

LARIMER COUNTY

Human Services

ANNUAL REPORT

STATE FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021



Larimer.org/dhs
970.498.6300



Letter from the Director

Thank you for your interest in Human Services and for reading our first annual report. We are proud of the work we provide to the community and know that you will learn more about our important work in this report. In late 2020, we finalized our Human Services strategic plan. Our leadership team defined our vision, mission and values and set the path for the work we wanted to do as a department.

Our vision is an inclusive community where everything thrives. Our mission is that Human Services is responsive, providing timely resources in partnership with our community so individuals and families are healthy, supported, and safe. In addition to these two important statements, we crafted a staff statement, because the work we do would not be possible without our staff. Our staff is the foundation of our vision and mission. We are committed to the professional development and wellbeing of our staff. We strive for excellence, promote resilience, and encourage our staff to contribute, learn, and grow.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, we have spent our days serving our clients and working to make our vision and mission a reality. We have used our values to readjust our business practices, processes and how we interact with the community. Integrity and inclusivity are paramount to our daily work and clients.

Throughout this annual report, you will see instances of great partnerships and instances of the amazing resilience and work our staff does every day. Issuing over \$35,000,000 in benefits to the families in our community who need it the most takes patience, understanding, and a strong knowledge of the rules and laws Human Services is bound by. Additionally, working with parents who may be seeing us on one of the worst days of their life takes kindness, empathy and collaboration to create great outcomes for the next generation of Larimer County residents. Every division in Human Services- Aging & Adult Services, Benefits & Community Support, Children, Youth & Family and Operations - is committed to providing a hand up to those who need it the most.

You are welcome to email me with any thoughts or questions you may have about Human Services, my contact information is below. I'm excited to share with you the outcome of our State Fiscal Year 2020-2021 in these pages.

Sincerely,

Heather O'Hayre, Director
HS-Director@larimer.org



- Letter from the Director 2
- Financial Summary..... 3
- Partnerships 3
- Larimer County Snapshot
2020 Stats at a Glance 4
- Aging & Adult Services..... 6
- Benefits &
Community Support..... 10
- Children, Youth
& Family Services 14

Our mission is to be responsive, providing timely resources in partnership with our community so individuals and families can be healthy, supported, and safe.



Human Services Leadership

HEATHER O'HAYRE

Human Services Director

LORI METZ

Aging & Adult Services Division Manager

VANESSA FEWELL

Benefits & Community Support Division Manager

THAD PAUL

Children, Youth & Family Division Manager

KATHERINE PALMER

Operations Division Manager

JILL MAASCH

Community Relations & Public Information Supervisor

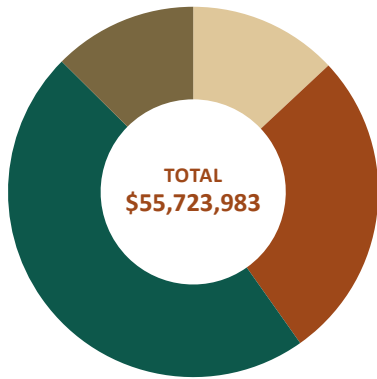
LINDY BLUE

Executive Assistant to the Director's Office

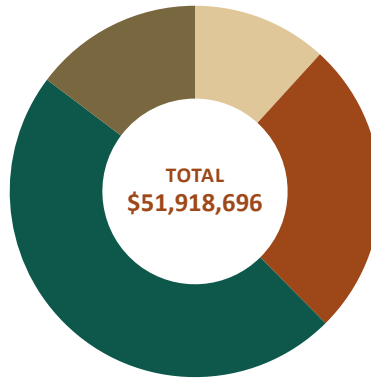
Financial Summary

The Larimer County Department of Human Services funding is comprised of federal, state, and local dollars. Each Human Services program has a unique funding allocation consisting of these funding sources. Below is a snapshot of the funding for the state fiscal year 2020-2021. These figures are not audited and have been rounded where appropriate.

Funding Allocation



Funding Spent



- ▶ Adult Protective Services
- ▶ Child Welfare
- ▶ Benefits & Community Support
- ▶ County Admin

	ALLOCATION	SPENT	% SPENT
Adult Protective Services *	\$1,309,080	\$1,285,791	98%
Child Welfare *	\$26,326,602	\$24,771,661	94%
Colorado Child Care Assistance Program *	\$6,961,729	\$6,044,793	87%
Colorado Works/TANF	\$7,021,099	\$6,964,683	99%
Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)	\$795,627	\$293,804	37%
County Admin	\$6,999,147	\$7,645,247	109%
Employment First	\$355,933	\$84,270	24%
Office on Aging *	\$3,691,989	\$2,567,260	70%
Options for Long Term Care (OLTC)	\$2,262,776	\$2,262,776	100%
TOTAL	\$55,723,983	\$51,918,696	93%

* These program area allocations include funding provided by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).



Thank You, Partners

The work and benefits completed by the Department of Human Services could not be done without tireless assistance from our community partners. Much of the work that is completed by the department is focused on providing benefits to the community, creating safe homes for our clients and the checks and balances that happen behind the scenes.

Our community partners provide direct service benefits to our clients, like counseling, home cleaning, transportation, and more. These partners have contracts with the Department of Human Services so that they may be reimbursed for the services that they provide our clients. Though out this Annual Report you will see partner spotlights to highlight the great work that helps our community grow and thrive.

We cannot thank our partners enough for the services they provide day in and day out. If you are interested in learning more about partnering with the Department of Human Services, please email DHS-Communications@larimer.org.

