Figure 3: Photo credit to International Community Health Services.

CLFR funding also supports to programs focuses on supporting people experiencing domestic violence. The pandemic and related public health orders have led to increased stress, isolation, and financial instability worldwide. This further compromised the safety and autonomy of survivors of gender-based violence. Additionally, survivors experienced reduced access to support and resources. The Domestic Violence Services Program allocates funds to organizations providing domestic violence and sexual assault services in King County. This program aims to increase support for people experiencing domestic

and sexual violence during a period when isolation, increased stress, and financial strain can create circumstances that additionally compromise survivor safety and stability. Additional funding is designed to provide no-cost legal services to county residents that are experiencing domestic violence.



Figure 4: CLFR Funded Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services increase safety and prevent further violence. ARPA and CLFR funding toward domestic violence and sexual assault services helped organizations safely resume in-person services and extend their reach to help address the increased demand. Data from services distributed in 2022.

Substance Use Prevention

The CLFR-funded substance use prevention efforts are designed to work alongside other behavioral health investments. These include funding for a temporary leased location for the sobering center as well as funding for a new, permanent sobering support center. The Sobering Support Center serves as a safe place for people to sleep off the acute effects of intoxication and connect to treatment services, housing assistance and other supports.

The portfolio also includes funding for substance use prevention education efforts, as well funding for a comprehensive Needs Assessment of the Behavioral Health and Recovery Division's Substance Use Disorder (SUD) system. The SUD Needs Assessment shall include an inventory of current services, identification of gaps and needs across the SUD system, including gaps in access, service types, and service capacity, and provide recommendations to address the identified needs and gaps.

Food Security

Public Health – Seattle & King County reported² that food insufficiency almost doubled after the implementation of strategies to slow the spread of COVID-19. With the advent of CLFR, Public Health established the Food Security Assistance Program in partnership with United Way of King County (UWKC) to grant funding to 35 CBOs to purchase and distribute culturally appropriate foods to communities most impacted by COVID-19. The CBOs purchased, stored, and distributed culturally

² [https://kingcounty.gov/depts/health/covid-19/data/impacts/~media/depts/health/communicable-diseases/documents/C19/food-insecurity-brief-report-august-2020.ashx#:~:text=Even%20before%20COVID%2D19%2C%2012,County%20\(BRFSS%2C%202010%2D2013](https://kingcounty.gov/depts/health/covid-19/data/impacts/~media/depts/health/communicable-diseases/documents/C19/food-insecurity-brief-report-august-2020.ashx#:~:text=Even%20before%20COVID%2D19%2C%2012,County%20(BRFSS%2C%202010%2D2013)

appropriate foods and other food items as part of the program. The program prioritized purchasing food from locally owned/operated grocery stores, farms, catering companies, restaurants, growers, hunters, and fishers. It also prioritized supporting community-based organizations who serve populations disproportionately affected by food insecurity to sustain their food distribution models that have been key to meeting community cultural food needs. In addition, UWKC used CLFR funding to purchase produce boxes from Cascadia Produce for their Home Grocery Delivery Program.

The Farmers Market Grant program partnered with two organizations, the Neighborhood Farmers Market Alliance (NFMA) and Harvest Against Hunger (HAH). A portion of the funds supported the business capacity of farmers and farmers markets while the other portion of the funding was directed to organizations that provide food individuals experiencing food insecurity to purchase directly from small farmers. NFMA expanded online sales capabilities for vendors to alleviate the financial burden caused by COVID-19 pandemic restrictions which limited the number of vendors and residents allowed in farmers markets. Also, NFMA purchased farm products directly from farmers that sell at their farmers markets for distribution across King County food distribution sites. HAH managed a food access program that links local farmers with local food distribution programs. Clients that access food at food banks are those defined as the priority population.

These adults were most likely to report not having enough food to eat



- Low-income households <\$25,000
- American Indian/Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Multiple race, Other
- Less than high school education
- Younger adults 18-44 years of age
- Unemployed, self-employed, or working in a family business

Access to Services

King County has included CLFR investments for a wide array of programs to increase access to services for residents. Areas include digital access, civil legal system assistance, health care access, improvements to internal services, and capacity building for local community-based organizations.

The Health Care Access and Outreach program provided funding for local navigators to connect eligible residents to health care services. For example, 1,200 uninsured community members were enrolled in health care over a three-month period in 2021. Outreach was carefully calibrated to focus most fully on underserved communities.

Another program, the Enhanced Wireless Program, deployed wireless devices in the high traffic areas of three parks (Steve Cox Memorial, Skyway, and South County Ball Fields parks), which are located in underserved neighborhoods for public wireless access (ball fields, courts, etc.), as well as implement King County wireless (private) for Parks employees to conduct business. Implementation is set for 2023.

The Equity Justice Coalition Legal Services provides civil legal aid services to low-income individuals negatively impacted by COVID-19, decrease the backlog of civil legal aid cases left unprocessed due to court closures during the pandemic and ensure timely access to benefits necessary to meet basic needs for those who lost jobs due to COVID and were denied benefits due to shifting eligibility requirements.

PERFORMANCE REPORT

Childcare Grants

The Childcare Grant program provided over \$6 million in grants directly to providers for qualified families that lived or worked in King County. The Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS) provided emergency childcare voucher that allowed families to access the high-quality care of their choice and included informal caregivers. King County partnered with Child Care Resources, a local non-profit, to administer the program. In addition to providing direct payment to providers, CCR helped connect families with childcare that met their particular needs. This investment has served essential workers, as well as families struggling to access childcare that have been impacted by COVID-19.

The value of resourcing childcare, particularly for families who don't qualify for existing subsidies, goes beyond even just supporting the families who receive the subsidy, but in creating lasting impacts for children and their community. However, as families across the country know, the cost of childcare can be burdensome. In Washington, a two-parent family with two young children can spend more than 35 percent of their income on childcare. In a single-parent household that cost-burden jumps to 150 percent of their income.³ King County is making investments to address these connected inequities to ensure sustainable access to childcare.

The program included income guidelines and was designed to work alongside other childcare subsidy programs, such as the Working Connections Child Care subsidy offered by Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families and the Child Care Assistance Program from the City of Seattle. Community feedback informing this program is captured in a [report](#) by the Children and Families Strategy Task Force.⁴

How much?

This childcare subsidy program prioritizes low-income families, who do not already qualify for other childcare subsidies such as Working Connections. This program committed approximately \$360,000 to fund 237 informal childcare providers, such as family friends or neighbors who care for children, in the form of a one-time \$1,500 grant.



Figure 5: A total of 690 families received subsidies, which provided childcare for nearly 1,000 children. Data shows the unique count total (some families received vouchers from more than one category).

³ <https://www.commerce.wa.gov/about-us/boards-and-commissions/child-care-collaborative-task-force/>

⁴ <https://mkcclegisearch.kingcounty.gov/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4661581&GUID=F62BF7D6-9F4C-4473-BE71-9700F05431DA&Options=Advanced&Search=>

As of October 31, 2022, the ARPA emergency funding program has been completed. This Childcare Grants Program served a total of 690 families, for a total of 999 children in King County. The total dollar amount for childcare subsidy vouchers was for \$6,088,344. Of those vouchers, a total of \$1,042,846.72 were committed and provided to families living in rural communities. Rural vouchers served a total of 93 families for 127 children. Outreach was conducted to reach families living in rural zip codes.

As this program ended its funding, Child Care Resources staff supported families funded by these vouchers to transition to other local funded subsidies, including the Best Starts for Kids Child Care Subsidy, which began funding in September 2022. King County has been able to ensure that families in this program do not experience a gap in funding by virtually extending these subsidies until December 2022. This bridge funding for families was paid by Best Starts for Kids (BSK) dollars. ARPA funded families were the first to be rolled into the BSK program, and then the application opened to the larger community in September.

How equitably did we provide service?

