

Gaston Community Action, Inc.

Annual Report



Helping People, Changing Lives

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*O*ur Vision

“To diversify funding to empower the agency to maintain and grow its programs and services”

*O*ur Mission

“To stimulate a better focusing of all available local, state, private and federal resources upon the goal of enabling low income families, and low income individuals of all ages, in rural and urban areas, to attain the skills, knowledge, and motivations and secure the opportunities needed for them to become self-sufficient.”

*C*ommunity Action Promise

Community Action changes people’s lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live. We care about the entire community, and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.

About Us

The Beginning of GCA

Gaston Community Action, Inc. is a private non-profit corporation chartered by the State of North Carolina to operate anti-poverty programs in Gaston County on October 22, 1964. Structured in accordance with standards and requirements of the federal Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 and subsequent amendments, "the basic purpose of community action is to stimulate a better focusing of all available local, state, private, and federal sources upon the goals of enabling low-income families and low-income individuals to obtain skills, knowledge, and motivations, and secure the opportunities for them to become fully self-sufficient"

Agency Overview

The agency administers programs in Cleveland, Gaston, Lincoln and Stanly Counties. Funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and Human Services Administration for Children and Families, North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services of Economic Opportunity. GCA employs a staff of about 120 and operates on an annual budget of over 7 million.

GCA has continuously provided services and advocacy on behalf of the poor and disadvantaged since its inception and charter. Our programs are planned after holding public hearings to solicit community input. Head Start educates 460 preschool children in Gaston and Lincoln Counties. The CSBG program is directed toward making low-income residents of the four counties self-sufficient by providing help with employment, housing, education and transportation.



Board of Directors

GCA's Board of Directors

**is comprised of 18
members representing
three sectors;**

- **Public (appointed by
the county
commissioners)**
- **Citizen (elected by the
low-income residents)
and**
- **Private (appointed by
civic groups).**

CONSULTANTS TO THE BOARD

**Regina M. Taylor
Wanda Wyont**

LOUIS BROWN, JR.—Chairman

BRENDA SPENCER—Vice-Chair

LABONNIE KNIGHT—Secretary

TERETHA YOUNG—Treasurer

HUGH GRANT—At Large

RASHEEDA WHITE

REESHIA BELL

NANCY MAYNOR

WILLIAM LINDSAY

JOHN MADDOX

DEVONDA FRIDAY

GEORGIANNA HARTGROVE

DELORIS CHAMBERS

ASHLEY RUDISILL

ROBERT POPE

JOSIE BROOKS

SHARON WHITE

Executive Director

We are celebrating 50 years of Head Start at Gaston Community Action, Inc. and I am excited. As a leader of our great agency, it is a pleasure to present GCA's 2014-2015 Annual Report that highlights our outcomes, accomplishments and our commitment to combating poverty in Cleveland, Gaston, Lincoln, and Stanly Counties.

Although GCA has made significant accomplishments in assisting low-income families in the community, GCA understands the needs to position ourselves to better combat poverty over the next fifty years. The nature of poverty has a different appearance. From recent years, poverty now extends to a wide variety of individuals, non-traditional customer, are in need of service and resource. Therefore, it is a necessity; we seek innovative ways in our service delivery. We must utilize comprehensive case management and bundle services to help overcome generational poverty.

These are our main focus points;

- GCA is connecting with new partners to help the agency to better serve the communities.
- GCA will revise our 2016-2017 Head Start Application to include Early Head Start to better meet the needs of our families.
- GCA, over a 50 year period, has served over 20,000 children in Gaston and Lincoln Counties.
- GCA has been successful because of the leadership from our compassionate Board Members, our committed partners and our qualified staff.

GCA will help meet the demanding needs of a changing world, as it positions itself as an agency that effectively serves one child, one family, and one community at a time. Gaston Community Action would like to thank its internal and external stakeholders for their continued support.