Larimer County Population Snapshot

2020 Stats at a Glance^{***}

LARIMER COUNTY POPULATION

359,066 (19.8% increase from 2010)

Colorado Population: 5,773,714 (14.8% increase from 2010)




HOUSEHOLDS

146,638

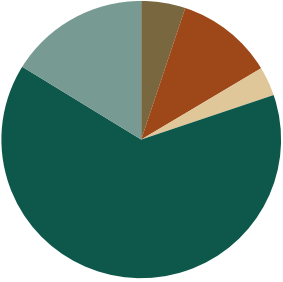
(number of housing units: 154,407)

Single parent households: **41.4**

Average family size: **2.87**




POPULATION AGE



- Under 5 years: **5.1%**
- 5-14 years: **11.3%**
- 15-17 years: **3.4%**
- 18-64 years: **64%**
- 65 years and above: **16.2%**

MEDIAN AGE: 36.4
(37.1 in Colorado)

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT



Bachelor or higher: **49%**

Associates: **9.2%**

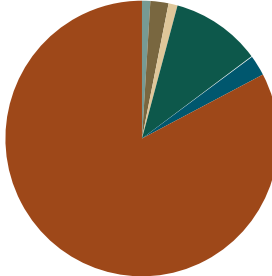
HS or equivalent: **19%**

Bachelor's degree: **28%**

Some college no degree: **20.4%**


Graduate or prof degree: **19.2%**

RACIAL/ETHNIC MAKEUP



- White Alone: **92.6%**
- Hispanic or Latino: **11.9%**
- 2 or more races: **2.7%**
- Asian: **2.4%**
- American Indian & Alaska Native: **1.10%**
- Black or African American: **1.2%**
- Native Hawaiian & Pacific Islander: **1.2%**

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME



Totals: **\$75,186**

Families: **\$91,840**

Married-couple families: **\$102,455**

Nonfamily households: **\$41,925**

LANGUAGES



Non-English Speaking population: **6.9%**


Spanish: **5.4%**

Other Indo-European languages: **2.0%**

Asian and pacific islander languages: **1.5%**

Other: **0.5%**

POVERTY




Individuals below poverty level: **11.3%**

Under 18: **9.4%**

18-64: **13.5%**

65 and over: **6.4%**

DISABLED POPULATION




Individuals who are disabled: **9.2%**

Types of disabilities: hearing, vision, cognitive, ambulatory, self-care, independent living

Without health care coverage: **5.8%**

VETERANS



6.7%

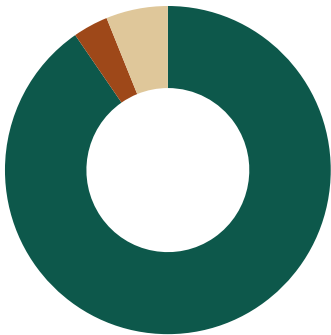
(91.5% male, 8.5% female)

* United States Census 2019 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates for Larimer County

** United States Census Bureau for 2020



How You Connected With Us



PHONE STATS

- Benefits & Community Support: **141,733**
Monthly Call Average: **11,811**
Over **25,000** hours
Monthly average of **2,111** hours
- Office on Aging: **5,479**
Monthly Call Average: **457**
- Child & Adult Protection: **9,627**

HUMAN SERVICES WEBSITE:

Over **65,000** unique users,
and more than **134,000** unique page views.



NETWORK OF CARE STATS:

Unique Page Views: **219,779**
Average Daily Visits: **3,477**



CONTACT US:

24/7/365

Adult Protection Reports: 970-498-7770
Child Protection Reports: 970-498-6990

Benefits & Community Support: 970-498-6300 or benefits@larimer.org
The Office on Aging: 970-498-7750 or ADRC@larimer.org

LARIMER.ORG/DHS



OPERATIONS SPOTLIGHT ON CONTENT MANAGEMENT



Content Management

The Department of Human Services Content Management team has made a concerted effort to digitalize as many paper documents as possible. Sensitive information as it pertains to processing public benefits, case notes and information from child welfare and adult protection (as is permitted by the State of Colorado) has been processed to an electronic database to allow for easy access and the move to remote work. Content Management worked closely with the Larimer County Information Technology Department to make this secure shift. Additionally, mail operations have been centralized to our 1501 Blue Spruce office. With this adjustment to mail operations, all incoming mail is processed electronically as well and outgoing mail costs have been reduced. This small but mighty team has worked hard over the past year to process these documents, operations and records requests in a timely and confidential manner.

INCOMING & OUTGOING MAIL

46,905 incoming mail pieces were processed (58,992 in the previous year)

44,913 outgoing mail pieces were processed (71,919 in the previous year)

SECURE DOCUMENT SCANNING & PROCESSING

53,556 documents (44,281 in the previous year)

HUMAN SERVICES

DOCUMENT OR RECORDS REQUESTS:

655 records requested and fulfilled

This small but mighty team has worked hard over the past year to process these documents, operations and records requests in a timely and confidential manner.

Aging & Adult Services

Larimer County Human Services' Aging and Adult Services Division provides services and support to keep adults over the age of 60 and adults with disabilities safe and self-sufficient through Adult Protective Services, the Office on Aging and Options for Long Term Care.

Each of these service areas works with vulnerable citizens on personalized programs, benefits or through case management to assist in creating safe and stable living situations. Family members and caregivers may also benefit from these services and referrals to community resources.

Adult Protective Services

Adult Protective Services receives reports of mistreatment or neglect of at-risk adults who, due to age or disability, are unable to advocate for themselves. Following an assessment, Adult Protective Services will make referrals to implement services to reduce risk and prevent further mistreatment. The Adult Protective Services hotline is answered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

Office on Aging

The Larimer County Office on Aging is the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) for Larimer County. As one of sixteen AAA's in Colorado, the Office on Aging receives funding to provide services to Larimer County residents who are 60 and older, and to serve as the lead agency for planning and coordinating those services.

Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), as mandated under the Older American's Act, play a unique role to not only fund community partners and provide direct services but to innovate, advocate, and lead our community to meet the growing needs of the population. AAA's need to be visible, innovative, collaborative, and responsive to community needs.

The Office on Aging provides funding to agencies that provide services for seniors in Larimer County, including congregate meals, transportation, legal assistance, caregiver support and many more. These agencies are referred to as our funded community partners. In addition, the Office on Aging staff provides direct services and programs to older adults. To speak with someone about services available for someone ages 60 and up or an adult with a disability, call 970-498-7750 or email ADRC@larimer.org.