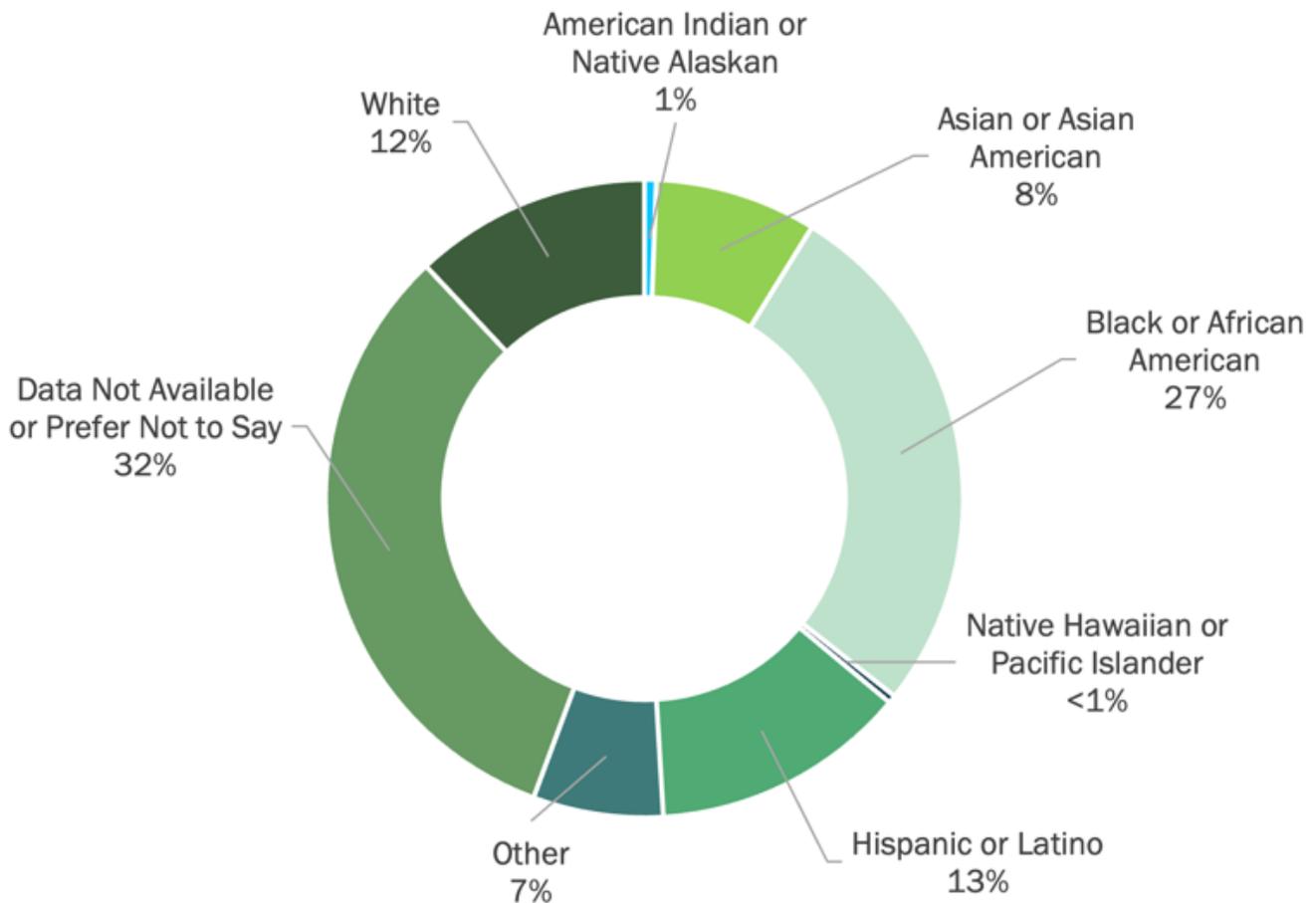


Figure 6: Nearly 50% of children served by the Childcare Grants Program were BIPOC.

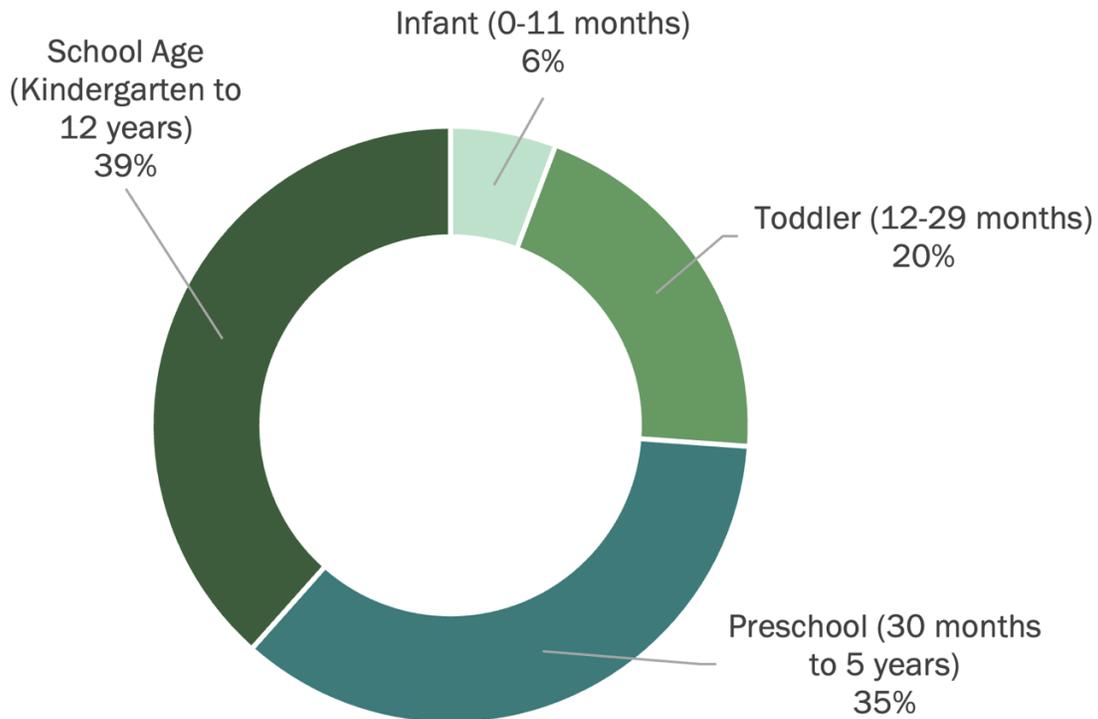


Figure 7: Over 60% of children served by the Childcare Grants Program were under 5 years of age.

Is anyone better off?

King County's childcare field was stretched thin prior to COVID-19, with many families struggling to access and afford high quality care. Many providers, in particular those outside of Seattle, were not able to charge tuition rates that truly cover their costs, and staff are paid poverty wages. Disparities have grown as a result of the pandemic: more than 30% of licensed sites have closed, the vast majority report financial losses as a result of low enrollment, and one report shows only 11% of providers confident they will be able to survive the financial toll of any closure. Childcare providers are now required to adhere to stringent health, safety, and staffing requirements, stressing an already precarious business model, and many families face new and increased barriers to childcare as a result of COVID-19.

Without swift financial support, the childcare sector was at significant risk of major reduction or even collapse. This outcome would have disproportionately impacted women of color who work in this sector, as well as families of color, who are disproportionately likely to live in childcare access deserts. Even for programs that remained open, deeply limited budgets presented barriers to provided pay and benefits that sufficiently reflect the work these caregivers are assuming. Finally, without additional assistance, many families would have been unable to afford or access care during the pandemic, and thus unable to get to work reliably or know their kids are safely cared for.

The success of this program has been twofold: families have received access to childcare and have a reduced financial burden, while providers have received steady payments at a time of great uncertainty. The ongoing need to provide additional support to families and childcare providers is evident by the demand for these grants. Affordable, accessible childcare – often made possible through targeted

subsidies – is necessary to improve racial and gender equity in King County and will be critical in the region’s economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

To continue to financially support King County families with childcare needs and to support the childcare sector from significant risk of major reduction, King County proposed a new childcare subsidy program in the Best Starts for Kids levy renewal for families struggling to access affordable childcare. King County voters approved the levy renewal in 2021. This BSK Child Care Subsidy Program, which launched in September 2022, intends to expand equitable access to affordable and high-quality childcare for King County families ineligible for, or not well served by, existing public subsidy programs. It is anticipated that 600-700 children that are currently served by the CLFR-funded program will be automatically reenrolled in the BSK program, and the application process will be streamlined to ease the burden of the transition on families.

