



Utah Community Action™

Committed to Ending Poverty

2020 Community Needs Assessment

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Section 1: Executive Summary

Utah Community Action (UCA) is one of the largest nonprofit organizations dedicated to fighting poverty and its root causes in Utah. Since 1965, we have provided holistic services in Salt Lake and Tooele Counties, continuously adapting our delivery-model and programs in response to community needs. As a part of that commitment, UCA conducts community assessments which include feedback from key stakeholders—clients, staff, partners, leaders, and community members—in an effort to better understand the needs of the populations we serve.

This year, Utah Community Action enlisted the help of the Kem C. Gardener Policy Institute to lead a robust study of the developing needs of those residing in Salt Lake and Tooele Counties. This report will outline the underlying causes and conditions of poverty as well as available resources to address the unmet needs of income-eligible clients. The results will guide the work to develop and implement programs to bolster our mission of empowering individuals, strengthening families and building communities through self-reliance and education programs.

Section 2: Overview of Utah Community Action

Past and Present

Utah Community Action is part of a rich history in the fight for reducing systemic inequities. In 1964, Lyndon B. Johnson declared War on Poverty and signed the Economic Opportunity Act into law as part of sweeping changes to address the ‘paradox of poverty in the midst of plenty.’ This act created the nationwide Community Action Network and Head Start program in order to give all Americans, regardless of circumstances at birth, the opportunity to succeed. Community Action Agencies provide coordinated and flexible programs at the local level to respond directly to community needs. These agencies aim to provide holistic support to achieve self-sufficiency.

Head Start serves children 0-5 and was created to address the disadvantages faced by low-income children entering the public school system. In order to achieve this goal, Head Start expanded services beyond early childhood education to include nutritional, medical and social services to children and their families.

Utah Community Action was one of the first programs created in Utah under this effort and has now operated for over 55 years. Founded under the name ‘Salt Lake Community Action Program,’ our original mission was to ‘eliminate the paradox of poverty in our society.’ In those early years, the agency’s services were diverse and created in direct response to the needs of those we served through input from community councils and neighborhood workers. We distributed cheese and butter, helped to educate the community about Medicare, established English as a Second Language classes, facilitated medical screenings, started community health clinics and much more.

In 2016, we rebranded as ‘Utah Community Action’ to reflect the expanded service areas of both Salt Lake and Tooele Counties and our increasing presence in the state of Utah. Although our services and delivery-models have transformed over the years, our approach then and now prioritizes input from the low-income sector to drive program changes. Today, our services have solidified into six high-quality programs which act in tandem to provide a safety net and ‘hand up’ in order to address the many barriers facing those experiencing both single- and inter-generational poverty. Today, we operate the largest Head Start preschool program, HEAT utility assistance program, and rent-relief programs in Utah as well as the two largest food pantries in the state.



Our Six Comprehensive Programs

Last year, Utah Community Action served 60,887 people facing economic hardship through six-core programs. Due to the ever-changing needs of our community, UCA created an intake center to provide a coordinated entry point for all six Utah Community Action programs. Since its creation in mid-August of 2020, the Intake Center has handled 24,633 calls for all six Utah Community Action departments to address the increased demand for emergency rent and utility relief, food assistance, and other services during the COVID-19 pandemic. This center fields calls, schedules appointments, and provides information on all agency services in order to seamlessly connect clients to in-house and community programs in a trauma-informed manner.

Adult Education

Adult Education offers a variety of low or no-cost services for improving clients' educational and job readiness skills with individualized support based on client needs and interests. These in-house, community, and higher education partnership programs provide opportunities for clients to acquire and increase skills necessary for advancing in education and employment, key barriers to adults living in poverty as identified by UCA's 2019 Community Needs Assessment. By removing or reducing these barriers through the Adult Education program, students are able to make essential gains on their path to financial stability and self-reliance. Classes include English as a Second Language, GED preparation, vocational preparation and certification for childhood education (CDA) and the culinary industry (Sauté), and post-secondary education in several degree programs. Participants additionally learn resume and job finding skills to reduce and remove barriers to employment and increase wage-earning potential through the ACHIEVE! Financial Education program. To increase participation, UCA offers varied scheduling options to meet families' needs.

This year, the majority of our Adult Education programs have continued through the pandemic virtually, including ESL, GED prep, CDA ACHIEVE!. Following local regulations, Sauté culinary classes were temporarily put on hold and have now resumed with additional precautions in place to accommodate safe in-person learning.

Case Management & Housing

Case Management & Housing assists those experiencing a temporary financial crisis with rental and deposit assistance, landlord-tenant mediation, homeless services and holistic case management. Through this program, as well as connections to other UCA programs and community resources, clients are able to get the support they need to stabilize long-term and achieve self-reliance. With the completion and opening of the new Homeless Resource Centers, UCA also expanded our homeless services to include intakes and diversions at each center along with the operation of the homeless resource phone line.

This year, UCA expanded services at the beginning of COVID-19, onboarding 15 new case managers and other key program staff to administer critical financial support to eligible clients and deliver holistic case management to help stabilize households. As the CAP agency for Salt Lake and Tooele Counties, UCA received COVID-19 housing funds from the State, County, Salt Lake City and other smaller cities and has been able to distribute funds for these grants in a timely and effective manner to meet the needs of households impacted by COVID-19. UCA's Landlord-Tenant Mediation program also enhanced services, working with landlords, tenants and the court to avert evictions during this pandemic. In a time where many clients have lost income and are unable to pay rent, this service has seen increased need as a vital service to keep tenants housed.





Head Start and Early Head Start

Serving children 0-5, this free early education program focuses on health, education and self-reliance to provide holistic support for children and families on their road to success. This program has been recognized for excellence at both the state and national levels, and uses a linguistically and culturally sensitive engagement framework to encourage parent participation in the educational process. Children learn in a classroom or virtual setting, have access to health and nutrition services, and prepare for school and future success. Home-based and prenatal services are also available. This year, the average annual household income for a family of four in our program is \$20,176, over \$6,000 lower than the Federal poverty level guideline for a family of 4.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, Head Start's 'whole child' and 'whole family' approach has provided vital support for families facing increased economic insecurity. At the height of the COVID-19 outbreak in March, classes of the early education program were moved virtually to protect the health and safety of our students, and align with state-mandated protocols. During this time and throughout the rest of the summer months, meal services were provided via contactless curbside pickup in response to community needs.

In September, Head Start re-opened a portion of our classrooms with smaller class sizes and implemented physical-distancing guidelines, PPE for staff and children, and added safety measures in all of our facilities. We have continued to offer virtual learning with teacher-led support for families who chose to engage in this learning option, as well as a meal pickup option for those students. Throughout this process, the Mental Health Team also provided individualized support for families, children and staff, through email, phone calls and video. Staff received trainings on providing support for families during times of crisis and connected with families on a weekly basis.





HEAT

Utah Community Action is the largest provider of the HEAT program in the state, accounting for 40% of Utah's total applications. HEAT services help subsidize and manage the utility costs of income-eligible households, and are now year-round. Extra assistance for those who have young children or an elderly or disabled individual in the home. Clients also receive budget counseling and education on energy use during their assessments.