Options for Long Term Care

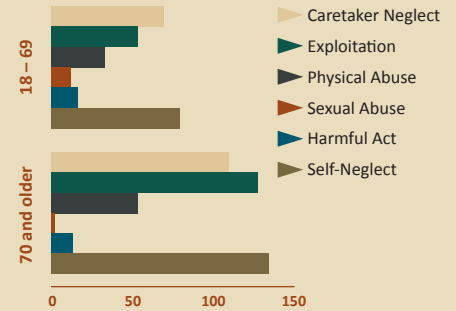
Options for Long Term Care (OLTC) provides access to publicly funded programs, providing support to people with disabling functional conditions and limited finances. These programs are designed to help people continue to live in their own homes or in other community settings, as alternatives to nursing home care.

OLTC provides assessment and ongoing case management to older and disabled low income individuals who are in need of long term care services in their own homes or alternative care facilities, and provides assessments for people in need of placement in a skilled facility. OLTC currently provides ongoing services with the goal of providing long term care in the settings requested by clients and their families and utilizing Medicaid in the most cost effective manner.

ADULT ASSESSMENT ALLEGATIONS BY AGE GROUP



For July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021 there were **1823** referrals made

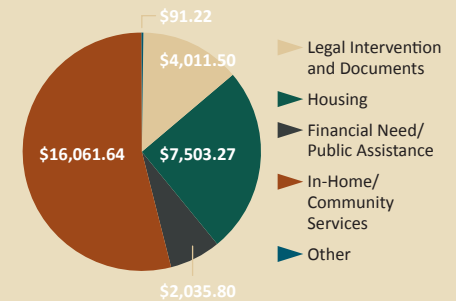


30 cases were staffed with the Adult Protection Team.

SUM OF CLIENT SERVICES FUND AMOUNT



Total **\$29,703.43**



By 2030, the 65+ population is forecasted to be 24.1% of the total population of Larimer County.

The current percentage of the population age 65+ is 16.2%.



Client-Centered Protective Services: Differential Response Pilot

Larimer County Human Services employees efforts lead to passage of SB21-118.

In June 2021, SB21-118 was passed, allowing the creation of a pilot program that would allow Colorado county departments of human or social services an alternative response to a report of mistreatment of an at-risk adult. Heather O'Hayre, Larimer County Human Services Director, and Lori Metz, Larimer County Aging & Adult Services Division Manager, were a part of a multi-county workgroup that saw the bill to fruition.

Over the past five years, subject matter experts across multiple Colorado counties have worked together to improve the process for responding to the reports made to Adult Protective Services (APS). Currently, the process uses the same approach to respond to every report of potential abuse and neglect of at-risk adults. Without the flexibility to respond to low risk cases using a more collaborative style, APS workers miss the opportunity to better connect with clients and their families in a manner that feels more like a partnership.

The pilot program through SB21-118 will go into effect on July 1, 2022 and allow pilot county APS programs to adopt an alternative approach which marks unannounced visits as optional and no finding of mistreatment required.

"This alternative response is so important because we need to continue to build trust between the department and the community. People need to see us as a resource rather than a last resort," Metz said. "I think there are community partners who are hesitant to make an APS report because of the current investigative approach, so if they know that there's an alternative approach, our hope is that it will encourage them to make that call to us."

Many county departments of human services have successfully used a similar, tailored response in their child welfare programs for many years. This approach to low-risk child welfare cases engenders a sense of partnership between the family and county workers and has helped restore families that were in need of support. The success counties have had in the child welfare arena informs and motivates the request for a tailored approach in APS.

"It's important that we have a state system that provides resources, support, and care for the individualized needs of vulnerable adults," O'Hayre said. "We wanted to make sure that we were implementing legislative change to create a system that we would all want for our parents and for ourselves. It should be a system that promotes safety and stability for older adults across the state. We are incredibly grateful for the leadership of Senator Joann Ginal as the bill's primary sponsor. Her advocacy for older adults in our community is tremendous."

The state department will select a maximum of 15 county departments to participate in the pilot. The pilot will extend through July 1, 2027.

WANT MORE INFO
ABOUT THE BILL? ➔



Spotlight on: Home Modification

Home Modifications, also known as Home Accessibility Adaptations, are specific modifications, adaptations, changes, or improvements to a client's home setting, offered through our Options for Long Term Care program. These modifications are individualized for each client with the goal of greater independence in the home and to prevent a move to an assisted living situation.

Home Accessibility Adaptations may include but are not limited to the following:

- Installing or building ramps
- Installing grab-bars and other Durable Medical Equipment (DME) as part of a larger Home Modification project
- Widening doorways
- Modifying bathrooms
- Modifying kitchen facilities
- Installing specialized electric and plumbing systems that are necessary to accommodate medically necessary equipment and supplies.

Regular homeowner maintenance and modifications that are not a direct benefit to the member are not covered under the Home Modifications benefit. There is a \$14,000 lifetime limit on this benefit. The Home Modifications benefit is available through Larimer County Options for Long Term Care under the Elderly, Blind, and Disabled waiver, Community Mental Health Supports waiver, and the Brain Injury waiver.

39 home modifications were completed for our clients.



If you need to report abuse or neglect of an adult, call (970) 498-7770 any time. The hotline is staffed 24/7. For an after hours emergency, please call local law enforcement or 911. The identities of reporters are kept confidential.

OFFICE ON AGING / AGING AND DISABILITY RESOURCE FOR COLORADO STATS



Dental Voucher Program: **64** individuals received **\$50,000** in financial support for oral health services. To make this program possible, the LCOA partnered with the Health District of Northern Larimer County to provide dental care services to older adults.

Chore Voucher Program: **112** individuals received a chore voucher providing financial support for chores around the home that they were unable to perform equaling a total of **\$37,913**

IN-HOME SERVICES VOUCHER PROGRAM



157 individuals received **8,812** hours of homemaker and personal care services. To make the In-Home Services Voucher Program possible, the LCOA partnered with the following agencies to provide homemaker and personal care services to older adults: A Little R&R, Brightstar Care, Firstlight Home Care, Homewatch Caregivers, InnovAge Home Care North, Right at Home, Senior Helpers, and Seniors Helping Seniors

FAMILY CAREGIVER SUPPORT PROGRAM



Family Caregivers are the backbone of our long-term care system and many of them find themselves providing care 24 hours a day/7 days a week. The goal of the Caregiver Support Program is to lessen the strain experienced by family caregivers by providing consultations, respite assistance, and connection to support groups, counseling, and classes.