“Our core commitment - our True North - is to make King County a welcoming community where every person can thrive, and that includes our youngest residents. We must invest in positive outcomes for our children now, and into the future. The child care sector has long been under-resourced, with low wages for workers and increasingly unaffordable care for families with low or moderate incomes. This new child care subsidy helps ensure equitable access to high-quality child care for all, and is part of the County’s commitment to treat child care as an essential service.”
— Dow Constantine, [King County Executive](#)



This next phase of the Child Care Subsidy program, funded by local dollars, will serve over 2,000 to 2,500 children annually. This investment is a direct result of the success of earlier iterations that were funded through federal COVID relief dollars. King County’s continued investment in the childcare subsidy program is a long-term benefit of the federal COVID response funding it received.

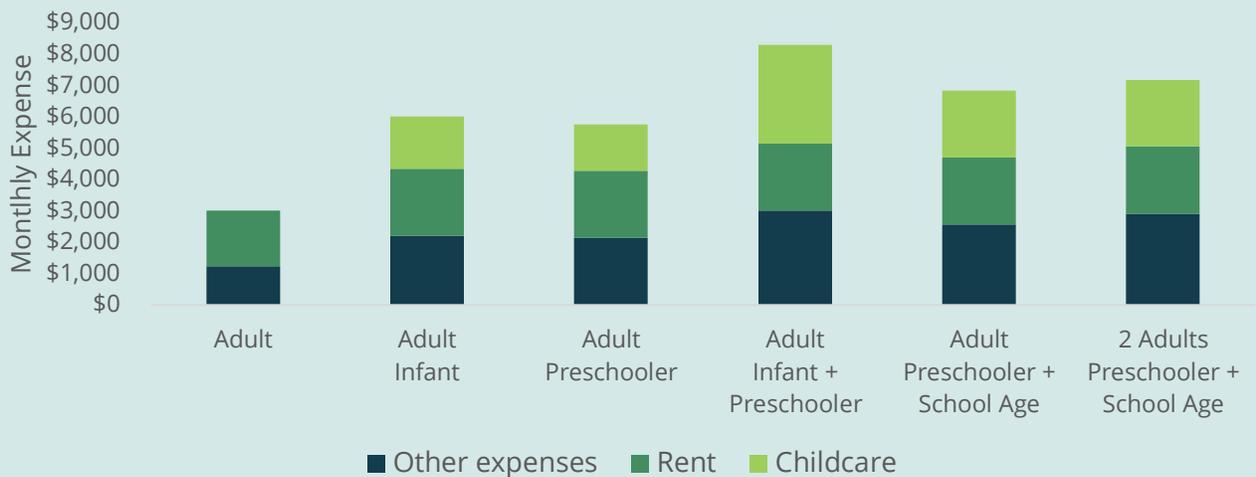
Childcare Access Is Vital for Families

CASE STUDY

Childcare Grants Program

The King County Childcare Grant Program increased access to high-quality childcare and provided relief from the financial burden of childcare. The [Self-Sufficiency Standard for Washington State 2020](#)⁵ emphasizes the impact of childcare costs on the financial well-being of families. The methodology places particular emphasis on the age of children in families, as the cost of childcare for young children is such a large expense.

Childcare is a major cost for families that can equal or exceed the cost of housing.



Given the magnitude of the expense, subsidizing childcare can have a major impact on improving the financial stability and economic wellbeing of families. Some recipients of the King County subsidies have shared their stories:

Alcira is a single parent to four kids, two of which are in childcare. In the fall of 2021, Alcira had given birth to her fourth child and was at the end of her maternity leave. Alcira was at a crossroads. For her, the end of maternity leave meant that she needed to find childcare for two of her kids. Her income was too high to qualify for state assistance yet was too low for her to be able to afford childcare for two kids. Without access to affordable childcare, she says she would have had to quit her job before returning from maternity leave. Alcira says this would have caused a ripple effect in her and her kids' lives, as without income, her ability to provide food and housing for her kids would be at risk. Alcira is an immigrant to the U.S. and shares that her family and support system live outside of the country, noting that family members are not an option for childcare for her. Alcira was approved for the ARPA

⁵ From the Self-Sufficiency Standard at the Center for Women's Welfare, University of Washington: https://selfsufficiencystandard.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/WA2020_SSS.pdf

subsidy before the end of her maternity leave and says the program has been instrumental in her life, crediting it as the reason she was able to access childcare and continue working and providing for her family.

Jane is a single parent of several children, most of whom are grown. Jane's youngest child, an infant, was born while Jane was living in her car. When she applied to the program in October 2021, Jane was working full-time, paying for childcare out of pocket, and was in transitional housing. Jane was approved for the program, and her Family Engagement Specialist supported Jane with finding a new childcare provider that would accept subsidy payments and could provide care overnight, as Jane works nights. Over the months that Jane's family received the grant, Jane found permanent housing for her family. Jane shared that, without the program, she would not have a job, would not be able to pay rent, and would return to homelessness. Having reliable childcare funding and a trustworthy childcare provider has allowed Jane and her child to remain stably housed, which has, in turn, supported Jane's sobriety.

Carrie, a single mom, stated that she unfortunately is "never eligible for assistance through other programs" because, while her income is barely enough to cover her and her daughter's cost of living, it is not low income enough to apply for other state assistance. The program helped her feel a bit more at ease when it came to monthly expenses and to feel stability as they entered a big phase in their journey to move out of state near their extended family.

As impactful as the program has been, it is worth noting that demand outstripped the need, and the actual needs of families were not always able to be met due to program restrictions. For instance, the subsidy amount was based on income only and did not fluctuate in response to cost increases by providers. One participant, Kendra, shared that not only was her childcare provider raising their rates, but her rent was also increasing. While she was grateful for the subsidy, it was frustrating that it was not able to flex up as quickly as household expenses were rising.

The direct impact to families, both those that received funding and those that did not, have informed the next phase of the childcare subsidy program. Understanding the lived experience of families, childcare workers, and providers and how it connects to policy and program design critical to improving access and outcomes for all. The Department of Community and Human Services is committed to removing barriers where possible and looks to streamline how its programs interact with other programs available to residents.



PERFORMANCE REPORT

Senior Center Grants

The pandemic has had profound effects on older adults who are more vulnerable to severe illness and death from COVID-19. Elders in our community have suffered from isolation as they attempt to protect themselves from the virus. At the same time, senior centers have struggled due to lost revenue and inflation. This funding strengthens the capacity for senior centers whose budgets and abilities to meet the needs of older adults in King County have been most severely impacted by the COVID-19 public health emergency. Additionally, this program hosted a community planning session prior to program design to hear from community-based organizations, senior centers themselves, of what the pressing needs are in terms of COVID recovery.

How much?

The Senior Center Grants Program's funding provided **a total of 24 awards (13 Program Awards and 11 Economic Impact Awards) serving older adults** to address the needs of the community in their COVID-19 recovery efforts. These funds were used in a variety of ways to help organizations resume and sustain operations, allowing older adults to safely return to social activities in their communities. In addition, funding under a different program, Intergenerational Programming within Senior Centers, was provided to 6 organizations to implement intergenerational programming to increase connection, share knowledge between generations, and reduce isolation for older adults.

With the help of ARPA funding organizations:



Served **365 people** in intergenerational programs



Secured **PPE and technology** to safely resume services like dance classes and field trips



Made **600+ phone calls** to reconnect with seniors and identify needs



Served nearly **30,000 meals** to older adults facing food insecurity

"Our programs have been suspended since March 2020. With the assistance of this funding, 60% of old programs resumed in-person, which provides the opportunity for our members coming back to the community. This funding also helped us to develop new online programs..."

Figure 8: 2022 Annual data details the impact of ARPA funding on senior center older adults.