Since the pandemic, UCA processed 8,152 CARES applications and provided over \$3.3 million in CARES utility assistance. In addition, during this period UCA helped 656 households in crisis who are not able to afford to operate their homes at safe temperatures, providing extra assistance for those who have young children or an elderly or disabled individual in the household. From October to December, we have received 4,551 applications for utility assistance, a 33% increase from 2019.

Nutrition

Programs address food insecurity within our community by serving individuals and families ranging from infants to the elderly year-round. Central Kitchen provides meals for Head Start and Early Head Start classrooms, as well as outside clients who serve children ages 0-18. Offerings also include the Summer Food Program for youth, the Sauté culinary training program for adults, and emergency food boxes through our Food and Resource Centers for individuals and families. Additionally, UCA contracts with Salt Lake County Aging and Adult Services to operate meal services in the county's Millcreek, Draper and Midvale Senior Centers, which serve both aging adults and the general public. On average, UCA provides over 850,000 meals each year through these programs.

Since COVID-19, operations at the two Food & Resource Centers have drastically increased to address the heightened need for emergency food, and pantry service shifted to a curbside delivery model. Additionally, both locations expanded operating hours, increased the number of staff as well as the amount of food distributed to each household from a 3-5 day supply to a 7-10 day supply. We also partnered with local organizations to provide enhanced nutritional offerings at both pantry locations, including daily hot meals for clients through the Nourish to Flourish initiative. In Central Kitchen, we shifted to contactless curbside pickup to continue safely offering meals to children during the shift to virtual classes and was able to provide 1,600 meals daily during the summer months. Today, Central Kitchen provides meal pick-ups for virtual students and on-site meals for those engaged in in-person learning.





Weatherization

This program provides reduced energy costs and increased comfort and safety in homes year-round through cost-effective energy-efficient improvements and energy education. Weatherization can be performed for both homeowners and renters, including those living in apartments, manufactured homes, and single-family residences. Services include insulation, air sealing, installing high-efficiency furnaces, using energy-efficient lighting and appliances and more. Weatherized homes save energy costs and improve the health and safety of residents most at risk of possible residential dangers, such as radon or lead paint. As a result of Weatherization services, clients in Utah see an average yearly reduction of \$583 in gas, electric, and water bills, resulting in a reduced energy burden for income-eligible households.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, this program has continued to provide crisis services. Since the fall, the program has resumed regular services with increased safety precautions.

Program Highlights

In 2019:

- » Head Start served 2,982 children and families, and impacts the trajectory of our public school system by preparing young children to be academically, social emotionally and physically ready for kindergarten and beyond.
- » Over 90% of our Head Start children left our program ready for public schools.
- » Adult Education provided vocational training to 67 students pursuing their Child Development Associate (CDA) credential to pursue a career in early childhood education.
- » The Community Food & Resource Centers provided 14,579 emergency food boxes for income-eligible households.
- » The Case Management & Housing Program served 9,849 people with case management, landlord-tenant mediation and diversion services.
- » HEAT provided utility assistance to over 31,199 clients in our service area, distributing over \$9.8 million in benefits.
- » Weatherization services improved the health, safety, and energy efficiency of homes impacting 770 individuals.
- » Construction was completed for the state-of-the-art Ray and Tye Noorda UCA Center to provide a HUB site for clients to access multiple services in one location.

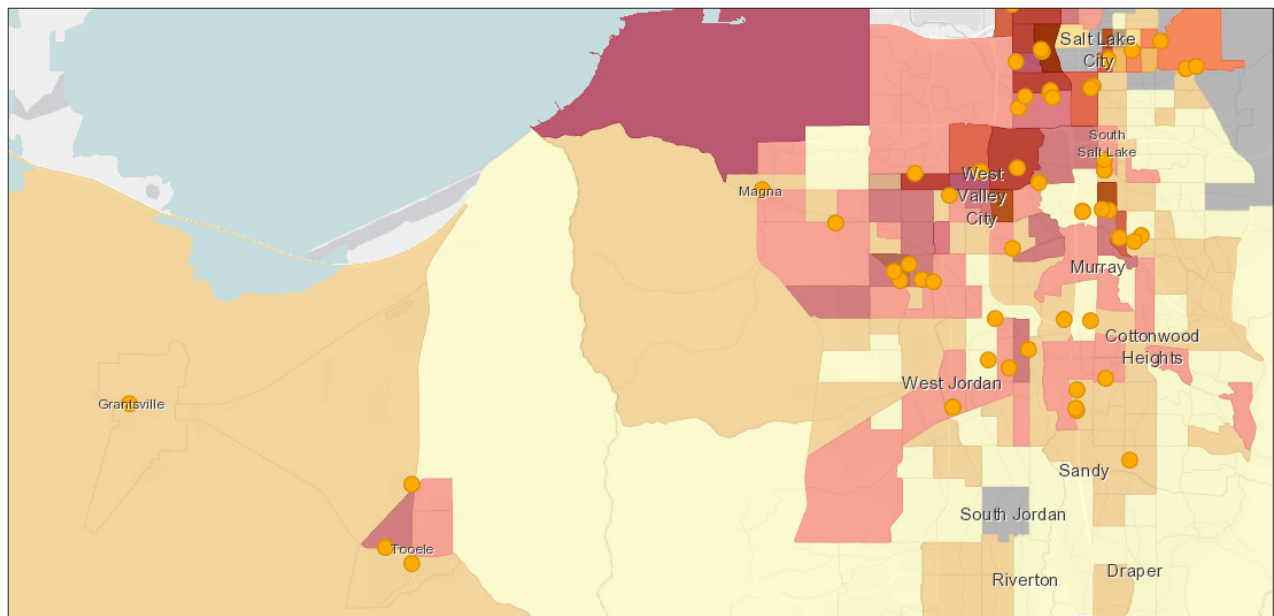


Utah Community Action Service Locations

The service area for Utah Community Action and Head Start includes Salt Lake and Tooele Counties with one Early Head Start Classroom in Washington County. UCA's Weatherization program expanded in 2015 to additionally serve Weber, Davis, and Morgan Counties. Salt Lake County has the highest population in Utah and includes the state capital. As such, it acts as the epicenter for government, culture, religious, commercial and economic activity in Utah. The American Community Survey 2019 demographic estimates placed the county at a population of 1,160,437, roughly 1,438 people per square mile.

Tooele County, on the other hand, has the 7th highest population in Utah with 72,259 residents. According to Census data, Tooele has seen a 77% population growth rate since 2000. The population of Tooele County is primarily concentrated in the Eastern portion of the county with most of the county's geographic area consisting of the Great Salt Lake desert, military training and storage installations at the Tooele Army Depot, Dugway Proving Grounds, and the Utah Test and Training Range. The population density of Tooele County is 9 people per square mile.

While Morgan County is more rural, Weber and Davis Counties make up some of the most densely populated counties in Utah with a total population of 627,818 across the three counties. Davis County ranks 3rd, Weber County ranks 4th, and Morgan County ranks 19th in population within the state of Utah. Davis County is the home of Hill Air Force Base, the largest single-location employer in the state of Utah, employing over 25,000 people. Washington County has a population of 177,556 and ranks 5th in the state.