Sincerely,

Joseph Dixon

Executive Director





HEAD START



**Annual Report School Year 2014-2015
In fulfillment of the requirements of the
Preparing Head Start for School Readiness
Act of 2007(644(a)(2)(B))**

*Copies of this report are available
To community members upon request*

This report is prepared to comply with the reauthorized Head Start Act of 2007. This Act, specifically Section 644 (a) (2) (B), and states:

Gaston Community Action, Inc. is committed and dedicated to ensure the Head Start children will be prepared to succeed in school and life. The Gaston Community Action School Readiness team is comprised of parents, staff, community partners, and the local school systems. The responsibility of the team is to make certain the school readiness goals align with the Head Start Early Learning Framework, the North Carolina Early Learning Guidelines and the local school system expectations. We will focus on implementing projects and activities that bring about the most efficient use of resources that will positively influence the lives and environment of the children and families we serve.

Each Head Start agency shall make available to the public a report published at least once in each fiscal year that discloses the following information from the most recently concluded fiscal year, except that reporting such information shall not reveal personally identifiable information about an individual child or parent:

- The total amount of public and private funds received and the amount from each source
- An explanation of budgetary expenditures and proposed budget for the fiscal year
- The total number of children and families served, the average monthly enrollment
- The percentage of enrolled children that received medical and dental exams
- Information about parent engagement activities
- The agency's efforts to prepare children for kindergarten
- Any other information required by the Secretary
- Implementing School Readiness goals for preschoolers



GCA'S APPROACH TO SCHOOL READINESS GOALS FOR CHILDREN

Head Start defines school readiness as children possessing the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary for success in school, for later learning and life. The Head Start approach to school readiness means that children are ready for school, families are ready to support their children's learning, and schools are ready for children.

Gaston Community Action, Inc. Head Start is committed to ensuring that children who leave our Head Start program are prepared when they enter the kindergarten program in the public schools. The teaching staff use various strategies including the CLASS observation tool to enhance best practice to ensure all children enrolled are working toward meeting goals in all domain areas. These domain areas are assessed daily. The five essential domains are:

- Approaches to Learning and Play
- Social-Emotional Development
- Cognition and General Knowledge
- Language Development and Literacy Knowledge and Skills
- Physical and Health Development

With the implementation of these domains GCA HS will ensure that children (including those with disabilities) are fully equipped with the necessary skills to successfully transition to kindergarten. The training and mentoring of teaching staff is critical in meeting school readiness goals. Parents are included in goal setting in order to help the child's progress.

FAST FACTS

- Head Start Employs 94 employees
- Contracts with local agencies to provide preventive health, nutrition, disability and mental health services to children and families
- Operates 7 Head Start Centers (3 in Lincoln County 4 in Gaston County)
- Serves children 3 and 4 years of age with birth date by August 31 of that year
- Operates four (4) NC Pre-K classrooms two (2) Rankin I Head Start center 714 Rankin Ave, Gastonia, NC 28053 two (2) Lincoln Park Head Start Center 140 Industrial Park Rd. Lincolnton, NC 28092
- Serves children breakfast, lunch and snack
- Operates 8:00 AM – 2:00 PM each day in conjunction with Gaston and Lincoln County school calendars
- Total enrollment is 460 at all times. Children who drop/add are replaced timely.
- Number of three year olds served—302
- Number of 4 year olds served—270

FUNDING SOURCES

The Head Start Program received funding from the following sources in FY 2014-2015

Funding Source	Amount		
	7/1/14 - 3/31/15	4/1/15 - 6/30/15	TOTAL
Head Start, OHS, DHHS	3,223,134	893,879	4,117,013
GCA Non-federal share	989,753	179,051	1,168,804
Gaston Pre-K	192,457	4,128	196,585
Lincoln Pre-K	168,239	24,048	192,287
USDA	274,059	57,752	331,811
E-Rate	37,613	0	37,613
Other	30	15	45
TOTAL FUNDING	4,885,285	1,158,873	6,044,158

BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES

BUDGET EXPENDITURES			
	7/1/14 - 3/31/15	4/1/15 - 6/30/15	TOTAL
Personnel	1,601,926	396,408	1,998,334
Fringe Benefits	709,401	216,334	925,735
Travel			0
Equipment			0
Supplies	70,940	2,524	73,464
Contractual	497,173	104,067	601,240
Facilities/Construction			0
T&TA	44,497	18,206	62,703
Other	508,312	88,969	597,281
Indirect Costs	463,283	153,314	616,597
GCA Non-federal share	989,753	179,051	1,168,804
Total	4,885,285	1,158,873	6,044,158



Head Start Annual Report Budget Justifications Fiscal Year 2014-2015

Personnel	1,998,334	Includes compensation for all Head Start employees for services rendered to the program.
Fringe Benefits	925,735	Includes FICA, health insurance, life insurance, disability insurance, workers comp insurance, SUTA and retirement paid on behalf of eligible staff.
Supplies	73,464	Includes janitorial supplies, office supplies, disabilities supplies, program supplies & medical/dental supplies.
Contractual	601,240	Includes child dental treatment, child medical treatment, equipment rental/lease, child audiology contract, child mental health contract, school lunches, contract food & delivery, & nutrition consultant.
T&TA	62,703	Includes employee development and training & technical assistance for staff.
Other	597,281	Includes all other expenditures necessary for Program function such as communications, storage rental, postage, local travel, space costs, field trips, translation, dues & registration, publications, printing, advertising, policy council & parent activities, equipment maintenance & repair, liability insurance, transportation costs, professional services, facility repairs & licensing, & technology costs.
Indirect Costs	616,597	Includes all allowable expenditures within the indirect cost pool to administer the Program.
GCA Non-federal share	1,168,804	Includes property or services that benefit the Head Start program and are contributed by non-Federal third parties without charge to the grantee.
Total	6,044,158	

Financial Audit Results: For the year ended June 30, 2014, the auditor issued an unqualified opinion. There were no financial statement findings and no questioned costs.

NUMBER OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVED

Our Children

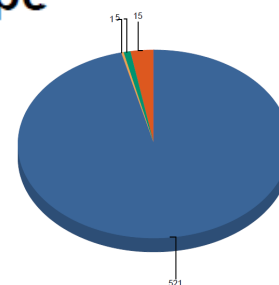
Gaston Community Action, Inc.'s Head Start is funded through the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start. Our funded enrollment is 460 children. Children who leave the program are replaced by those on a waiting list. Our average daily attendance for 2014 was 94%. We served 572 children.

Our Families

Gaston Community Action, Inc. Head Start served 542 families. 392 are single-parent families; 149 are two-parent families; and 1 foster family.

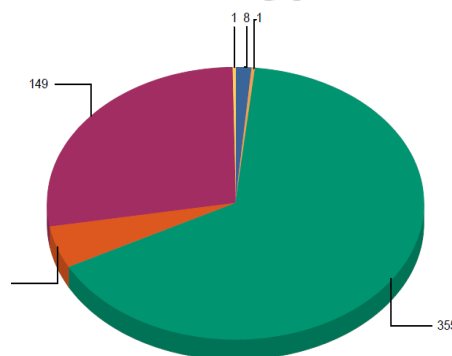
Family Type

Biological Family	521	96.1%
Foster family	1	0.2%
Other family type	5	0.9%
Other relative(s)	15	2.8%
Total:	542	100.0%