Both Program Awards and Economic Impact Awards offer support for organizations that have experienced various financial hardships during and following the pandemic. Program Awards provide funding to a limited number of selected organizations that propose a programmatic response to the

ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Economic Impact Awards are one-time unrestricted payments available to nonprofit organizations that can demonstrate financial impact due to the pandemic. Those impacts may include a decrease in revenue streams — such as a decrease in public giving and fundraising, loss of grants or funding streams, or closure of revenue ventures (e.g., thrift shops or the leasing of event space). This investment seeks to stabilize and build operational capacity for senior centers to be prepared in their response to the needs of the older adults they serve.

Overall, most senior centers utilized CLFR funds to support culturally relevant meals, wellness classes, digital literacy, transportation and housing assistance, nutrition classes, festive celebrations, recreational activities, community gatherings, social services, vaccination support and translated information, emotional and mental health support, and general resource coordination.

Partner organizations use innovative strategies to adapt and respond to the changing environments and needs of the communities those senior centers serve. For example, funds may be used to:

- Provide social engagement opportunities, access to meaningful activities, and relief from social isolation for seniors,
- Mitigate COVID-19 related financial hardship, revenue declines, and impacts of periods of business closure,
- Provide PPE and other operating supplies,
- Provide internet access, on-site equipment, and support for navigating digital spaces,
- Provide technical support to find, engage, and sustain new and existing volunteers, and
- Provide access to nutritional services for participants.

How equitably did we provide service?

King County continues to evolve and support senior centers countywide to be pro-equity, inclusive, learning organizations reflective of the neighborhoods and communities they serve. This includes seniors across racial, sexual, and gender identities.

13 nonprofit senior centers across King County delivered services to the seniors they serve: Sound Generations/[Sno-Valley Senior Center](#); Ukrainian Community Center of Washington ([UCCW](#)); Greenwood Senior Center ([Phinney Neighborhood Association](#)); Indian American Community Services ([IACS](#)); [CISC](#); SouthEast Seattle Senior Center ([SESSC](#)); [South Park Senior Center](#); [El Centro de la Raza](#); [Kin On](#); [Filipino Community of Seattle](#); [North Shore](#); Pike Market Senior Center & Food Bank ([PMSC-FB](#)); The Central Area Senior Center Partnerships, Food and Health (Central Area Senior Center, CASC, The Central).



Figure 9: Photo from the South Park Senior Center.

For example, the Ukrainian Community Center of Washington primarily serves senior refugees, predominantly from Ukraine. UCCW offers a program in response to the ongoing effects of COVID-19 among the Ukrainian/Russian speaking refugee and immigrant seniors by enrolling new eligible participants, and offering the following services: Nutritious ethnic meals, social connections and resources, temporary mental health services and support, and mental health education. CLFR funding is helping UCCW continue to serve seniors, the vast majority of whom are limited English speaking, low-income, and/or widowed, isolated, and depressed. The effects of COVID-19 have been especially difficult for this population group due to their limited English proficiency and limited ability to receive language appropriate socialization and support systems. UCCW became their main source of support and networking. Additionally, due to the war in Ukraine, UCCW's clients have been especially impacted in the area of mental health and well-being. The added levels of new stress and anxiety among the participants — especially those who still have close and/or extended family members in Ukraine — has also required additional staff time, resources, and support to help participants find relief and comfort.

Another example of the diverse elderly populations served by the Senior Center Grants is exhibited by the Kin On Health Care Center. This grantee recipient primarily supports Asian or Asian American elders who have language barriers and health impacts around the greater Seattle area including Bothell, Issaquah, and Federal Way. In fall 2022, weekly activities included Tai Ji Quan, Zumba with TAPS, Fitness Bachata Dance, Cha Cha Dance, Calligraphy, Craft and Chat, Dance With Fun, Ikebana, Exercise Time, Huey Line Dance, Linda Line Dance, Meditation, Mei-Shu Qigong, Advanced Qi Gong, Table Tennis, Tai Chi Qi Gong, Daytime Mahjong, English Conversation, Karaoke Time, Life Story Club, Mandarin-Cantonese Meetup, and Tea Time. Encouraging seniors who live alone to join hybrid programs was also a focus.



Figure 10: Greenwood Senior Center group excursion.

On the other hand, the Greenwood Senior Center's CLFR funding focus population is socially isolated seniors. Additionally, there was a focus on those with hearing loss as much of its CLFR funding went to new equipment that support hearing impaired seniors – including classroom sound equipment purchases to make it easier for participants to hear speakers during guest lectures and classes. The Center also provides trips and outings, some camp style programs, fitness, guest speakers, community dining, recreational and social services programs. One noteworthy activity is their memory loss program, which was in full swing by the end of 2022.

Is anyone better off?

The need to practice social distancing to help slow the spread of COVID-19 and to protect people at higher risk for COVID-19 increased social isolation for seniors. Few social supports, lack of nearby family,

service access challenges, and mobility issues that cause seniors to be home-bound also contributed to social isolation for seniors. King County's senior centers and senior serving providers responded quickly, playing a critical role in fighting the COVID-19 pandemic by transitioning services to virtual formats, continuing to provide critical supports, finding new ways to make sure homebound seniors were not isolated, providing services so seniors could stay safe, and making sure seniors had the information they needed about COVID-19.⁶

Staying connected is the best way to combat loneliness, depression, and social isolation. Isolation resulting from the lockdown led to chronic loneliness and boredom. Prolonged loneliness and multiple restrictions imposed on the public can have detrimental effects on physical and mental well-being. Loneliness is common in the old-age group, leading to increased depression rates and suicide. Funds allowed senior center staff to create programs online so community could come together remotely to participate in cultural events and still feel connected.

"COVID-19 adversely affected senior populations, and particularly seniors of color through increasing social isolation. This funding helped with reducing social isolation by bringing seniors and youth together and engaged in storytelling, learning, and social interaction/ socialization..."

As it became safe to provide hybrid and in-person activities again, this funding has helped mitigate the impacts of Covid on our senior community. Grant allocations allowed senior centers to put extra time and effort into reaching out to those seniors who have not returned to pre-Covid levels of center participation, to get a better idea of the barriers they are facing in re-establishing their previous level of engagement, as well as provide additional emotional support, opportunities for social engagement, and transportation assistance for medical appointments. Centers have also been able to increase their community education about center programming and services. This grant continues to enable senior centers to provide more social gathering opportunities for new participants and those returning to the centers post Covid restrictions.

⁶ <https://dchsblog.com/2021/05/27/king-county-thanks-senior-centers-and-partners/>

From Social Isolation to Engagement: King County Continues Support for Senior Centers Experiencing Pandemic Hardship.

CASE STUDY

Senior Center Grants Program

[King County Department of Community and Human Services \(DCHS\)](#) recently awarded more than \$2 million in funding to 19 nonprofit senior centers impacted by COVID-19. The pandemic has altered the community in many ways, and senior centers, which are critical operations that increase connection, information sharing, and support for elderly neighbors, continue to experience some challenges.

Federal funding from the American Rescue Plan helped make these awards possible. The one-time funding ensured that more than a dozen senior centers could expand programs and maintain critical resources, including rental income support, meal delivery, health and wellness programs, and staffing. Funding awards ranged from \$25,000 to \$200,000.

Awarded senior centers include Central Area Senior Center, Chinese Information and Service Center, El Centro de la Raza, Filipino Community of Seattle, Greater Maple Valley Community Center, Indian American Community Service, Kin On Health Care, Mt. Si Senior Center, Northshore Senior Center, Phinney Neighborhood Association/Greenwood Senior Center, Pike Market Senior Center & Food Bank, Generations with Pride, Greenwood Senior Center, South Park Senior Citizens, Wallingford Community Senior Center, Sound Generations, Southeast Seattle Senior Center, Ukrainian Community Center of WA, University of WA Aging with Pride, and Sno-Valley Senior Center. King County continues to evolve and support senior centers countywide to be pro-equity, inclusive, learning organizations reflective of the neighborhoods and communities they serve.



A key area of focus in the Adult Services Division in DCHS is connecting older adults, especially during the pandemic when social isolation was common. Lack of social connection has been shown to increase health risks. [More than one in four adults aged 50+ reported that they felt isolated before the COVID-19 pandemic began](#) and that number jumped to more than one in two in 2020.⁷

One example of an awarded senior center tackling social isolation is the Sno-

⁷ <https://www.kff.org/medicare/issue-brief/one-in-four-older-adults-report-anxiety-or-depression-amid-the-covid-19-pandemic/>.