Map Legend

Vulnerable Populations Footprint, ACS 2015-19



Population Below 200% Poverty Level, Children (Age 0-5), Percent by Tract, ACS 2015-19

Over 80.0%

60.1 - 80.0%

40.1 - 60.0%

20.1 - 40.0%

















































Under 20.1%

No Data or Data Suppressed

Head Start Facilities, All Facilities, ACF 2019



<https://careshq.org/map-room/>, 8/17/2021

Zip Code	Sites	Services Provided	Head Start			Early Head Start			Qualifying Children in Zip Code*
			HS #Full Day	HS # Half Day	HS Capacity	EHS # Full Day	ECCP # Full Day	EHS Capacity	
84094	Bellview			4	68				166
84102	Bennion, Tenth East		2		35				41
84128	Catherine C. Hoskins	  	5		88	1		8	197
84111	Central City, Palmer Court		1		17	2	1	24	175
84029	Grantsville		1		17				59
84107	Hal J. Schultz, Murray, Meadowbrook		3	4	118	1	1	16	593
84101	Horizonte		1		17	7		60	72
84116	James R. Russell, Escalante, Northstar, Northwest	   	8	3	191	2		16	1410
84118	Noorda, Kearns Early Childhood Center	  	6		106	6		48	1298
84044	Magna	 	3	4	119				445
84084	Majestic, West Jordan			6	102				384
84047	Midvale, SLCo Midvale Senior Center Cafe, Copperview	   	3	4	119		1	8	740
84124	Millcreek, SLCo Millcreek Senior Center Cafe	 		2	34				91
84119	Redwood	 		4	68				1189
84123	Salt Lake Community College, Grant, DWS Redwood	 	1	2	52				441
84070	Sandy Boys and Girls Club	 	1		17				329
84020	SLCo Draper Senior Center Cafe								117
84104	Sorenson Unity Center, Glendale, University Neighborhood Partners, Neighborhood House, Riley, Shriver, Weatherization	   	3	2	100	2	2	22	1201
84115	South Salt Lake, Creekside	    	3	2	85	1	1	16	644
84088	Terra Linda		1		17	1		8	326
84770	TLC						1	8	720
84074	Tooele Center	  	1	4	82				573
84108	University Of Utah, UEC, UPC		2		34		2	16	170
84083	Wendover		2		34				85

*Data Source: US Census Bureau, Small Area Income & Poverty Estimates, 2018. Source geography: County.



Adult Education



Head Start



Nutrition



Case Management
& Housing



HEAT



Weatherization

Section 3: Methodology

Utah Community Action assesses the needs of the communities we serve on an annual basis and conducts an in-depth analysis every three years. This rigorous report represents our agency's effort to understand the unique characteristics of the communities we serve. Assessing the needs of our communities enables us to better fulfill the mission of our programs to empower individuals, strengthen families and build communities through self-reliance and education programs.

This report contains demographic data for Salt Lake and Tooele Counties as well as the results the service-provider led assessment of client needs conducted by the Kem C. Gardner Institute. The demographic data was collected and analyzed from the American Community Survey of the U.S. Census Bureau in order to provide a foundational background of the geographic service area as it relates to poverty. The service-provider led assessment of client needs offers a more in-depth analysis of our main service area, including insights to shifts during COVID-19.

Data Collection

The Kem C. Gardner Institute was enlisted to aid in a robust analysis of community needs in early 2020. The institute conducted a service-provider led assessment of client needs starting in May 2020 and ending in November 2020, which included aggregated data and coded responses to open-ended questions.

Service Provider Input

In May 2020, 15 service providers participated in initial interviews to determine how the needs assessment could benefit their organizations and the community as a whole. From the initial meeting, an advisory board of 12 providers was formed an advisory board to assist in survey development as well as guide methodology.

Surveys

Service-Provider

Two surveys were developed, one for clients and one for service providers. The service provider survey consisted of 31 questions and took approximately 30 minutes in length. While the service provider survey answers were not anonymous, responses were not tied to providers.

Client

The client survey consisted of 26 questions and took approximately 20 minutes in length. Online survey options were available in English and Spanish. Paper surveys in English and postcards with a phone number to take the survey over the phone were also available. The client survey responses were anonymous. Due to the sensitive nature of some questions, responses to all questions were optional. At the end of the survey, resources for mental health, child abuse, suicide, domestic violence and other types of assistance were provided.

Participants

Service-Provider

35 service providers were invited to participate. In total, there were 66 participants from 22 different providers.

Client

Surveys were available from October 1 to November 6, 2020. During that time, 427 clients participated in the survey.



Section 4: Service Area Demographics

Demographic information for our service area along with state and national demographic information are presented for comparison purposes. UCA Main Service Area consists of Salt Lake and Tooele Counties. We also include demographic information for the Tri-County area (Weber, Davis, and Morgan Counties) where our agency provides Weatherization services.

Data for this section of the needs assessment were drawn from the American Community Survey data accessed through the Community Action Partnership's Assessment Tool.

Population

Population change within our service area between 2000 and 2018 (the most recent year for which data are available) was 403,955 persons or 29.84%. Slightly under 30% of the total statewide population increase since 2000 is within our service area.

Population	UCA Main Service Area	Utah	USA	Salt Lake County	Tooele County	Weber/Davis/Morgan Counties (Weatherization)
Total Population 2018 ACS	1,785,733	3,045,350	322,903,030	1,120,805	65,185	599,743
Total Population 2000 Census	1,381,778	2,233,169	281,421,906	898,387	40,735	442,656
Population Change 2000-2018 ACS/Census	403,955	812,181	41,481,124	222,418	24,450	157,087
	29.84%	36.37%	14.74%	24.76%	60.02%	36.04%

Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, US Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2014-18.
Source geography: County

Age and Gender

For each age category under 65, there are slightly more males (51%) than females (49%). Over one-third of the state population in each age category live in the UCA main service area, with nearly 41% of the statewide adult population between ages 18 and 64 residing in our service area.

Age and Gender		UCA Main Service Area	Utah	USA	Salt Lake County	Tooele County	Weber/Davis/Morgan Counties (Weatherization)
Age 0-4	Male	47,325 (51%)	129,503	10,146,960	44,543	2,782	35,270
	Female	45,587 (49%)	123,362	9,689,890	42,947	2,640	33,829
Age 5-17	Male	123,320 (51%)	342,624	27,438,613	114,828	8,492	94,873
	Female	117,434 (49%)	323,560	26,277,777	109,442	7,992	90,256
Age 18-64	Male	370,311 (51%)	912,546	99,617,317	351,398	18,913	249,635
	Female	361,250 (49%)	893,486	100,493,892	342,717	18,533	243,829
Age 65+	Male	49,157 (43%)	133,470	19,630,586	46,621	2,536	36,622
	Female	66,305 (57%)	172,174	27,457,281	63,156	3,149	47,781

Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2014-18. Source geography: County



Race and Ethnicity

In the UCA main service area, 73.43% identified as White, 3.54% as Asian, 1.62% as Black or African American, 1.33% as Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, 0.70% as American Indian or Alaska Native and 3.00% as two or more races. Additionally, 16.38% of the population within the UCA main service area identified as hispanic ethnicity.