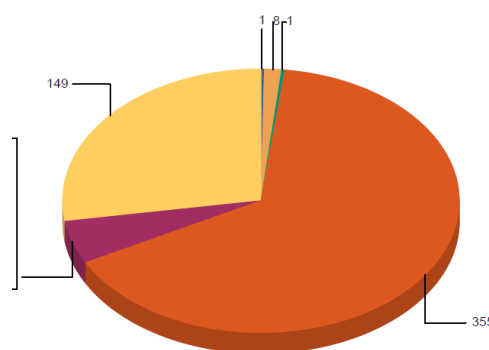
Parent Type

Single parent (father figure only)	8	1.5%
Single parent (father figure only) living w/partner	1	0.2%
Single parent (mother figure only)	355	65.5%
Single parent (mother figure only) living w/partner	28	5.2%
Two parent family	149	27.5%
Type Not Specified	1	0.2%
Total:	542	100.0%



Family Type or Parent Type

Biological Family	1	0.2%
Single parent (father figure only)	8	1.5%
Single parent (father figure only) living w/partner	1	0.2%
Single parent (mother figure only)	355	65.5%
Single parent (mother figure only) living w/partner	28	5.2%
Two parent family	149	27.5%
Total:	542	100.0%



PARENT ENGAGEMENT/MALE ENGAGEMENT

Gaston Community Action, Inc. Head Start strongly encourages parent participation. Parents are their child's first teachers, and are the key to the design and success of the program. Parents are encouraged to participate in a variety of activities, including:

- Parent/staff meetings and trainings
- Policy Council meetings
- Parent-Teacher Conferences
- Home Visits
- Classroom volunteer
- Parent/Staff Trainings held monthly
- Special Programs for male involvement

The program provides newsletters and a monthly calendar to parents that include upcoming events. The menus are posted weekly, breakfast, lunch, and snack. The center news and other items of interest are also posted on the parent information board.

TRANSITION TO KINDERGARTEN

Preparing Children for Kindergarten

215 children transitioned to Kindergarten in May 2015. Transition meetings are held in April of every year to assist parents of children who are moving on to kindergarten. A tour of the local public school is scheduled to familiarize the families of the setting and routines; parents are given opportunities to ask questions of kindergarten teachers. Parents are encouraged to participate in transition activities. Transition documentation containing all health developmental and educational information will follow the child to their assigned school.

Collaboration Agreements

Gaston Community Action, Inc. collaborates with two LEA's (Gaston and Lincoln) in our service area. These agreements help coordinate disability services for children who required needed services from these local school systems.

PROGRAM NOTICE AWARD FOR FIVE YEAR HEAD START PROJECT PERIODS

The Office of Head Start (OHS) is moving from indefinite project periods to five year project periods for all Head Start grantees. This requires changes on OHS funding practices and oversight of Head Start Programs. Changes in oversight will include improved communication between federal staff and grantees, as well as ongoing analysis of data to determine the type of support needed by grantees. The main purpose of improved oversight is to demonstrate the quality of program services, the effectiveness of management systems, and the achievement of outcomes for children, families, and communities. This is our agency's second (2) year of the five (5) year period. We expected and received our first (1) monitoring visit this

year. The visit was for health and safety of our program. We passed this monitoring review without any problems.

OHS APPROACH TO SCHOOL READINESS FOR GCA's HEAD START PROGRAM

The Head Start School Readiness encompasses three major frameworks that promote an understanding of school readiness for parents and families. The three frameworks provide the foundation for implementing a systemic and integrated comprehensive child development service including family engagement. Grantees must participate in school readiness progress meetings with OHS.



MEDICAL AND DENTAL

Medical Homes

94% of enrolled children have an ongoing source of continuous, accessible health care. 6% are eligible to receive medical services through child care insurance.

92% of children are enrolled in Medicaid 8% are enrolled in private health insurance plans. Head Start works cooperatively through both County Health Departments and our Nutrition Consultant to perform heights, weights, blood pressure, dental screening, fluoride varnish, blood lead screenings, and review of immunization records.

Dental Exams

96% enrolled children have continuous, accessible dental care.

Nutrition

Menus are provided in English and Spanish for parents and public review.

We participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). During our school year we serve approximately 215,480 meals to children at a cost of \$600,320.