Caregiver Information and Assistance:

250 clients were provided information

Respite Voucher: **110** caregivers received **7,588** hours of respite support

Caregiver Consultations: **124** caregivers received **179** individual caregiver consult sessions

OFFICE ON AGING / AGING AND DISABILITY RESOURCE FOR COLORADO STATS



5,672 Emails and phone calls requesting assistance,
472 per month average

Visits made to Network of Care website (lcoa.networkofcare.org):
105,538, on average **8,794** per month

Office on Aging Community Partner Spotlight

A Little Help: Testimony of Success

A Little Help is a nonprofit organization who works with volunteers to assist the aging population with small house projects to keep them living safely in their home. The work they do is invaluable to the community and to the Office on Aging. Organizations like A Little Help provide many with the peace of mind that our aging population has helping hands at any time!

Tom came to ALH after being referred by the Town of Berthoud. In poor health following the death of his wife and son, Tom had fallen into a depression and let his house go into disrepair. His yard was overgrown and debris from broken flowerpots and a rotten picnic table had gotten tangled in the foliage, causing neighbors to complain about the neglected yard. Fortunately, the Town of Berthoud has a good relationship with A Little Help and often refers older adults before enforcing city code violations.

Over the course of the summer, a group of youth from the local ROTC program spent two days clearing and cleaning Tom's yard, including mowing the grass, cutting down bushes, trimming trees, and sifting through the debris. The volunteers saved the debris that could be repaired and threw away the rest. Following the yard cleanup, Tom's driveway was filled with a number of leaf bags and other debris. To haul away the yard waste, another set of A Little Help volunteers made two trips with trucks and a trailer.

Since the initial cleanup, A Little Help volunteers have kept up Tom's yard by raking leaves, cleaning gutters, and helping with snow removal. Tom is now in better graces with his neighbors and the city has found some solace knowing Tom does not have to worry about yard upkeep anymore. Volunteers also keep Tom company while providing chore services and deliver care calls to check-in on Tom's wellbeing. A Little Help continues to check-in on Tom to determine if additional mental health or other resources are needed.

Do you need a resource for an aging family member, friend, or acquaintance? Call the Larimer County Office on Aging at (970) 498-7750.



Ombudsman Program

The Ombudsman Program protects the rights of individuals living in nursing and assisted living homes. Larimer County has three full-time paid Ombudsmen and two volunteers who serve residents in 50 different long-term care communities.

PROGRAM DETAILS



2,904 individual beds protected by the Ombudsman Program

Cases opened: **796**

Complaints investigated: **1,454**

Visits made to Long Term Care homes: **137** (Ombudsmen were restricted from going into buildings until January 2021)

1,652 consultations with facilities

568 consultations with residents

Provided **18** sessions of community training and **2** sessions of facility training

Operations: Direct Service Contracts

The Larimer County Office on Aging and Aging and Adult Services division work with many partners that provide direct service to our clients. While Human Services staff may handle the case management of a client, the service provided to them through our voucher programs or other programs are provided by contracted community partners. These contracts are signed on an annual basis and outline the terms of agreement and cost of service Larimer County will pay to the partner.

Our Contracts Team works with our community partners to update or amend contracts. This team works hard to gather feedback to review with community partners annually. This step ensures excellent customer service for our clients, adherence to the contract terms by the partner, and timely payment to community partners for the services provided. Once gathered, the Contracts Team will conduct a review with the community partner to determine if the contract should be extended or discontinued.

The Office on Aging team works closely with the Contracts Team to be sure that all direct service gaps are identified and filled during the contracting process. We continually review client contact information to identify additional needs or gaps in direct service that we provide to our clients. We also review the level of use to identify if more partners in specific direct service areas are necessary to meet the need of clients.

The Contracts Team is working on a robust RFX process to be released in calendar year 2023 to create a more inclusive and consistent process to select direct service providers. The process will utilize experts on staff in all subject areas to be sure that the community partners chosen are those who will provide the best service possible for our clients.

If you are interested in learning more about this process, please visit larimer.org/humanservices and under the Operations heading, click the link to sign up for our newsletters. These newsletters are sent out with opportunities for grant funding or Human Services updates.

The Office on Aging Caregiver Forum a “Virtual” Success

The Larimer County Office on Aging holds a Caregiver Forum annually. The event in April of 2021 was a challenge due to the COVID-19 pandemic and that the event needed to be held in a virtual setting. The planning and presentation of the Forum was managed by the Office on Aging staff as well as the Office on Aging Advisory Council’s Public Policy and Education committee. The topic, which was appropriate for the year, was Caregiving (and Aging) in a High Tech Age. The key note speaker, Jane Barton, spoke about how using technology can be used to lessen stressors and reduce exhaustion for caregivers.

The event was one of the most successful of the year with 108 registrants. About 56 of those attended the session live, and a link was sent to the remaining registrants to watch the event after airing. The Office on Aging is looking forward to planning an equally successful event for their next Caregiver Forum.

“The impact of the excellent information reached beyond the borders of Colorado. Feedback from forum participants, the Office on Aging Advisory Council and the presenters has been very positive. I believe the forum was absolutely beneficial to all who attended. The ideas, advice and information shared was outstanding,” stated Royce Boyers from the Office on Aging Advisory Council.

OPTIONS FOR LONG TERM CARE INFORMATION



Total Community Ongoing Clients: **1,343**
(currently unable to close clients due to COVID-19 protocol)

By Location: Fort Collins **767**, Loveland **537**

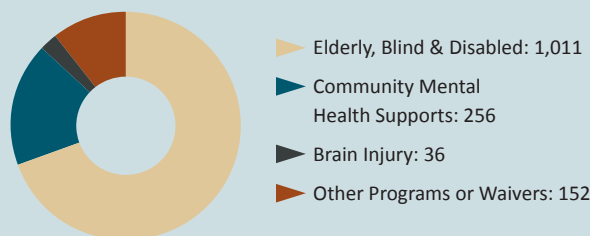
Other (Johnstown, Berthoud, Wellington, LaPorte, Timnath, Windsor, Denver) **105**

Rural (Bellvue, Livermore, Masonville, Estes Park, Carr, Red Feather Lakes, Drake, Lyons) **50**

LONG TERM CARE PROGRAMS



Our Long Term Care Programs offer seven different types of waivers to provide cash assistance to those who qualify. Waiver types range from homemaking and personal care to adults who need care due to a mental illness.