Race and Ethnicity	UCA Main Service Area	Utah	USA	Salt Lake County	Tooele County	Weber/Davis/Morgan Counties (Weatherization)
White	946,014	2,632,056	234,904,818	887,562	58,452	538,210
Black or African American	20,883	35,862	40,916,113	20,539	344	7,307
American Indian or Alaska Native	9,034	32,657	2,699,073	8,616	418	3174
Asian	45,548	69,810	17,574,550	45,043	505	8955
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	17,090	27,096	582,718	16,723	367	2847
Mixed Race	38,699	89,879	10,435,797	36,666	2,033	20,266

[2018: ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles](#)

Home Languages

The majority of homes in the UCA service area speak English as the primary home language. For the UCA Head Start population, primary home languages are English (62.6%), Spanish (25.5%), Portuguese (2.3%), Arabic (2.3%), and Nepali (1.2%). Additionally, 54.0% of UCA Head Start, EHS, and ECCP families speak a language other than English in the home as either a primary or secondary language.

Home Languages	UCA Main Service Area	Utah	USA	Salt Lake County	Tooele County	Weber/Davis/Morgan Counties (Weatherization)
English	870,922	2,367,992	303,066,180	815,815	55,107	487,567
	79.70%	84.80%	78.50%	79%	92.20%	88.78%
Spanish	143,895	288,392	40,256,297	140,535	3,360	46,198
	13.20%	10.30%	13.30%	13.60%	5.60%	8.41%
Other Indo-European Languages	30,746	54,224	11,014,379	30,023	623	7,330
	2.80%	1.90%	3.60%	2.90%	1.00%	1.33%
Asian & Pacific Island Languages	38,006	60,761	10,570,681	37,585	421	7,131
	3.50%	2.20%	3.50%	3.60%	0.70%	1.30%
Other Languages	9,609	21,116	3,268,328	9,357	252	947
	0.90%	0.80%	1.10%	0.90%	0.40%	0.17%

Data Source: TableID:S1601 (2018: ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables)

Veteran Status

In the UCA main service area, 5.30% of the population over 18 are veterans, with the percentage being higher in Tooele County (9.00%) than in Salt Lake County (5.11%). The overall percentage of veterans in our service area is less than the average for the state of Utah (5.81%) and the nation (7.49%). Over one-third of the total veteran population for the state of Utah lives in the UCA service area.

Veteran Demographics	UCA Main Service Area	Utah	USA	Salt Lake County	Tooele County	Weber/Davis/Morgan Counties (Weatherization)
Veterans Total	45,162	123,339	18,611,432	41,274	3,888	31,884
Veterans Male	41,868	114,865	17,003,235	38,433	3,435	12,980
Veterans Female	3,294	8,474	1,608,197	2,841	453	1,157
% Veterans (Population Over 18)	5.30%	5.81%	7.49%	5.11%	9.00%	7.77%

Data Source: TableID: S2101 (2018: ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables)



Poverty Guidelines

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) released updates of the poverty guidelines on January 17, 2020. The federal poverty guidelines are used as an eligibility criterion by the Community Services Block Grant and a number of other federal programs, including Head Start and Weatherization. The poverty guidelines are derived from the Census Bureau's current official poverty threshold, and the figures reflect annual household income. Census poverty estimates from 2018 show that 6.0% of the population in the UCA main service area live in poverty. The rate of poverty is slightly higher for children with 11.59% of the children under 18 in our service area being below the federal poverty level.

Persons in Family/ Household	100% of Poverty	125% of Poverty	150% of Poverty
1	\$12,760	\$15,950	\$19,140
2	\$17,240	\$21,550	\$25,860
3	\$21,720	\$27,150	\$32,580
4	\$26,200	\$32,750	\$39,300
5	\$30,680	\$38,350	\$46,020
6	\$35,160	\$43,950	\$52,740
7	\$39,640	\$49,550	\$59,460
8	\$44,120	\$55,150	\$66,180

Note: For families/households with more than eight people, add \$4,420 for each additional person.

Data Source: [ASPE 2020 Poverty Guidelines](#) and [Percentage](#)

Poverty Rates Change

Poverty Rates	UCA Main Service Area	Utah	USA	Salt Lake County	Tooele County	Weber/Davis/Morgan Counties (Weatherization)
Persons in Poverty 2000	76,445	396,868	31,581,086	73,343	3,102	32,394
	8.16%	8.82%	11.30%	8.20%	7.30%	7.19%
Persons in Poverty 2018	151,519	283,562	41,852,315	102,660	4,744	44,115
	6.00%	9.10%	12.96%	9.00%	6.80%	7.59%
Change in Poverty Rate 2000-2018	0.05%	0.30%	1.80%	0.80%	-0.50%	0.49%

Data Source: [US Census Bureau, Small Area Income & Poverty Estimates, 2018](#). Source geography: county



Poverty Rates by Age

Poverty rates vary by age with children under 18 experiencing higher rates of poverty than those 18 and above.

Poverty Rates	UCA Main Service Area	Utah	USA	Salt Lake County	Tooele County	Weber/Davis/Morgan Counties (Weatherization)
Population in Poverty	112,241	309,904	44,257,979	107,925	4,316	46,853
	9.59%	10.34%	14.05%	9.75%	6.69%	7.88%
Age 0-4	11,410	32,805	4,193,998	10,831	579	4,999
	12.47%	13.11%	21.49%	12.57%	10.83%	9.95%
Age 5-17	26,685	71,728	9,923,016	25,791	894	12,105
	11.26%	10.91%	18.77%	11.68%	5.51%	8.95%
Age 18-64	66,240	184,985	25,692,073	63,775	2,465	25,928
	9.16%	10.43%	13.20%	9.29%	6.63%	7.46%
Age 65+	7,906	20,386	4,448,892	7,528	378	3,821
	6.65%	6.45%	9.28%	6.66%	6.52%	6.25%

Data Source: TableID:S1701 (2018: ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables)

Poverty By Race and Ethnicity

Poverty rates vary by racial and ethnic groups with poverty rates being higher for minority populations.

Race and Ethnicity	UCA Main Service Area	Utah	USA	Salt Lake County	Tooele County	Weber/Davis/Morgan Counties (Weatherization)
White	70,580	236,041	26,730,734	67,277	3,303	38,256
	7.61%	9.10%	11.60%	7.70%	5.70%	8.18%
Black or African American	5,482	8,561	9,490,587	5,454	28	1,278
	27.11%	24.90%	24.20%	27.20%	8.70%	18.32%
American Indian and Alaska Native	1,969	9,391	673,665	1,737	232	583
	24.86%	29.40%	25.80%	20.70%	56.00%	21.67%
Asian	5,945	9,770	1,989,768	5,930	15	711
	13.37%	14.30%	11.50%	13.40%	3.20%	8.19%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	1,483	3,141	103,304	1,483	0	352
	8.90%	11.70%	18.30%	8.90%	0.00%	13.13%
Some other race	22,466	31,837	3,497,625	21,849	617	3,203
	20.98%	20.60%	22.60%	21.00%	20.40%	18.51%
Two or more races	4,316	11,163	1,772,296	4,195	121	2,470
	11.45%	12.70%	17.50%	11.60%	6.20%	15.12%
Hispanic or Latino origin (of any race)	37,713	77,185	11,849,315	36,620	1,093	13,643
	18.17%	18.60%	21.00%	18.30%	13.90%	18.59%
White, not Hispanic or Latino	57,565	195,169	19,205,816	54,704	2,861	28,652
	6.82%	8.30%	10.00%	6.90%	5.30%	6.71%

Data Source: TableID:S1701 (2018: ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables)

Special Service Populations

Based on information gathered from city, county, and state data in 2017 and 2018 as well as partners serving preschool-aged children with disabilities or homelessness, we estimated the following numbers for special service populations within our main UCA service area.

