



Helping People, Changing Lives

The Community Action Agency Newsletter November 2020

Early Head Start is Accepting Applications from South County Families

Community Action's Early Head Start program is currently accepting applications from South County families. The program welcomes income-eligible households as we serve children from birth through the age of three. Although the program is typically center-based, at this time the staff serves families by offering the curriculum virtually, as well as offering benefits to the entire family through the Agency's wrap-around services and referrals.

At this time, the Agency anticipates opening the Early Head Start Center in February and will offer full-time individualized programming to maximize young children's development and high-quality childcare.

To receive an application for the program or to obtain more information, please contact Margaret "Peg" Jarboe, Director of Children's Services, at 443.223.1121 or mjarboe@aaccaa.org.

Community Action Launches Emergency Hotline for Energy Assistance

Community Action has launched an emergency hotline to assist Anne Arundel County residents who have experienced a power shut-off, are low on or out of bulk heating fuel, or are facing an imminent shut-off. Our new hotline is manned 24 hours per day, 7 days a week by Agency staff ready to serve households in emergency circumstances with their energy.

Customers with no heat, or at risk of losing it, can call the hotline at **833.888.0401**. For customers seeking assistance with their energy bills, but not currently experiencing an energy shutdown or at risk of shutdown, please contact our energy department during our regular hours of operation (Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.) at **410.626.1900 extension #3**.

Anne Arundel County Funds New Emergency Energy Assistance Program

Community Action recently received a \$550,000 grant from Anne Arundel County that will allow qualified families and individuals affected by COVID-19 to apply for special

assistance with their energy bills. To meet the eligibility requirements for this program, applicants must be a resident of Anne Arundel County, must have an outstanding utility bill or shut-off notice, past due bills from Baltimore Gas and Electric (BGE) or bulk fuel vendors must be from March 1, 2020 or later, have experienced a loss of income due to COVID-19, and must have household income over the income eligibility guidelines for the Maryland Energy Assistance Program and CAA's other electric and utility programs.

For more information about this program, please call 410.626.1900 extension 3.

Community Action Offers Online Classes for First Time Home Buyers

Community Action is offering virtual home buyer classes during the COVID-19 pandemic. The cost of the class is \$75 per household. In order to obtain a FHA completion certificate, participants must complete the online class and have a pre-purchase counseling session. To register for the online classes, please visit <https://aaccas.frameworkhomeownership.org>. To schedule a pre-purchase counseling session, please contact Robin Revell-Dunn at revell-dunn@aaccas.org.

For more information about the First Time Home Buyers program, please call Robin Revell-Dunn at 443.822.2117.

Community Actions' Youth Development Services Guiding Coalition Meets

The Community Action Agency recently met with local community agency and non-profit representatives to launch the Youth Development Services Guiding Coalition, a new initiative of the Agency's Youth Development Services.

"As a new member of the Agency, it is important for me to listen to the voices of the community and to work strategically with them to create programming to address their concerns," said Dr. Lenny Howard, Director of Youth Development Services. "I am looking forward to working with the community and in partnership with other organizations to provide referrals and promote their services to help as many youth and their families as we can."

The objective of the Guiding Coalition is to understand what programs currently exist, to explore partnership opportunities, and to identify current gaps in services with an eye to developing new programs or strengthening existing ones.

For information about Youth Development Services, please contact Dr. Lenny Howard, Director of Youth Development Services, at 443.822.8466 or lhoward@aaccas.org.

Community Action Adopts Two-Generation Approach to Serving Families

Community Action is implementing the Two-Generation Whole Family approach and is building family well-being by intentionally and simultaneously working with children and the adults in their lives together, with the understanding that families come in all shapes and sizes, with needs of their own. The Agency's Program Integrationist, Roxanne

McGowan, is piloting the initiative with the 45 families participating in the Agency's Early Head Start program. CAA will be expanding the methodology to all families we serve.

For more information about the Agency's Two-Generation initiative, please contact Roxanne McGowan, Program Integrationist, at 443.822.8504 or via email at rmcgowan@aaccaa.org.

Fund Development

Community Action is pleased to announce that the Agency has been selected as a recipient of grant funding from the Rotary Club of Annapolis' 2020 Crab Feast. The funding will be used to assist homeless families and individuals with transitional housing costs as they wait to move into permanent housing or a local shelter.

For over twenty years, the Community Action Agency has hosted the Harriett Pratt *Gifts of Love* holiday event to provide an evening of dinner, entertainment, activities, and gifts for children from low-income families. We are inviting members of our community to help us continue the tradition of bringing joy to children during the holiday season. We are accepting donations to offset the expenses of the event and gifts, or donors can choose to "adopt" a child and receive a wish list of gifts chosen by that child. For more information regarding *Gifts of Love*, please contact Dr. Lenny Howard at 443.822.8488 or lhoward@aaccaa.org.

During the final two months of each year, non-profits experience an increase in the donations they receive as donors round out their annual giving. Community Action depends on individual and corporate giving to help us serve over 16,000 vulnerable Anne Arundel County residents through one or more of our programs. If your circumstances allow, please make a donation to the Community Action Agency to help us assist your neighbors.

For more information about the Agency's fund development program, please contact Julie Snyder, Director of Development and Community Engagement, at 443.822.1167 or jsnyder@aaccaa.org. Please mail all donations to her attention at the Community Action Agency, 251 West Street, Annapolis, Maryland 21401.

Making a Difference

A few months ago, a woman moved to Anne Arundel County from New Jersey with little money, one bag of possessions, the clothes on her back, and no plan to move forward. Although she had a successful career for years, her circumstances changed and she found herself in a position where she needed to rebuild her life. When she arrived in the county, she received help from Arundel House of Hope, and through their program connected with people who gave her a temporary place to live and she was able to obtain a job.

Once our customer gained employment, she was able to save enough money to begin her search for housing. While she was initially rejected at an apartment complex, she

continued to look and was eventually offered the opportunity to rent a townhouse from a private owner. She had the funds to cover the security deposit for the townhouse, but not the first months rent. Fortunately, she met an employee from Community Action who directed her to the Agency's housing department. We were able to help her with her first months rent and she is settling into her beautiful new home.

CAA's staff continues to work with our customer to ensure she continues to progress on her pathway to success. To that end, our customer recently decided to continue her education and has enrolled in Anne Arundel Community College's Project Management program. We look forward to hearing more about our customer's successes as she continues to build a new life for herself!

The Community Action Agency will be closed on Thursday, November 26 and Friday, November 27 so our staff can enjoy the Thanksgiving holiday with their families. We will reopen on Monday, November 30, 2020 at 8:30 a.m.

At this time, the CAA's office sites remained closed. Our staff continues to work remotely to ensure that our customers' needs are met in a timely manner.

The Community Action Agency is On the Move!