NURSING



Individuals in Skilled Nursing Facilities (approximate): **540**

Benefits & Community Support

BCS: Division Overview

Larimer County Human Services Benefits and Community Support Division is charged with determining if an individual or family is eligible to receive benefits to help them become self-sufficient through challenging times. The eligibility requirements are determined by federally set income limits and guidelines. The benefits offered are to assist individuals and families in our community in a variety of ways including food assistance, other cash benefit programs, medical benefits, child care assistance, employment assistance as well as other specialized programs.

The shift to virtual work during the pandemic has expanded our service outlets to be online, on the phone, and in person. The robust website Colorado PEAK is available to anyone applying for benefits, so they may do so from the comfort of their home. This system can also be used to check on application or payment status. The COVID-19 pandemic has increased the number of applications across all programs, but the most significant change has been to the Supplement Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, with increased applications across all demographics.

The benefit programs managed through the Benefits and Community Support Division in Human Services are:

- Adult Financial Program
- Aid to the Needy and Disabled
- Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)
- Colorado Works (TANF)
- Employment First
- Health First Colorado (Medicaid)
- Old Age Pension
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

Colorado Works or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

Colorado Works is Colorado's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. Works' participants receive help to become self-sufficient through economic and social supports.

Thank goodness for those classes that I was taking in Colorado Works. I was able to really get my resume refined and I went into a completely different field, and I'm making way more money than I was! — Sarah

Quality Assurance: Ongoing Checks, Balances & Training

Quality Assurance (QA) activities focus on the adherence to State policy and program regulations for public assistance programs (Supplement Nutrition Assistance Program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Adult Financial Programs, Medicaid, and the Colorado Child Care Assistance Program). The QA review team conducts case reviews designed to identify and address errors, recognize error trends, utilize data to inform future business procedure, policy, and practice. Each review focuses on case activities, eligibility determinations, and payments issued in the sample month focusing on the case outcome. The QA review team serves as an independent review system designed to meet the state-mandated review requirements for public assistance programs.

SNAPSHOTS



Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or food benefits information

July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021

18,756 families received SNAP benefits

The average monthly benefit provided per family was **\$274.87**

During this fiscal year, **\$35,547,783** in benefits was provided to families and spent in our community.

In the state fiscal year of 20–21, the Colorado Works (TANF) program issued **\$628,904** in supportive services to Colorado Works participants.

50,214 Larimer County residents were able to access health, dental or behavioral health care through Health First Colorado in the state fiscal year 20–21.

COLORADO CHILDCARE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



CCAP is a childcare benefit that is paid directly to the childcare provider after the services are provided. CCAP can cover children on days they are absent and holidays.

755 applications/families,
2,652 children served

179 providers

CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES PROGRAM



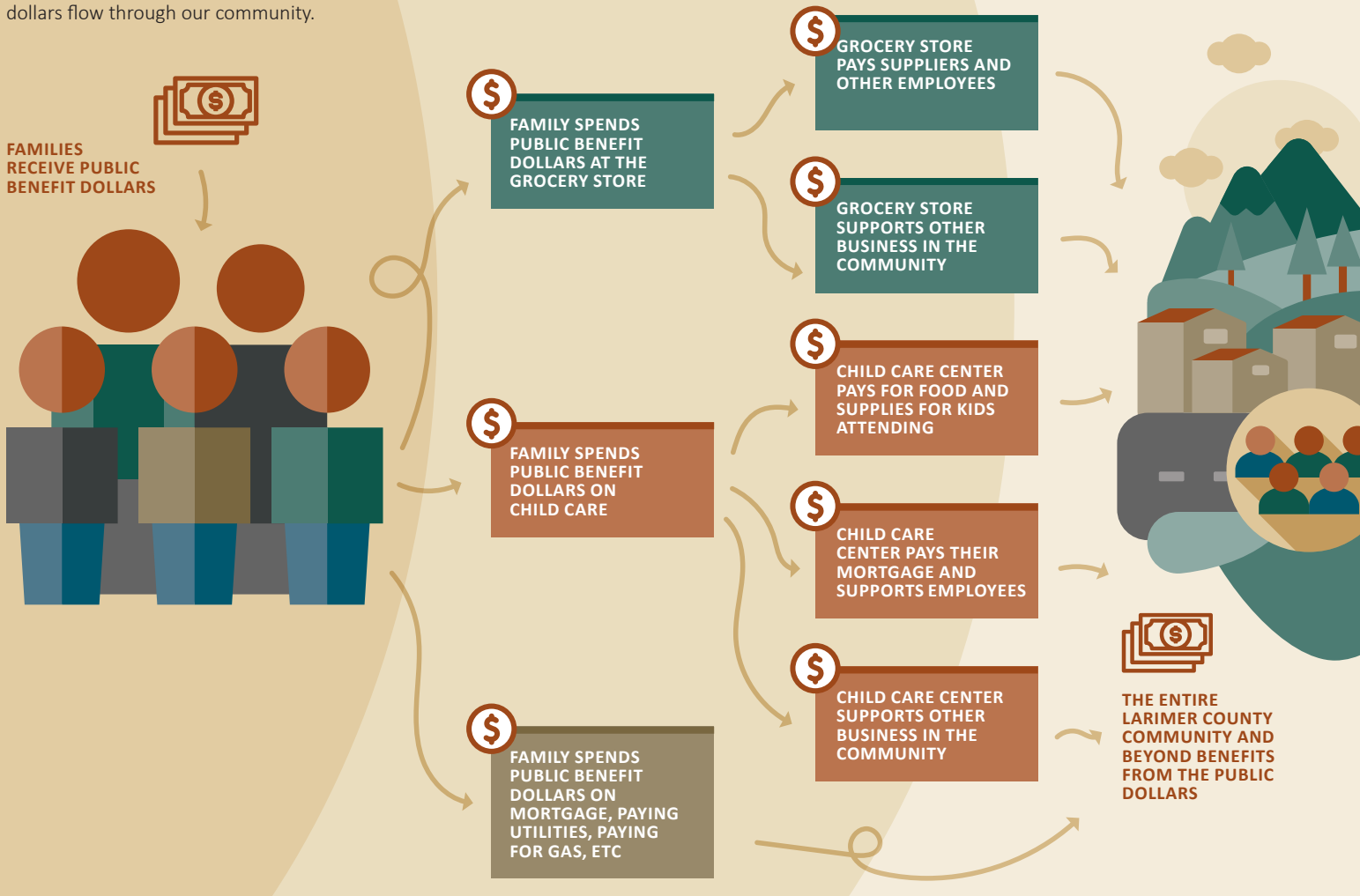
Did you know that the Child Support Services Program can assist families who are working through child support enforcement?