For children with disabilities, 48% had a developmental delay, 43% had a speech or language impairment, 6% had autism, 0.6% had orthopedic impairments, 0.6% had other health impairments, 0.3% had hearing impairments, 0.2% had visual impairments, 0.2% had intellectual impairments, and 2% had multiple disabilities.

	Preschool Children Receiving Disability Services	Children in Foster Care	Preschool Children Experiencing Homelessness	Expectant Mothers in Poverty
UCA Main Service Area	3,978	270*	1,402	3,998*

Data Source: CrossRoads Urban Center: Child Homelessness in Salt Lake County

*Data from 2018 (2019 data unavailable)

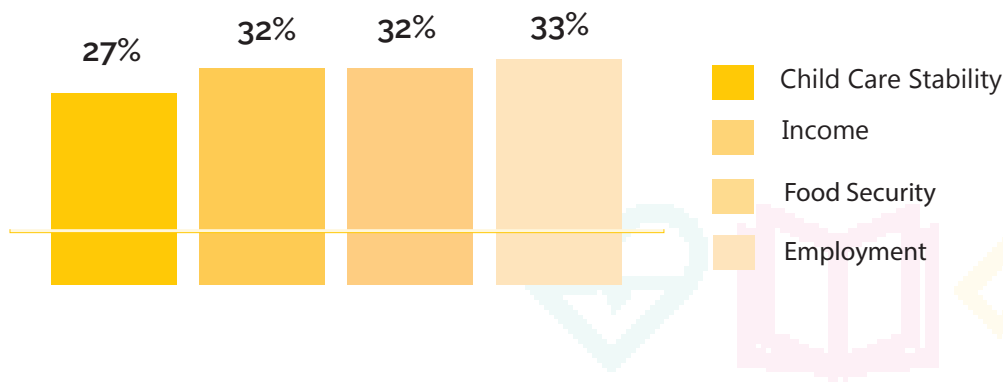
Utah Community Action Client Demographics and Barriers

For Utah Community Action clients, 39% were children and 11% were seniors. Additionally, 30% lacked health insurance, 31% lacked a high school diploma and 18% had a disability.

	Individuals Lacking Health Insurance	Adults Lacking a High School Diploma	Children under 18	Individuals with Disabilities	Senior Citizens
2019 UCA Clients	30%	31%	39%	18%	11%

Percentage of Families Reporting Improvements in Areas of Self-Sufficiency

Teachers and family advocates met with Head Start families to identify educational and developmental needs and engage in the goal-setting process. Families complete the Arizona Self-Sufficiency Matrix at the beginning and end of the program year. Last year, the greatest improvements in self-reliance took place in child care stability, income, food security, and employment over the course of the year.





Nutritional Needs of Families

During the last year, the nutritional needs of families increased due to COVID-19. There was an increase in first-time clients accessing emergency food services at our Food & Resource Centers as well as our Summer Dinner program. To accomodate this increased need, UCA has operated and expanded curbside pickup food services, as well as insured virtual Head Start students were able to continue accessing healthy meals made in our Central Kitchen.

In our service area, almost 40% of students are eligible to receive free or reduced lunch.

Free and Reduced Lunch Program	UCA Main Service Area	Utah	USA	Salt Lake County	Tooele County	Weber/Davis/Morgan Counties (Weatherization)
Total Students	232,340	666,208	50,138,019	212,008	20,332	136,090
Number Eligible for Free/ Reduced Lunch	91,368	227,019	26,206,442	84,464	6,904	38,936
	39.3%	33.2	52.3	38.7%	33.2	28.6

Data Source: Kids Count Data Center

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Benefits

Additionally, 7.1% of the households in the UCA main service area receive SNAP benefits.

SNAP Benefits	UCA Main Service Area	Utah	USA	Salt Lake County	Tooele County	Weber/Davis/Morgan Counties (Weatherization)
Households Receiving SNAP Total	27,549	69,022	14,635,287	25,766	1,783	13,753
	7.1%	7.2%	12.2%	7.0%	9.0%	7.3%
SNAP Households Below the Poverty Line	12,391	32,805	7,090,216	11,651	740	6,019
SNAP Households At or Above the Poverty Line	15,158	71,728	7,545,071	14,115	1,043	7,734
Households in Poverty NOT Receiving SNAP	23,605	65,436	8,937,265	22,842	763	9,734

Data Source: TableID:S2201 (2018: ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables)

Housing

Affordable housing is a challenge for people in the UCA service area. Residential vacancy rates are very low with housing costs rising rapidly in recent years. In Salt Lake County, an individual would need to earn \$20.67/hr in order to afford a two-bedroom apartment (average rent=\$1,075/mo. National Low Income Housing Coalition). With the shortage of affordable housing, many families are experiencing housing instability. In the 2019 Point in Time homelessness count, 620 individuals in households with minors were identified. Approximately half of minors in homeless families in Salt Lake County are under 5 (Office of Childcare “Homeless Children in Care” 2013).

Housing		UCA Main Service Area	Utah	USA	Salt Lake County	Tooele County	Weber/Davis/Morgan Counties (Weatherization)
Housing	Total Housing Units	502,335	1,066,131	136,384,292	390,308	21,417	90,610
	Owner Occupied Homes 2000	262,720	501,547	69,815,753	203,597	9,933	49,190
		70.44%	71.52%	66.19%	68.98%	78.35%	74.87%
	Owner Occupied Homes 2018	322,086	668,985	76,444,810	246,459	15,868	59,759
		64.20%	62.75%	62.75%"	63.14%	74.09%	65.95%
Vacancy Rates	Residential Addresses	796,548	1,182,297	149,623,509	445,695	25,890	100,881
	Vacant Residential Addresses	47,775	108,512	16,654,164	4,315	186	20,879
		10.17%	10.18%	12.21%	1.11%	0.87%	23.04%
	Business Addresses	77,599	115,108	13,904,730	49,145	1,241	8,547
	Vacant Business Addresses	7,354	9,766	1,270,600	4,531	73	945
		0.85%	0.92%	0.93%	1.16%	0.34%	1.04%
Number of Unsafe, Unsanitary Homes	Occupied Housing Units 2000	446,763	701,281	106,741,426	295,141	12,677	138,945
	Housing Units without Plumbing 2000	1,381	2,906	736,626	1,074	32	275
		0.32%	0.38%	0.69%	0.35%	0.23%	0.20%
	Occupied Housing Units 2018	657,029	957,619	119,730,128	369,429	19,901	82,417
	Housing Units without Plumbing 2018	2,114	3,016	472,098	1,167	52	349
		0.25%	0.31%	0.39%	0.32%	0.26%	0.42%
Evictions	Renter Occupied Households	206,902	301,260	38,372,860	128,465	4,900	24,470
	Eviction Filings	6,212	6,590	2,350,042	3,568	156	911
	Evictions	2,530	2,787	898,479	1,813	52	190
		1.09%	0.93%	2.34%	1.41%	1.06%	0.78%

Data Source: US Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2019-Q2. Source geography: County

Data Source: TableID: DP04 (2018: ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables)



Transportation

Transportation is essential to access employment opportunities, education, health and social services. The inconvenience and lack of reliability of public transportation, limited public transportation choices, and cost of owning and operating a vehicle are barriers within Salt Lake and Tooele Counties.