Serving Gaston & Lincoln Counties

The Head Start center has a central office in Gastonia and (7) Head Start Centers in Gaston and Lincoln counties.

CENTRAL OFFICE

223 N. Morris Street

Gastonia, NC 28052

(704) 866-8721

www.gastonca.org



Gaston County

Cherryville Head Start—4 Star

203 Elm Street

Cherryville, NC 28021

(704) 435-8946

40 Students—2 Classrooms

Highland Charter Head Start—5 Star

324 N. Highland Street

Gastonia, NC 28052

(704) 866-9874

126 Students—7 Classrooms

Rankin I—4 Star

714 Rankin Ave

Gastonia, NC 28052

(704) 861-2285

56 Students—2 NC Pre-K Classrooms

Rankin II—4 Star

304 N. Highland Street

Gastonia, NC 28052

(704) 866-6345

69 Students—4 Classrooms

Lincoln County

Oaklwan Head Start—4 Star

410 Linden Street

Lincolnton, NC 28092

(704) 735-4702

40 Students—2 Classrooms

Deaton Head Start—4 Star

101 Deaton Ave

Lincolnton, NC 28092

(704) 732-3201

20 Students—1 Classroom

Lincoln Park Head Start—4 Star

140 Industrial Park Road

Lincolnton, NC 28092

(704) 732-1216

109 Students—6 Classrooms



Community Service Block Grant



2014-2015 Outcomes



Brenda Smith, Director

Through collaborative efforts with community partners, GCA works to improve the social and economic well-being of individuals and families in Gaston, Lincoln, Cleveland and Stanly counties in North Carolina. Tasked by the State to aid in the reduction of citizens who are living in poverty, GCA operates the Total Family Achievement Program (TFAP) with funds provided through the Community Service Block Grant (CSBG). Clients learn about new possibilities for themselves and their families. They begin to see themselves as someone who can make a difference for their family as a member of their community. The TFAP promotes self-sufficiency by providing help with setting a household budget, rental, food, housing and transportation assistance along with education/training and job search support.

The number of families enrolled from July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015 was 169, which represent 443 family members being served.

<i>Program Results</i>	<i>Target</i>	<i>Achieved</i>
Planned participants	200	169
Moved Above the Federal Poverty Guideline	36	20
Obtained Employment	24	30
Obtained Better Employment	6	18
Obtained Jobs With Medical Benefits	4	4
Completed Education/Training	24	24
Secured Standard Housing	15	26
Received Emergency Assistance	100	116





Community Service Block Grant (CSBG)