The Child Support Services Program collects and distributes child support payments to parents.

In the state fiscal year 20–21 the program served **7,200** families and passed through **\$19,471,275**. There is no household income recruitment to participate, if you need support, you can apply! Contact email and phone?

What are the Benefits of Public Assistance Dollars?

Families benefit. Small and large businesses benefit. Communities benefit. While many studies have shown there is a direct benefit from public assistance programs to many areas of a community, no firm dollar amounts have been included in these studies. Below shows how public assistance dollars flow through our community.



Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP food assistance

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or SNAP is a food assistance program that helps low-income households in Larimer County purchase food. It provides a monthly benefit that helps families and individuals buy the food they need for good health.

The benefit is provided based on income, resources and the number of individuals in the household. All clients receiving SNAP benefits receive an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card and their SNAP benefit is loaded onto this card to be used similar to debit cards at participating food stores. The benefit can be doubled in value by shopping at participating markets and food stores that support the Double Up Food Bucks program.

SNAP is good for the local economy. Households participating in SNAP spend more on food. By providing more resources for food, SNAP helps free up cash for households with low-income to buy other essential items, like diapers and medication. As a result, retail sales increase, benefiting stores that sell both food and non-food items.

Additionally, those who receive SNAP benefits automatically qualify for Free or Reduced Lunch at school districts in Larimer County, and just by showing their EBT card, they can take advantage of discounts at museums or other fun and educational places to visit with their families.

During the COVID-19 Pandemic, SNAP benefits were increased to that each family received the maximum allotment of SNAP benefits. Of all of the programs administered through Larimer County Department of Human Services, the SNAP program saw the largest increase of applications.

Benefits & Community Support Partner Spotlight:

Poudre School District: Sharing the Wealth of Knowledge

The Benefits and Community Support Division focused heavily on partnerships in the state fiscal year of 20/21. While there are many partners to celebrate successes with, one of the most impactful partnerships has been between Benefits and Community Support and Poudre School District. It is well-known that students who have access to affordable and adequate access to nutrition enjoy better health and education outcomes. With a Benefits team that is focused on processing applications to connect families to food, it was important to provide knowledge to those who interact with families and students in need so that they could help the family gain access to programs such as SNAP food assistance.

With this in mind, leadership partnered with Poudre School District Parent Navigators and counselors to provide training about SNAP and other benefit programs as well as training on the virtual application system LEAP. The goal was to arm these connectors with information so that families and students in need could access the benefits that would make their lives more stable and sustainable. The trainings were the first step to open a forum where navigators and counselors could better understand the nuances of programs and Human Services could work to dispel myths about programs.

The outcome of the partnership and training with Poudre School District has led to more opportunities to impact the lives of those who need it most in our community. We look forward to continuing the partnership in the next fiscal year!

One of the most impactful partnerships has been between Benefits and Community Support and Poudre School District



Employment First: Making Community Members Successful!

Employment First promotes long-term self-sufficiency and independence by preparing those receiving SNAP benefits with work-related education and training activities. Additionally, Employment First can provide additional benefits to assist clients into a changing career landscape through gas or rent assistance, resume assistance, training programs or resources for potential job opportunities. To learn more about Employment First, please call (970) 498-6300.

***Names have been changed to protect the identity of clients.**

LYN: On the Path to Employment Success!

A member of the Larimer County Department of Human Services Employment First Team worked with Lyn for about three months. Lyn was a referral from Workforce Investment Opportunity Act (WIOA) and Department of Voc-Rehab (DVR). She had some medical challenges and was only able to work a few hours a week. She was placed in an internship through DVR. Lyn is working 12 hours per week now at Scrap to It.

The combination of Lyn's Social Security disability benefits and the extra income from her new job will put her over the income limit for her SNAP benefits. Employment First (EF) was able to make the transition a little easier for her! EF was able to pay her rent for two months, help with her internet services and provide gas assistance to allow her to get back and forth to her internship. This has made life a little less of a challenge at this time. She loves her new job at Scrap to It and is doing great!

CLINT: Extra Training and Connections Make All the Difference!

A member of the Larimer County Department of Human Services Employment First Team worked with a Clint for about two months, assisting with his job search. He had been job searching for a while after being laid off from his last job. The EF Team worked with Clint to update his resume, provided referrals to a few different jobs and suggested he register in Connecting Colorado. We followed up with him to make sure that his registration was up-to-date, and he started to receive helpful referrals.

We referred him to the Larimer County Department of Human Services for additional wrap-around services and to the Interviewing Workshop at the Larimer County Economic Workforce and Development Department. He successfully completed the workshop and used his newfound skills to apply and interview for a position with the Benefits and Community Support Division in Human Services. He was hired to fill that position! Once employed, Employment First was also able to provide job retention services in the form of gas assistance to support him in getting to work. He absolutely loves his job and is doing great!

Colorado Child Care Assistance Program or CCAP or CCCAP:

Colorado, which has **4,700** child care programs, has some of the most expensive child care in the United States. Child care for infants in Colorado costs about **21%** of a median family's income, according to the Economic Policy Institute.

CCAP pays the approved provider directly for the child's attendance, after the attendance or absence has been recorded. The program covers absences as well as days attended for participating families. The family does not pay anything above and beyond what CCAP pays the provider.

To apply for the CCAP benefit, or to become a CCAP provider, please call (970) 498-6300.

Did you know?