- 76.0% of all Utah workers over age 16 drive alone to work.
- In Utah, the average commute time is 21.70 minutes.

This table shows the method of transportation workers used to travel to work. Of the 624,413 workers in UCA's Main Service Area, 74.9% drove to work alone while 11.7% carpooled. 3.7% of all workers reported that they used some form of public transportation, while 3.0% walked or rode bicycles and 0.9% used taxicabs to travel to work.

Travel times for workers who travel to work (and do not work from home) is shown below. The average commute time for UCA's main service area, 25.5 minutes, is slightly shorter than the national average commute time of 26.6 minutes.

Type of Transportation	UCA Main Service Area	Utah	USA	Salt Lake County	Tooele County	Weber/Davis/Morgan Counties (Weatherization)
Workers 16 and Up	624,413	1,433,444	150,571,044	569,309	28,546	281,492
Drive Alone	74.9%	76.0%	76.4%	74.9%	74.9%	41.4%
Carpool	11.7%	11.2%	9.1%	11.5%	16.3%	5.8%
Public Transportation	3.7%	2.5%	5.0%	3.8%	1.5%	0.8%
Bicycle or Walk	5.7%	3.2%	3.3%	3.1%	1.9%	0.9%
Taxi or Other	0.9%	1.0%	1.2%	0.9%	0.6%	0.5%
Work at Home	5.8%	6.2%	4.9%	5.9%	4.8%	2.5%
Average Commute Time (mins)	25.5	21.7	26.6	22.2	28.8	24.1

Data Source: American Community Survey, 2018.
[\(2018: ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables\) S0801: Commuting Characteristics by Sex\)](#)

- Utah Transit Authority (UTA) provides various transportation services in Utah, including buses, light rails (Trax), commuter rails (Frontrunner), and Paratransit. UTA offers discount passes, bicycle storage options, Carpool, Vanpool, and GreenBike alternative commuter programs. Reduced fare FAREPAY card offered for qualified people with disabilities and adults over age 65.
- Salt Lake City Transportation provides programs to make public transit in Salt Lake City more affordable and convenient, including the HIVE Pass, dockless e-scooter pilot program, and bike sharing program.
- Salt Lake County Aging & Adult Services Rides for Wellness Program provides rides to adults 60 years of age and older to essential medical appointments.
- Tooele County provides public transportation services including the Medical Shuttle, Senior Transportation, On-Demand service, UTA F-400, F-402, and F-453 to suit the needs of the community.
- Tooele County Aging Services Transportation Assistance provides FLEX routes services for seniors, enabling elderly riders to increase flexibility and convenience. This program includes curbside drop-off and pick-up as well as limited route deviation on public transportation.



Education

Education remains an essential means for individuals and families to earn a livable wage and overcome poverty. Poverty in Utah is highest among those who have less than a high school diploma (19.2%). The poverty rate for high school graduates is 10.0%. Poverty is lowest among college graduates with a bachelor's degree or higher at 4.2%. 9% of Utahns aged 16 and older lack literacy skills, according to the National Center for Education Statistics. For Salt Lake and Tooele Counties, the rate of illiteracy is higher at 11% and 10%, respectively. The national rate of persons lacking literacy skills is 14.64%. At 9.55%, the percent of population with no high school diploma is lower in Salt Lake and Tooele Counties than the state average of 8.04%. In Utah, 8.4% of children live in families where the head of household lacks a high school diploma. Educational attainment levels are shown below. Education attainment is calculated for persons over 25 and is an average for the period of 2014 to 2018. The highest numbers of person are found in the High School Only, Some College, and Bachelors Degree categories. Despite a large percentage of those with Bachelors degree, 32.68% of the population in UCA's main service area have High School diploma or less.

Education Attainment Levels (%)	UCA Main Service Area	Utah	USA	Salt Lake County	Tooele County	Weber/Davis/Morgan Counties (Weatherization)
No HS Diploma	9.55%	8.04%	12.34%	9.57%	9.03%	6.68%
High School Only	23.13%	22.86%	27.13%	22.75%	30.27%	24.50%
Some College	24.37%	26.09%	20.61%	24.19%	27.73%	27.15%
Associates Degree	9.04%	9.75%	8.39%	8.99%	9.99%	9.99%
Bachelors Degree	21.66%	21.94%	19.44%	21.94%	16.46%	21.66%
Graduate or Professional Degree	12.25%	12.56%	12.08%	12.56%	6.52%	10.02%

Data Source: [TableID: S1501 \(2018: ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables\)](#)

Literacy

Literacy within our service area remains a relevant issue. Although the estimated percentage of those lacking literacy skills for those over 16 in Utah (9.00%) is lower than the national average (14.64%), UCA's Main Service is higher compared to the state average at 10.95%.

Literacy (%)	UCA Main Service Area	Utah	USA	Salt Lake County	Tooele County	Weber/Davis/Morgan Counties (Weatherization)
Estimated Population over 16	688,463	1,638,079	219,016,209	656,428	32,035	325,693
Percent Lacking Literacy Skills	10.95%	9.00%	14.64%	11.00%	10.00%	8.60%

Data Source: [National Center for Education Statistics, NCES - Estimates of Low Literacy. 2003.](#)





Adult Education

Utah Community Action offers Adult Education to help bridge these gaps in educational attainment and literacy. Our programs aim to remove and reduce barriers to employment and to increase wage-earning potential so that adults are able to earn a livable wage and reach their educational goals. The following community resources also target adult education:

- Granite School District provides adult education courses including GED preparation and testing.
- Horizonte Instruction & Training Center provides adult education including GED preparation and testing.
- Indian Training & Education Center provides American Indians and Hawaiian Natives with adult education resources including GED/High School Completion, ESL (English as a Second Language) and occupational skills training.
- Jordan School District provides adult education courses including GED preparation and testing.
- Murray School District provides adult education courses including GED preparation and testing.
- Salt Lake City School District provides adult education courses including GED preparation and testing.
- Salt Lake Community College is Utah's largest college serving more than 60,000 students on 10 campuses with affordable academic and vocational programs.
- Tooele Applied Technology College is a campus of the Utah College of Technology serving high school students, adults and businesses in Tooele County through applied technology and vocational skills training.
- Tooele School District provides adult education including GED preparation and testing.



Employment

Employment and income remain primary predictors of poverty. Utah's rates are unemployment (5.1%) are low compared to the national average (11.1%). Utah's job growth rate decreased by 1.9% from April 2019 to April 2020. During that same time frame, unemployment for April 2019 to 2020 grew from 2.7% to 4.6%, a decrease of 1.9% percent. However, with the rising costs of housing and other basic necessities, many employed Utah residents continue to face economic hardship.