Valley Senior Center, located in the Snoqualmie Valley. This Center is a Hub partner⁸ with Mt. Si Senior Center and Issaquah Senior Center. It utilized the funds to increase programming after the COVID-19 pandemic had slowed operations. In addition, social worker hours were expanded which in turn led to greater outreach and higher engagement with the senior community in the Snoqualmie Valley, especially among Latinx seniors.⁹

Sno-Valley is working to understand the barriers facing seniors in re-establishing their previous level of engagement prior to the pandemic. For example, the ARPA Grant funding has helped the Sno-Valley Senior Center put extra time and effort into reaching out to those seniors who have not returned to pre-COVID levels of center

participation. Additionally, the grant funds helped the Center provide additional emotional support, social engagement, and transportation assistance out of the valley for medical appointments. Sno-Valley Senior Center has also been able to provide more opportunities for new and returning members to meet, socialize, and support each other in low-stress social situations, and learn more about the programs and services offered.



The Sno-Valley Senior Center has also been able to increase their community education about center programming and services. This is particularly important because Sno-Valley serves a rural community and outreach is critical to increasing senior center participation. This grant enables them to provide more social gathering opportunities for new participants and those returning to the Center post-COVID restrictions. These include a Monthly Gathering Tea Party and recent Fall Festival of Fun event which featured programs and provided information and demonstrations of the variety of activities seniors can choose to become involved in at the Center.

Additionally, this funding has helped maintain a New Member Ambassador Program to increase individual attention to seniors newly joining, or recently returning to the Center post-COVID restrictions. The program provides an established senior to orient new senior center participants to the Center and programs, attend events with them, and provide an overall friendly warm welcoming to Sno-Valley Senior Center.

⁸ Senior Hubs serve as recognized resource centers on aging services and provide support, outreach, connection, and opportunities for social engagement to elders throughout King County. To learn more about the Senior Hubs, visit: <https://kingcounty.gov/depts/community-human-services/adult-services/older-adults-caregivers/senior-hubs.aspx>.

⁹ <https://dchsblog.com/2022/11/30/king-county-continues-support-for-senior-centers-experiencing-economic-hardship-in-the-pandemic/>



The Sno-Valley Senior Center’s focus population is rural, isolated older adults (of all backgrounds and ethnicities). This center continues to work with expert partners to ensure program equity for all of its seniors. Partnering with other senior centers in King County helps Sound Generations/Sno-Valley bring more resources and social engagement opportunities to the seniors they serve. Their partners include GenPride (LGBTQ), SeaMar (Spanish speakers), Encompass (Kinship care), IACS (Indian American Community Services) and

POCAAN/Sage Medical mobile van. Sno-Valley Senior Center serves all the seniors in their community including seniors who experience social isolation related to health issues, financial stress, emotional issues, or having few social supports.

Overall, the Sno-Valley Senior Center has been a lifeline for many rural seniors facing post-pandemic loneliness and isolation, transportation needs, and other needed services. Recovery funding has allowed the Senior Center to maximize its outreach and restore hope through the provision of meaningful social events, caregiving, emotional support, home maintenance, alternative housing resources, nutritional support, equipment, etc. via phone calls, email, and 1:1 supportive visits. Sno-Valley Senior Center — like the other 18 dedicated, knowledgeable, and uplifting senior centers receiving this funding from King County — is improving the well-being and lives of King County seniors in essential and caring ways.

An overarching goal for King County is to ensure that all people, regardless of who they are and where they live, have the opportunity to thrive, with full and equal access to opportunities, power, and resources. The Senior Center Grants Program is just one of King County’s investments designed to improve the quality of life for local seniors. King County is dedicated to supporting seniors who rely on local senior centers for engagement and access to essential supports and resources. These grants support senior centers, resulting in stabilizing and building operational capacity for senior centers to respond to the needs of King County’s older adults. With this funding, senior centers like Sno-Valley Senior Center have developed or expanded programs and/or services and strengthened their capacity to serve older adults in King County using innovative strategies in response to the changing needs of the communities.

PERFORMANCE REPORT

Food Security Assistance Program

Exacerbated by COVID-19, the number of people in King County seeking food assistance is high [according to a report by Public Health-Seattle & King County \(Public Health\)](#).¹⁰ While food insecurity in King County increased during 2022 and remains higher than pre-pandemic levels, some community members are more likely to suffer food insecurity than others. Food insecurity is more prevalent in south King County compared to other regions, communities of color, and people who are lower income, LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, or another diverse gender identity), or experiencing poor health. To help address this urgent need, Public Health launched new efforts to connect families in need to food resources, including the Food Security Assistance Program (FSAP).

What is Food Insecurity?

Food insecurity occurs when individuals or households lack reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food.

Public Health partnered with United Way of King County (UWKC) to distribute approximately \$5.4 million CLFR funds to community-based organizations, meal programs, food banks/food pantries, and coalitions. The purpose of FSAP is to increase access to culturally appropriate food within economically disadvantaged communities disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.¹¹ Public Health contracted with UWKC as the subrecipient to manage contracts with 35 community-based organizations (CBOs) across King County.¹² The CBOs include food banks, meal programs, and culturally specific organizations. The CBOs purchased, stored, and distributed culturally appropriate foods and other food items as part of the program. UWKC also used CLFR funds to purchase culturally specific produce boxes for home delivery through their partnership with Door Dash.

How much?

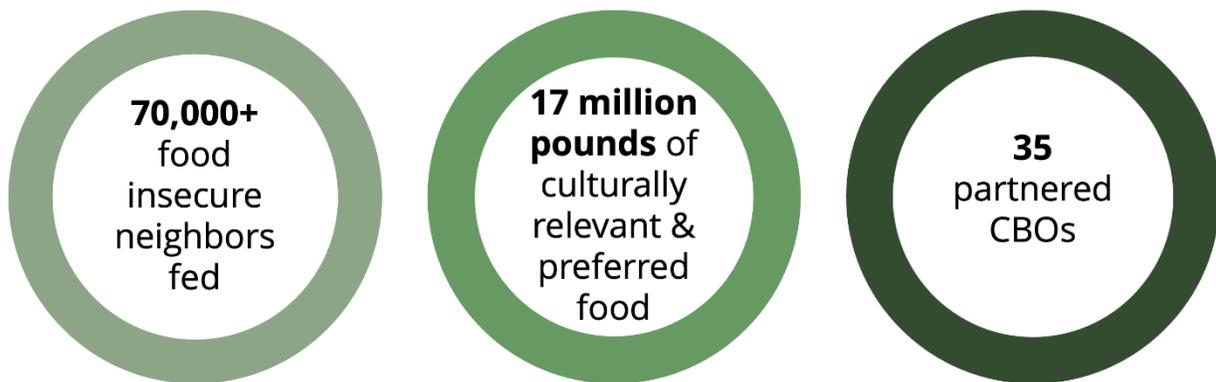


Figure 11: King County Food Security Assistance Program Final Progress Report Data as of March 31, 2023. *The CBOs were a mixture of organizations, incl. food banks and culturally specific non-profit organizations.*

¹⁰ <https://kingcounty.gov/depts/health/heal/~media/depts/health/heal/documents/food-insecurity-report-feb-2023>

¹¹ United Way King County. "Tackling Disparities With the Food Security Assistance Program." Published February 8, 2022. <https://www.uwkc.org/breaking-the-cycle-of-poverty-news/tackling-disparities-with-the-food-security-assistance-program/>

¹² <https://www.uwkc.org/assets/files/blog/2-7-2022%20KCFAP%20Agency%20Websites.pdf>

Collectively, Public Health, UWKC, and the 35 CBOs distributed food into marginalized communities that have been historically impacted by systemic inequities between January 2022 through March 2023. As a result, **17 million pounds of food** were procured and **over 70,000** food insecure neighbors were fed.