During the COVID-19 Pandemic lock down, the Larimer County Department of Human Services was able to pay CCAP providers **30 days of absences for each child receiving CCAP benefits!** This allowed many smaller child care providers to keep their door open and to continue after the initial lock down!



Checks and Balances for Clients and Staff through Program Integrity

The Fraud Department specializes in identifying, investigating, preventing, and recovering Public Assistance benefits. The cause of such over issuance of Public Assistance benefits can be due to human error on the part of either the client, the agency, or a deliberate attempt to intentionally violate program policy and procedure. Fraud and abuse takes money from needy individuals, families, children, the elderly, blind and disabled. Therefore, identifying, investigating, preventing and recovering benefits issued improperly is an important part of the Program Integrity unit's work.

Program Integrity functions utilizing three key service areas: claims validation, recovery, and hearings and appeals. Claims validation specializes in the review and the validation of all Public Assistance benefit overpayment claims. These claims may be a direct result of an overissuance of benefits. Reports are generated daily and this team reviews each and every claim to identify and ensure all claims are valid for collection of repayment.

Recovery initiates the recovery of Public Assistance benefit overpayment claims that have been overpaid to the client according to all collection rules and policies outlined by Federal, State and local regulations. The team manages multiple accounts for collection efforts, tracking accounts to identify outstanding collections, plans a course of action to recover outstanding claims owed to the county, negotiate payoff or payments plans, handle questions and complaints, and investigate and resolve discrepancies in overpayments or accounts.

Hearings and appeals specializes in conducting local level dispute resolution conferences. These conferences are requested by a client who is challenging a case determination that may include a Public Assistance benefit denial, discontinuation, decrease in allotment etc. It is the hearing officer's duty to take the time to review both sides and allow everyone (client and county) to have their say in the matter. This allows both parties to receive a fair hearing. The Hearing Officer will make a decision within seven (7) days after the conference and mails the decision to both parties of the case.

Children, Youth & Family Services

The Larimer County Department of Human Services Children, Youth & Family Division (CYF) works with children who are at risk of being abused or who have been abused or neglected. CYF also works with children and youth who are beyond their parents' control, have delinquent behavior, and/or have violated the law.

The Children, Youth and Family division operates with the following values in mind:

- The well being of children and vulnerable adults is a community responsibility in which Human Services plays an important role.
- Parents are accountable/responsible for raising their children.
- Parents have a right to raise their children.
- Children have a right to a relationship with their parents, siblings and relatives.
- Human Services, in partnership with the community, has a responsibility to intervene and identify all possible resources and services that enhance family safety, functioning, and resiliency.
- Child placement is not the solution but may be necessary at times to ensure safety.
- Kin have an obligation to help parents/children.
- We have a responsibility to respect individual family culture.

Family Meetings

Facilitated family engagement meetings are designed to promote the safety, permanency, and well-being of children involved with child welfare by valuing the voices of parents, youth and family supports. Professionals involved in the lives of children are also included. These meetings use a formal, structured process to promote consistent, high-quality discussions. A trained facilitator is used to offer an impartial, outside perspective and to help guide the meeting.

Adoptions

Adoption is another service that is coordinated through the Children, Youth, and Family division of the Department of Human Services. When a child is unable to return safely to their parents, adoption is a legal process which permanently gives parental rights to adoptive parents. Adoptive parents and the Human Services adoption team will work together to determine the resources available to support the child in the adoptive placement.



CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILY DIVISION: OVERVIEW & STATS



The average daily population is the average number of children that are under Human Services' care either with case management, in a kinship home, congregate care or other settings.

SFY 2021

- Child Welfare Referrals: **5,936**
- Child Welfare Assessments: **1,647**
- Child Welfare Cases: **730**
- Children Involved: **1,357**
- Children return home: **108**
- Children in OOH Care: **313**
- # Children in Kinship: **424**
- #PA3 (Case Count): **775**



AVERAGE DAILY POPULATION

SFY 2021

- Congregate Care: **14.4**
- Foster Home: **91.5**
- Kinship (Includes kin, foster and non-custody kin): **190**
- At Home: **351.3**



ADOLESCENT SERVICES

Completed **91** youth detention screens completed



ADOPTIONS

18 adoptions



FAMILY MEETINGS

- Number of meetings held: **1,592**
- Number of family members included: **5,153**
- Number of family members plus professionals: **12,664**

What is Kinship Care?

Human Services diligently works to find family or kin whenever possible, when it is unsafe for a child to remain in their home. The best situation for any child is for them to be in their home with one or both of their parents. However, the next best option is to place the child with a member of their family. Below is the process to find kin relations of children, which can result in 10 to 100 family members being found:

- Diligent parent search
- Searches done on the maternal and paternal side of the child's family
- Calls are made to every person on the list
- Additional searches are completed through social media, obituaries, school records and more.
- If a family member has an interest in placement, the Family Find Team will set up a call with that family member to meet with the caseworker for a full interview to provide additional family information and ask screening questions. Background checks, consultations, family meetings are all conducted before any changes are made to the living situation.

If none of these options are available, the child can be placed in foster care. Our foster families are vetted with numerous meetings and specific training for the family to handle many behaviors that may come with a child who has been in an unstable home. Once these parameters have been met, the foster family is added to the foster team and if a need arises, a child can be placed in their home.

Spotlight: Jacobs Center Partnership

When a family is involved with the Department of Human Services and they have a finding of neglect or abuse in their case, many times the parent is not in custody of their children until better habits and stable environments are achieved. Often times, partners like The Jacob Center, are providing the resources and therapies these families need to become whole again.

Supervised parenting is one of the most important pieces of a family plan to reunification. The parenting time is a motivator for the parent(s) to develop healthy habits, learn skills to cope with trauma they or their children have experienced.

The Jacob Center is a leader in providing a continuum of trauma-informed, evidence-based services that have a positive impact on families in our community. Additionally, The Jacob Center is helping the rest of the community understand the specialised needs of children who have experienced trauma in their lives. They continue to be on the cutting edge of speciality intervention methods like Trust Based Relationship Interventions and the principles of caregiver strategies that can be used in caring for children and youth impacted by trauma.