Employment	UCA Main Service Area	Utah	USA	Salt Lake County	Tooele County	Weber/Davis/Morgan Counties (Weatherization)
Labor Force	688,032	1,665,575	159,932,000	653,367	34,665	321,093
Number Employed	645,212	1,589,898	142,182,000	612,525	32,687	313,210
Number Unemployed	42,820	85,677	17,750,000	40,842	1,978	7,883
Unemployment Rate	6.0%	5.1%	11.1%	6.3%	5.7%	2.5%

Data Source: [Current County Labor Force Components \(jobs.utah.gov\)](https://jobs.utah.gov/)

Employers

Utah's largest five industries for employment, according to the Department of Workforce Services, include Trade, Transportation and Utilities; Government; Professional and Business Services; Education and Health Services; Leisure and Hospitality. The largest industry for employment in Salt Lake County is Trade, Transportation & Utilities. In Tooele County, the largest is Government. The following chart lists the major employers in 2018 for the state of Utah, as well as Salt Lake and Tooele Counties. The data is provided by the Department of Workforce Services.

Top Employers			
Utah	Salt Lake County	Tooele County	Weber/Davis/Morgan Counties (Weatherization)
Intermountain Healthcare	University of Utah	Tooele School District	Department of Defense
University of Utah	State of Utah	Wal-Mart	Davis County School District
State of Utah	Intermountain Healthcare	United States Government	Department of Treasury

Data Source: [Department of Workforce Service Largest Employers by County](#)

Parent Engagement

In our Head Start program, 1,760 parents completed a parent engagement survey. With work and school schedules, 24% of families identified drop-off as the best time for parent meetings and engagement, 21% identified during midday, 19% during pick up, and 18% during evenings.



Section 5: Kem C. Gardner Institute Study

Introduction

For 2020, UCA sought to expand their internal needs assessment to include the broader service provider community by seeking input from their community partners and the clients they serve. While initiated in early 2020, this community-wide needs assessment endeavor increased in importance due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The study was designed to better understand changing needs of low-income Utahns at a critical time and gain a more expansive perspective from the providers that serve them.

This report analyzes aggregated data and coded responses to open-ended questions. Included throughout are verbatim comments from both service providers and their clients to open-ended questions to best illustrate themes from comments.

Methodology

This project relied on regular community partner input and feedback to ensure it was as valuable as possible for those who participated.

The project began with in-depth interviews of UCA community partners in early May 2020 to determine how a needs assessment could be the most valuable to their organization and the broader community. Out of 25 providers asked, 15 participated in these initial interviews. In May, it was still unclear how the pandemic might play out in Utah, but providers were preparing for the worst and stressed the importance of documenting the probable changing needs of their clients.

These initial interviews gauged interest in serving as an advisor to this study's methodology. The 12 providers with sufficient interest and time for the endeavor were selected for the needs assessment advisory committee. Members of the committee are listed in Appendix B. The advisory committee helped formulate two survey instruments: one for service providers and one for the clients they serve. They also helped finalize the service provider sample list (which included all community partners) to extend to the wide array of sectors serving low-income Utahns in the Wasatch Front.

Service providers were given the option to take the service provider survey online or over the phone. Surveys were addressed to the head program administrator, but trusted staff with frontline insights and/or experience were also invited to share their valuable perspective. Service providers also shared the link with other service providers that weren't on the initial invite list. Of the 35 service providers invited to participate, the survey garnered 66 responses from 22 providers. This list of participants can be found in Appendix C.

Service providers were given the client survey to forward to their clients in various forms based on committee feedback. The following forms of the survey were utilized:

- Online English version
- Online Spanish version
- Paper survey (English requested)
- Post cards with a phone number to take survey over the phone

The surveys were in the field from October 1 to November 6, 2020. 427 clients participated in the survey.

Limitations

This study is not representative of the population as this study relied on community partner/service provider buy-in and participation. The compiled community partner list represented all service sectors, but study participants do not represent all of the sectors included in the community partner list. Some sectors, like legal services, are represented more than others in the provider survey and may have had more client representation in the client survey than those seeking domestic violence or homeless services. Consequently, the client survey results may overrepresent legal service respondents. Some of the service gaps identified by the surveys may be completely or partially met by providers that did not participate in the study.



Because the provider's service sector is identifiable through the provider survey, but client surveys are not associated with a service sector to ensure anonymity, the study does not provide a comparative analysis of service gaps.

The service provider survey was sent to additional service providers than were on the original list by those who were initially invited. These providers were included in the survey results, because the list by design was collaborative and their services were relevant. However, this affected researcher control of the sample. Finally, this study does not fully assess the needs of non-English speakers, immigrants, refugees, or the homeless population.

Participants

427 clients of service providers responded to this survey. Notably, these respondents received the survey because they have sought and likely found services from the providers participating in this study. Therefore, these results do not include insights from those in need who have either not found, or who have never sought services.

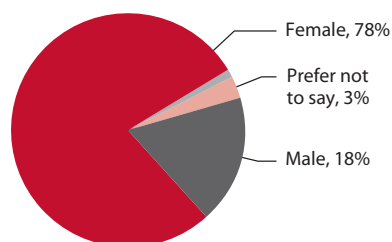
Considering these missing perspectives is particularly important since client descriptions of difficulty finding and accessing services, as well as specific barriers to finding and accessing services, could be less pronounced than for others who did not take the survey.

A quick summary of the demographic makeup of the 427 client respondents are as follows:

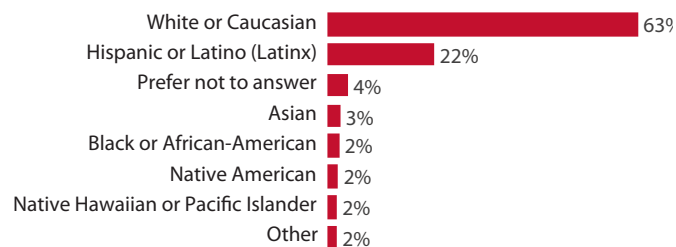
78% identify as female	63% white	22% Hispanic or Latinx
75% are between the ages of 26-65.	62% have a household income of less than \$39,000.	
33% have at least a bachelor's degree.		