In addition, UWKC used a portion of their contracted (CLFR) funds to purchase culturally specific food boxes through Cascadia Produce, in support of their Home Grocery Delivery program. The food boxes were delivered weekly to households throughout King County via United Way's national partnership with DoorDash. As of October 2022, 79% of food box clients identify as Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC). Eighty percent (80%) of Cascadia Produce is from local growers and BIPOC-owned farms.

*"Once again, as heat stays in our area, I am reminded how fortunate I am to have the lunches delivered to me. I haven't been outside for 2 weeks and these meals are a blessing on hot unpleasant days. **For those of us with mobility and pain issues, these delivered lunches are wonderful.** Thank you."*

The UWKC Home Grocery Delivery Program delivers more food to more neighbors in need than any other Project Dash program in the nation. Since inception in 2020, a total of nearly **600,000 deliveries** have been made to homes across King County, thanks to support, in part, from CLFR funding. In fact, UWKC's Home Grocery Delivery Program made **244,685 deliveries in 2022**, up from 206,197 in 2021 (an increase of approximately 18.5%). Almost 5,000 boxes are delivered weekly to those who need them. For example, Mary's Place Shelter and their on-site residents benefitted from the Home Grocery Delivery Program. A Mary's Place Shelter employee shared,

"The relationship with Door Dash made available through this project and United Way has been invaluable. As a large organization with multiple sites in King County, the logistics around transportation and delivery factor heavily in our Food Services program. Having Door Dash pick-up and/or deliver meals to the shelters removed that task from our current drivers, again helping us bridge staffing challenges, or absences due to vacations or illness."

How equitably did we provide service?

A goal of the Food Security Assistance Program is to reach individuals who have limited access to food resources as a result of inequitable systems. Research shows significant disparities in food security, with lower income households, households with children, and people of color experiencing hunger at disproportionate rates. While a robust network of organizations supports clients in accessing federal food assistance programs and the emergency food system, identified food access gaps persist, particularly in communities that have been disproportionately impacted by the economic impacts of COVID-19. To address these food access gaps, the FSAP program prioritized supporting CBOs that serve populations disproportionately affected by food insecurity. CBOs that are deeply rooted in the communities they serve have been key to meeting community



cultural food needs during the pandemic. The RFP process to select the CBOs was highly promoted and was available in multiple languages. The bidding conference was available in English and Spanish and interpreters for other languages were available upon request. Community members with lived food insecurity experience were on the rating panel. The awarded CBOs span across King County regions and serve a variety of cultural communities of all ages.

*"Families should never have to choose between paying their utility bill or putting a full meal on the table. Food insecurity has always existed in King County, but it has deepened and grown during the pandemic and more families have turned towards the emergency food system for support. Our local emergency food system has been stretched thin by the pandemic, and it's been especially hard for families to access culturally relevant food – foods like halal meat, coconut milk, plantains and many fresh vegetables... **The awardees have deep roots in the communities that they serve and are doing transformational work to connect families with the food they need.** We're excited to partner together to reduce hunger across King County."*

— Sara Seelmeyer,
[United Way Food Security Program Manager](#)

Grantees have been able to infuse culturally appropriate food, fresh produce, and nutritious food into communities across King County due in large part to partnerships with ethnic grocers. Not only did historically marginalized communities have better access to culturally specific foods, but many small businesses in King County, many BIPOC-owned, also benefited economically.

CLRF funding served as a tool to strengthen communities and relationships across divides. Grantees were creative in their approach to meet neighbors at their point of need and saw the cultural options as a remedy to health disparities. The Center for MultiCultural Health (CMCH) was one of those organizations,

*"Food insecurity can result in adverse health, social and economic outcomes for priority populations, widening the disparities gap. **During this grant period, CMCH was able to not only address food insecurity, but our cultural navigators were able to identify and link individuals and families in need of social and health services (e.g., COVID resources, health insurance, telehealth appointments) to resources addressing their social determinates of health.**"*

UWKC is introducing the home grocery delivery model to other food banks and community-based organizations across the county and helping others eliminate the gap to access while also alleviating three major burdens many organizations face — capacity limitations, high cost of service, and lack of time. UWKC centered equity at the start and throughout the grant-making process. First, a pool of diverse community navigators was recruited to review, rate, and select top grant applications. The awardee selection was narrowed from 75 to 35 primarily grassroots organizations. Second, UWKC provided grantees early access to capital by distributing 50% of the grantees' award in private funding at the start of the grant period. This upfront funding prevented the barrier many small organizations face of having enough cash reserves for procurement, therefore allowing for swift food distribution to neighbors in need.

One of the successes United Way of King County has encountered while administering the FSAP grant is authentic grantee engagement, which is attributed to transparency and open communication. UWKC demonstrates its willingness to meet grantees where they are by providing individual video calls, group and individual technical assistance, monthly group check-in and peer sharing opportunities. Community partners regularly shared that they appreciate UWKC's approachability and responsiveness. UWKC has been able to foster a community of support and collaboration through monthly group check-ins, site visits and providing as needed 1:1 support at the request of organizations.

It was challenge awarding smaller grants to more organizations rather than larger award amounts to a smaller subset. UWKC prioritizes trust-based and relational processes while also allocating appropriate staff time to grant compliance and documentation. Many hours were dedicated to providing technical assistance and tailored support for the several smaller, newer organizations.



Is anyone better off?

Though impressive, the quantitative data only communicates a sliver of the impact the Food Security Assistance Program made in the community. The cultural relevancy emphasis was pivotal. The support provided to local ethnic grocers was crucial. The trust fostered across King County will create a ripple effect for more bridges of reconciliation to be built. Khmer Community of Seattle King County (KCSKC) expressed this in their final narrative report:

*"With our monthly culturally-appropriate food distributions, we were able to provide tangible support to our community during a tough time when government systems have continually failed to provide. **Food is so central to our community, so when we are able to provide high-quality, culturally-appropriate food to our elders, youth, and families, it is taken very seriously. This allowed us to build up trust within our community to see KCSKC as an organization that is here to stay, to advocate, to protect, and to provide support so that our community can heal and thrive.** An intended outcome of this program was to show local government and institutions how to effectively address one of the greatest needs and concerns in our Khmer community. Additionally, by utilizing local ethnic grocers, we were able to spread the benefits around to more than just our elders, youth, and families receiving food assistance. We increased business at local ethnic grocers and raised awareness with a local food bank of what types of food were appropriate to give away to Khmer families."*

— Stephanie, Executive Director, Khmer Community of Seattle King County

One of the greatest successes heard from grantees during monitoring visits and group check-in calls is the opportunity to support local businesses that sell culturally specific food. Those business typically struggled during the pandemic and grantees expressed gratitude to be able to funnel money back into their communities by supporting these small businesses. Similarly, the funding also helped grantees

produce jobs and employ folks from within their community. Organizations like Cultivate South Park, Alimentando al Pueblo, and Good Shepherd empowered community members who wanted to help, often youth and women. Cultivate South Park mentioned that for the first time they were able to afford to pay their staff, who are all African American women, a living wage.



Another success is the ability to build community trust, making neighbors feel seen and their culture appreciated, instead of a one-size-fits-all paternalistic approach to food insecurity. Many FSAP grantees serve undocumented community members with historical reasons to distrust government systems. The low reporting barriers created a way to build back community trust — UWKC with FSAP grantees and FSAP grantees with individuals being served.

Overall, UWKC appreciated the support, technical assistance, and opportunity to partner with Public Health to award grant funding to organizations across King County to distribute food to the community. The community is better and more connected because of the collaborative effort. During the FSAP implementation, grantees felt seen, heard, and empowered to speak up, collaborate, and work toward a more equitable emergency food system. Now, UWKC has harnessed the momentum and launched the Food Justice Collaborative, a BIPOC-centered coalition to propel the movement forward from crisis response to systems change.