Demographic Synopsis

Program

Outcomes

169 families enrolled

443 family members served

20 participants moved above the Federal Poverty Guideline

30 obtained employment

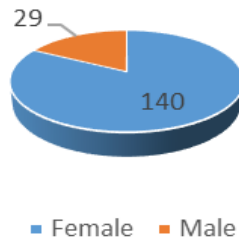
4 obtained jobs with medical benefits

24 completed education/Training

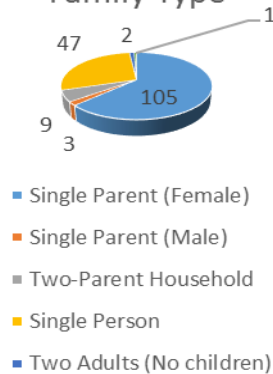
26 secured standard housing

116 received emergency assistance

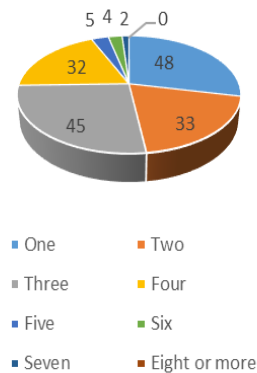
Gender



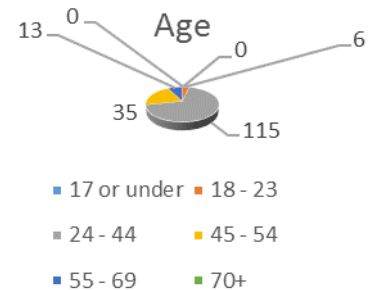
Family Type



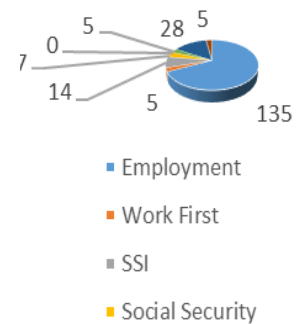
Family Size



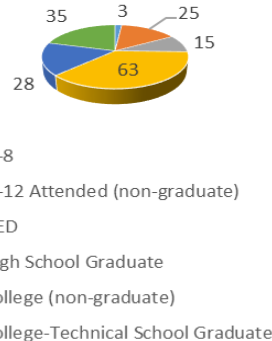
Age



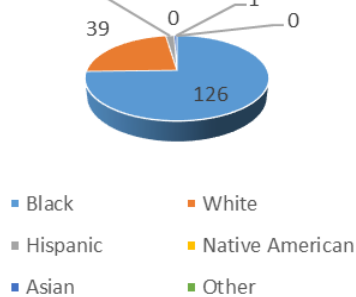
Source of Income



Education



Race



Success Story!



Shasta Johnson a single parent with five children entered the program in September of 2012. She had achieved a degree (AA) in Medical Office Administration and had a yearly income of

\$2725. She had not been able to secure employment in her field of experience. She was unemployed, had no transportation, and lived in Section 8 housing. Her mother assisted with the children and she received \$58 weekly in child support, but received very little assistance with rearing the children from the absent fathers. She was receiving \$952 in food stamps. While in the Total Family Achievement Program, she was assisted with additional education at Gaston College, utility assistance to maintain housing, and transportation to allow her to stay focused on employment. She received assistance with clothing and shoes for her children, and clothing for herself so that she could make a better impression while on interviews. Referral for budgeting was made to and completed at Consumer Credit Counseling (United Way) and through Gaston Community Action. She received certification as a CNA through

Gaston College, gained employment at Stanley Total Living Center and is currently earning \$11 an hour with benefits and overtime. She moved into a new four bedroom income based apartment complex, no longer receives food stamps, has a good job as a Certified Nurse Assistant, and has transportation. She entered the program with low self-esteem, but she now holds her head up. She married in of March 2015 and has a new son. Her husband is employed at Freightliner full time with benefits. The children are doing great, the family is making plans to purchase a home in 2016, and she plans to return to college to become a registered nurse. The family income is now \$43,248 which does not include her new husband's income.



Serving Gaston, Cleveland, Lincoln and Stanly counties

The CSBG has a central office in Gastonia and offices in Cleveland, Lincoln and Stanly County.

CENTRAL OFFICE

223 N. Morris Street

Gastonia, NC 28052

(704) 866-8721

www.gastonca.org

Gaston

Brenda Smith

Robin Conner

Leslie Lowery

Sandra Dunlap

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Shelby, NC 28150

(704) 480-0722

Jackie Thompson

Shirley Suggs

Lincoln

124 East Main Street

Lincolnton, NC 28092

(704) 480-9744

Cynthia Vinson

Stanly

507 Old Charlotte Road

Albemarle, NC 28001

(704) 985-1928

David Brown

Financial Information

PROGRAM	GRANT SOURCE	FUNDING
Head Start	US Dept. of Health & Human Services	4,117,013
Administration for Children and Families		
USDA	331,811	
Pre-K Gaston & Lincoln County	388,872	
Non-Federal Share	1,168,804	
CSBG	NC DHHS - Division of Social Services	1,010,257
Other Revenues	43,876	
Total	7,060,633	





Thank you!

Gaston Community Action, Inc. would like to thank you for your support and generous contribution toward our Annual Board meeting.

A & B Service Center
Hood Hargett & Associate
Minges Company