The Jacob Center has been a strong collaborator to determine how best to utilize evidence-based and promising practices to support healing, improve overall safety, well-being and permanency for children. As an agency, they are innovative and adapt well to the ever changing practice of working with families involved in child-welfare. They play an active role in our Resilience Practice Group whose mission is to educate, advocate for and implement a trauma informed, healing centered and resilience building model throughout our community.

Supported Families, Stronger Community (SFSC)

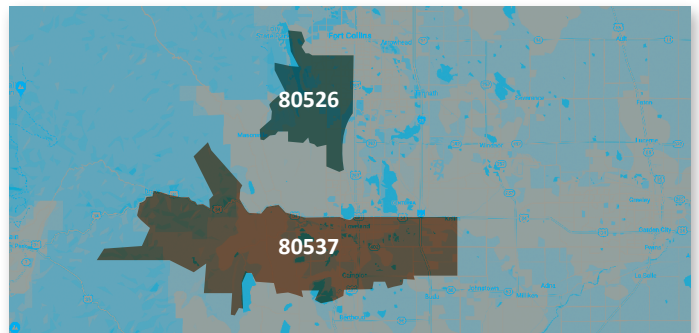
Supported Families, Stronger Community (SFSC) is a five-year grant funded by the Administration on Children, Youth and Families and was awarded to the Larimer County Department of Human Services in 2019. The first year was a planning year and years two through five are spent on the implementation of the direct work.

The goal of the grant is for families to receive the help and support they need, when they need it to care for their children. This means families are connected to the right resources from the beginning. We are utilizing the Protective Factor Survey to help each family share their strengths and areas they would like help. This way the family decides what best meets their needs.

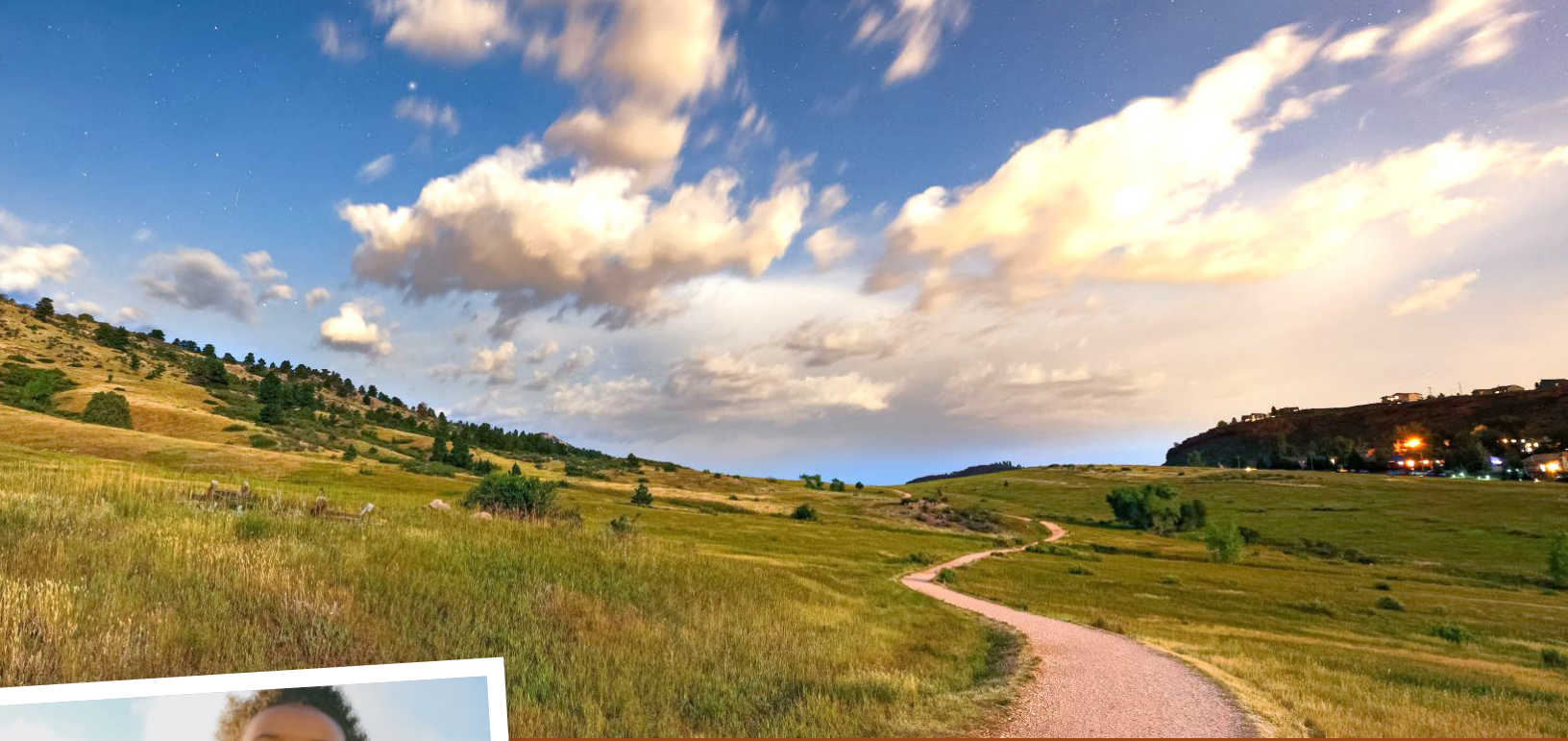
Through a community needs assessment it was determined the services of community navigators would benefit families and there are pockets in our community that would benefit from the extra support of the three navigators who were hired. The SFSC navigators can provide direct support to families by walking alongside them and navigating our community and the resources available.

We are currently serving families with a child or children under the age of 18 in selected sites: Fort Collins – 80526 | Loveland – 80537

We are excited to see this program take off and provide the much-needed resources to our community. Supported families make stronger communities!



Why is evidence-based programming so important? And why do we need a trauma-informed approach? Evidence-based programming is just that, a researched and proven type of therapy. These types of programs have been shown to be effective and utilize formal training to make a positive change in families' lives. Many times, those using these programs are still participating in the data gathering and research to continue the work. Trauma-informed therapies are intervention methodologies that understand vulnerable children have specific needs and are meant to be adjusted to the unique needs of each individual.



LARIMER COUNTY

Human Services

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