Clients have expressed profound appreciation for the ability to incorporate fresh produce into their meals and improve their health and quality of life. Stories from both grantees and clients expressed both appreciation and relief:

- *"Through our work, we were aware of the problem of food instability in the East African community. However, we did not understand the extent to which our weekly food boxes would fill critical gaps for our families. **We are happy to report that the popularity of our Food Drives has crossed cultural, racial, and linguistic lines.** We served East African, West African, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Latinx families in need. We regularly and quickly ran out of food boxes for families approximately 30 minutes into our two-hour window. We cannot express how much this program is needed."*
- *"Post-pandemic recovery for our program has been challenging with inflation/labor and supply shortages. Food insecurity and isolation for older adults have increased during the pandemic and continues to remain so along with the need for other essential services. Our staff need to be paid a living wage in order to retain them in a tight labor market. We were committed to meet these demands in spite of these challenges... Our chefs, **other staff and volunteers met a 40% increase in [our] April meal demand while also maintaining strict COVID-19 safety and sanitation standards.** This high increase in meals have demonstrated how essential the program has been throughout the pandemic."*
- *"In April, [we used funding] for three important holiday distributions: Cambodian New Year, Ramadan and Easter. We purchased items like fish and soy sauce, coconut milk, vermicelli noodles, basmati rice,*

pineapple, chicken legs, and biscuit mix. **We created packs of specific items for each of these holidays, but offered them to all customers** so everyone would have the opportunity to try some different choices."

- "I had not realized before becoming kitchen manager how much this extra funding could help us expand what we were already doing, and **allow us to lift up so many Native vendors**. I started reaching out to Indigenous vendors across the United States... I really wanted to help local Indigenous vendors and also reach out to other tribes across the U.S. because a lot of our members are far away from their own tribes and I want to **bring them something that reminds them of home as well.**"
 - "Responding creatively to the COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way we respond to the needs in our community and the way we operate our food bank for the better. Because of our unique and proactive relationship with United Way and the funding from FSAP, **we have been able to remove virtually all barriers to accessing food at our Market**. By doing this we have seen large increases in clients, and we also have the ability to match that need and continue to supply a dignified supply of food to those in need."
- 
- "We benefited many more community members facing hunger and food insecurity than initially anticipated, a big reason is because the community itself changed with all the new folks arriving from Afghanistan after the fall of Kabul. One client was newly arrived from Afghanistan and was residing in a temporary hotel. They expressed to us that they had no income, no job, no work authorization, and had still not received their food benefits after arriving to the U.S. just one month ago. They did not know how they were going to eat and provide for their family beyond the little bit of assistance provided from their case management resettlement agency. She told us that **her children were reminded of home when she brought home the meat to make a comforting soup her children loved back home.**"
 - "The food coming to our door has made feeding our kids easier on me and my wife. **We appreciate your help** as we get settled in our new home."

PERFORMANCE REPORT

Farmers Market Grant Program

Food assistance organizations and farmers are changing the expectations of “emergency food” to provide the types of food people need most.¹³ Hunger and food insecurity continue as outcomes of both the pandemic and a chronic fact of life for all too many King County residents. Several existing community programs were CLFR-supported to enhance King County efforts to mitigate hunger in the short and long term. Harvest Against Hunger (HAH), for example, coordinates the purchase of healthy food directly from local farmers to be distributed to those in need by food banks and other community-based organizations. Growing for Good (GFG), the name of the alliance between PCC markets, Neighborhood Farmers Market Alliance (NFMA), and Harvest Against Hunger (HAH) was able to expand operations to include new food banks, and several new farms, with the additional CLFR funding.¹⁴



Public Health allocated CLFR funding to support two farm-to-food bank programs: The Neighborhood Farmers Market Alliance’s Growing for Good Program and Harvest Against Hunger’s King County Farmer Share Program. Both programs used CLFR funding to assist food pantries, meal programs, and other food assistance providers to purchase food directly from local farmers. These funds enabled King County to continue supporting [the Farm to Food Pantry program](#),¹⁵ initially funded by a Regional Food System grant from the King Conservation District, which provides food banks, meals programs, senior centers, and other community organizations funding to purchase produce directly from farmers.



The Farmers Market Grant Program not only supports farmers and farmers markets, but a portion of the funds is paying for farm products that are distributed to people at food banks. Public Health entered subrecipient grant agreements with NFMA and HAH through December 2022 and March 2023, respectively. NFMA expanded online sales capabilities for vendors to alleviate the financial burden caused by COVID-19 pandemic restrictions which have limited the number of vendors and residents allowed in farmers markets. NFMA also purchased farm products directly from farmers that sell at their farmers markets for distribution across King County food distribution sites.

¹³ <https://publichealthinsider.com/2022/12/23/fresh-produce-for-all-connecting-small-local-farmers-and-food-banks/>

¹⁴ For more information, see the *Growing for Good 2022 Report*: <https://www.harvestagainsthunger.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Growing-for-Good-2022-Report.pdf>.

¹⁵ <https://www.harvestagainsthunger.org/farm-to-food-pantry/>

HAH managed a food access program that links local farmers with local food distribution programs. Food banks partnered with small, socially disadvantaged farms. As a result, the purchasing relationship between small farms and food banks was strengthened, as well as each of their respective operations.

How much?

A portion of the funding is directed to organizations that provide food to households and individuals experiencing food insecurity. The other portion of the funds are supporting the business capacity of farmers and farmers markets.

According to the Harvest Against Hunger 2022 KCFS CLFR Report:

- **109 total farms and 2 local distributors** were supported (42 supported with direct contracts - and 67 supported through a distributor).
- 33 Agencies were supported.
- **47,418.85 pounds of produce** were purchased.
- **363 different varieties of food** were purchased.
- \$149,890 was spent **directly** on food.
- 27 out of 58 contract agencies purchased food from farms beyond their contracted funding amount.
- Achieved 8.95/10 average satisfaction rating for the **variety** of food agencies received.
- Achieved **9.33/10 average satisfaction rating for the quality of food** agencies received.

Additionally, the Growing for Good [2022 Annual Report](#) states that King County provided \$65,000 CLFR funds, which helped support results of:

- 59,348 pounds of purchased food.
- 17 growers provided organic food.
- 22 food pantries received organic food, including protein.
- 197 varieties of crops purchased.
- Three new food banks and four new farms added to GFG.
- Helping meet needs of partner food banks to serve over 30,000 clients/week in the face of food access barriers which remained high due to inflation and supply chain shortages.

Key successes included bringing in proteins and culturally appropriate foods, stronger match ups between farms and food banks, and lasting partnerships between farms and food banks beyond GFG.



Figure 12: 2022
HAH Annual Data.

How equitably did we provide service?

A variety of partners were involved: Neighborhood Farmers Market Alliance, Harvest Against Hunger, Asian Counseling & Referral Service, Black Star Food Collective, Boys & Girls Clubs of King County, Byrd Barr Place, Emergency Feeding Program, FareStart, Hunger Intervention Program, International Rescue Committee, Jubilee Reach, Lifelong (Chicken Soup Brigade), Mary's Place, Operation Sack Lunch, Phenomenal She, Pike Market Food Bank, Pike Market Senior Center, Plant Based Food Share, Plateau Outreach Ministries, Rainier Beach Action Coalition, Rainier Valley Food Bank, Snoqualmie Valley Food Bank, Sno-Valley Senior Center, South King County Food Coalition, South Seattle College Food Pantry, Teen Feed, University District Food Bank, Vashon Maury Community Food Bank, Vashon Senior Center,

North Helpline Lake City Food Bank, West Seattle Food Bank, Des Moines Area Food Bank, White Center Food Bank, FamilyWorks Food Bank, Highline Food Bank, Ballard Food Bank, Edmonds Food Bank, University District Food Bank, Issaquah Food & Clothing Farm, Renewal Food Bank, Polack Food Bank at Jewish Family Services, Hopelink Food Banks, AG Family Farm, Eternity Farm, Songbird Haven Farm, Farmstand Local

Foods, Flynn Farms, Frey Family Farm, Kirsop Farm, Lees Fresh Produce, Left Foot Farms, Mariposa Farm, Olsen Farms, Red Barn Organic Farms, Regino Farms, Sno Valley Gardens, Spring Time Farm, Viva Farms, and Windy Acre Farm.

The funding made available to food banks was based on a point system that accounted for: the number of individuals served weekly, the percent of households in their primary service area (by zip code) receiving basic food benefits, the number of farms they partnered with for the program in the previous year, and whether they also receive funding/food from the Emergency Food Assistance Program (EFAP) or The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP).



For farmer Bill Thorn of Sky Island Farm, this year's funds came at a great time. No money was coming in, so he had a very late start to the season. However, the contract helped him get through the rough times, and he was able to invest in his farm. "We work with North Helpline Food Bank because they're consistent [at ordering]. Everyone should have access to good quality healthy food regardless of income level," Thorn said. "Our motivation is quality food to as many people as possible."

Harvest Against Hunger required evaluation of the opinions of clients of HAH food distribution programs; to that end, agencies conducted outreach to gather data about the program's effectiveness. The vast majority reported using informal in-person conversation, although annual surveys and some focus groups are also deployed. Such evaluation outreach is a component of assuring equitable service.

How do you determine the food preferences of those you serve when purchasing or receiving produce for donation/gleaning?

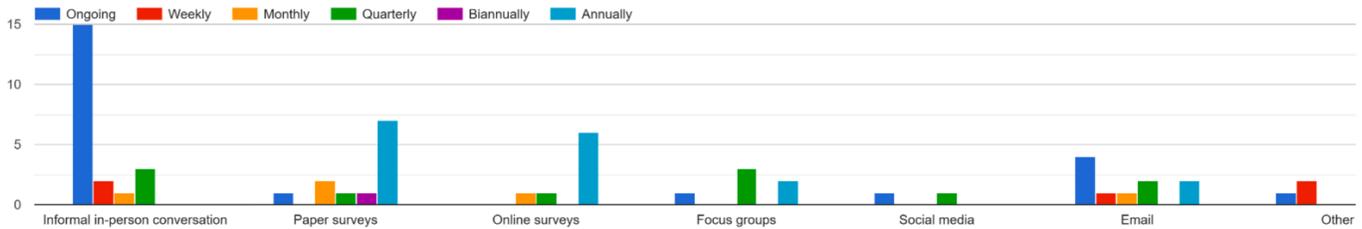


Figure 13: 16 out of 19 responding organizations collect direct community input on an “ongoing” or “weekly” basis. In the 2022 year-end program evaluation survey, King County Food Security agencies indicated using a variety of outreach methods, both in-person and virtual, to ensure that direct community member input informs food sourcing in this program.

Is anyone better off?

Food bank partners have been enthusiastic about the program’s successes, both organizationally and at the service level. For example, food banks have strengthened their working relationships with a diversity of farms (including new farms) different in terms of the demographics of their owners, the locale, and product offerings. This has supported the addition of new products at the food bank (such as pastured eggs and local meats) and culturally appropriate foods as well; for example, having shishito peppers available for Japanese-inspired dishes was a delightful surprise for some clients!

“Given...soaring costs of produce over the last year, families benefited greatly from the program and may not have been able to afford fresh produce without this program.”

“We were able to increase our grab and go bag distribution at our farmers market by over 50% with the additional funding received from Harvest Against Hunger, and were able to expand our rapport to other growers we hadn’t previously worked with, to include items like pastured eggs that were not covered by other funding sources.”

In addition, CLFR funding allowed food banks and farms to supplement their budgets in the face of inflated food costs, while increasing their distribution methods. For example, one group increased their ‘grab and go’ bags at a local farmer’s market. In addition, the programs fostered stronger matchups between farms and food banks, resulting in a smoother and larger quantity of food delivery from farms after harvest. Both farms and food banks have noted their relationship has grown even outside the ARPA-funded boundaries, resulting in a long-term reliance on each other’s efforts.

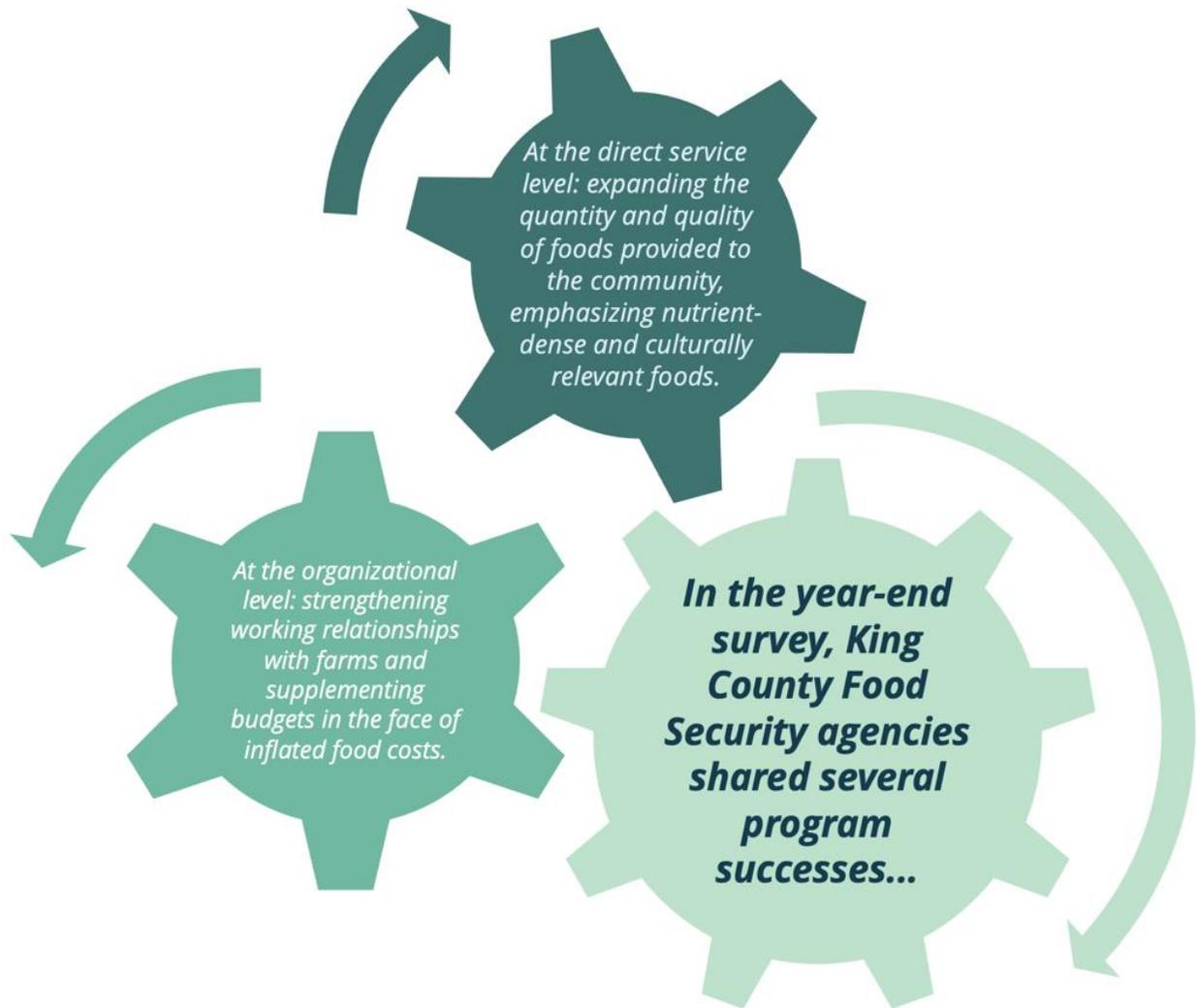


Figure 14: Partners have been enthusiastic about program successes both organizationally and at the service level.

Most importantly, clients have expressed profound appreciation for the ability to incorporate fresh produce into their meals and improve their health and quality of life. Stories from both partners and clients expressed both appreciation and relief:

- *“Knowing that their family could count on fresh quality produce **helped them improve their health and quality of life.**”*
- *“It has been a huge source of pride for our organization to invest in our south King County farm partners each year and grow our program alongside their operations. **Seeing our partner farms take on more acreage, expand their produce offerings, and connect them to new organizations means we are helping create sustainable businesses in our region.**”*
- *“Our farm partnership with Farmstand Local Foods enabled us to partner with an incredibly diverse group of farms (a diversity of race, class, gender identity, religion, geographic region, and type of produce) that **we never would have been able to achieve on our own.**”*
- *“We were able to provide **full, culturally appropriate holiday meals** this year!”*