Client Respondent Demographics

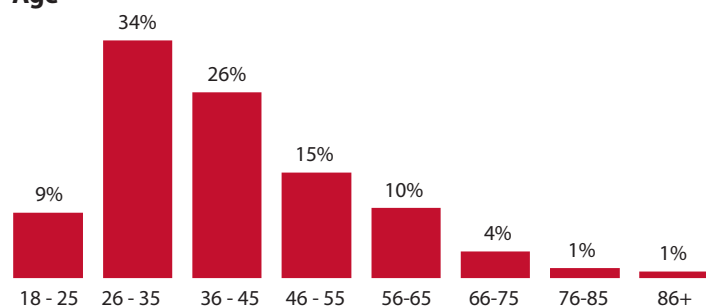
Gender



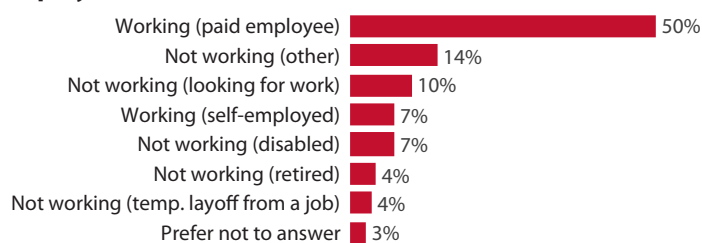
Race/Ethnicity



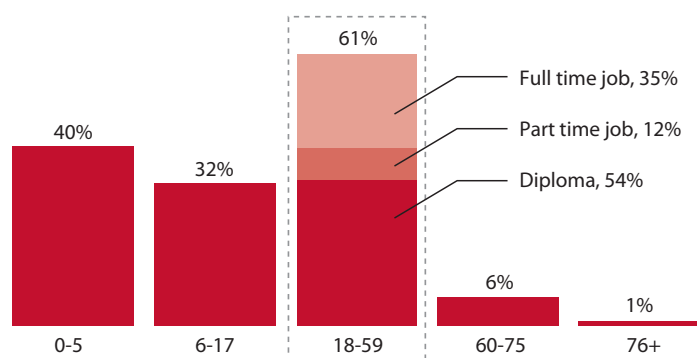
Age



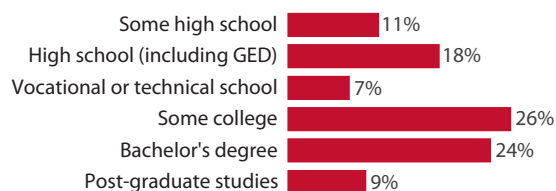
Employment Status



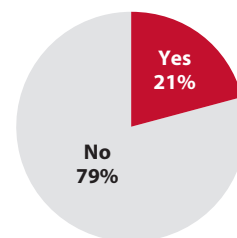
Number of people in household aged:



Educational Attainment



Does anyone in your household have a physical disability that limits one or more of their usual daily activities (walking, eating, bathing, toileting, etc.)?



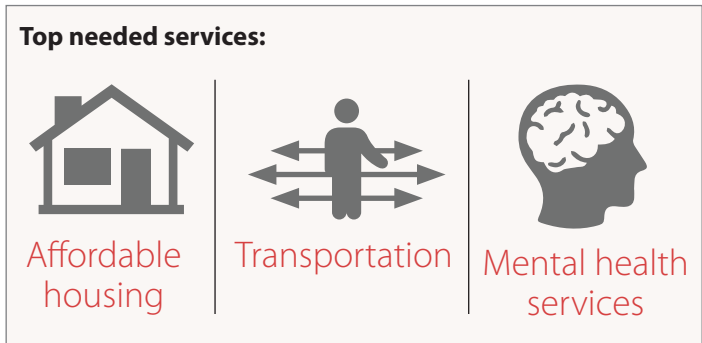
Analysis in Brief

By expanding their internal needs assessment to community partners, Utah Community Action and their partners have a better understanding of the service provider landscape and the needs of the clients they serve.

Due to COVID-19, UCA clients are facing increased hardship, and both providers and clients tend to agree on the most pressing needs of the community: affordable housing and mental health services.

Providers:

46% Affirm services are missing for the populations they serve:



33% Believe additional populations might need their services including:

- Non-English speakers
- Refugees
- Rural dwellers
- Those that would qualify but haven't sought the service.

90% Believe their outreach methods could be improved.

The majority would like to see **increased collaboration** among service providers.

Most indicated **funding requirements can restrict service provision.**

Clients of Providers:

Percentage point increase *since COVID-19*:

+30	Inability to work
+24	Job loss
+22	Did not have enough food or groceries
+8	Sought employment services
+7	Sought food pantry services
+7	Sought mental health services

Current client need, and top barrier cited if hard to find services:

33%	Mental Health	Barrier: too expensive
28%	Unaffordable Housing	Barrier: overwhelmed, not sure where to get help
25%	Food	Barrier: don't qualify for assistance
22%	Inability to pay heat and electric bills	Barrier: overwhelmed, not sure where to get help
22%	Unemployment	Barrier: overwhelmed, not sure where to get help

Opportunities

Forming a service provider coalition to help streamline services and allow for collective strength when advocating for unmet needs.



















Conduct a biennial community-wide needs assessment to understand changing needs of clients post-COVID-19 and to determine outcomes of any implemented opportunities.

Needs Before and Since COVID-19

Responses to the question “Have you or any member of your household experienced any of the following?” show a big change in many respondents’ circumstances the year before and after COVID. Most notably, inability to work and job loss increased 30 and 24 percentage points, respectively, and food instability 22 percentage points. These increases reflect the lack of stability faced by many respondents and suggest a likely greater need for other services in the future if employment and food security needs do not stabilize. Many of the other changes relate to school and child care, a pressing demand for many respondents during a time of frequent school closures and remote learning schedules. In addition to the magnitude of change shown in these tables, the number of respondents noting each experience is also noteworthy. Although not as exacerbated by COVID-19 as job insecurity, transportation and health care access, and experiencing a mental health issue are more prevalent experiences and growing.

Table 2. Have you or any member of your household experienced any of the following?

Percentage point difference of need before and since COVID-19, biggest to smallest

	Year before COVID-19 (March 2019- March 2020)		Since COVID-19 (Since March 2020)		Difference in Percent	
Unable to work	75	18%	201	47%	+30	 +30
Job loss	43	10%	146	34%	+24	 +24
Did not have enough food or groceries to meet our families needs	94	22%	186	44%	+22	 +22
Lack needed technology (i.e., for home schooling)	40	9%	117	27%	+18	 +18
Unable to access child care	37	9%	99	23%	+15	 +15
Received a utility shut-off notice	43	10%	94	22%	+12	 +12
Transportation Issues	63	15%	116	27%	+12	 +12
Experienced mental health issue	148	35%	195	46%	+11	 +11
Unable to access medical care due to cost	84	20%	117	27%	+8	 8
Received an eviction notice	21	5%	53	12%	+7	 +7
Shared housing due to housing costs	65	15%	87	20%	+5	 +5
At risk of losing housing subsidy, including section 8	11	3%	34	8%	+5	 +5
Other*	12	3%	35	8%	+5	 +5
Experienced substance use issue	23	5%	30	7%	+2	 +2
Lost health insurance	61	14%	64	15%	+1	 +1
Homelessness**	31	7%	34	8%	+1	 +1
Am the caregiver for an older or dependent adult	46	11%	48	11%	0	0
Change in family structure (i.e. separation, divorce, change in custody)	76	18%	75	18%	0	0
Witnessed abuse in household***	40	9%	31	7%	-2	 -2
Experienced abuse in household***	70	16%	45	11%	-6	 -6

*“Other” mostly included inability to keep up with housing and utility payments.

**56% of the 27 that have experienced homelessness post-COVID said it was due to eviction.

***It is unlikely a respondent would admit to such if taking the online survey at home.

Table 3 shows an increased need for services in many areas, especially those related to employment, food access, mental health services, and stabilization. The number of respondents indicating someone in their household received SNAP benefits or mental health services underscores the prevalence of these issues noted in responses regarding client experience.

Table 3. Which of the following services or supports did you or any member of your household receive?

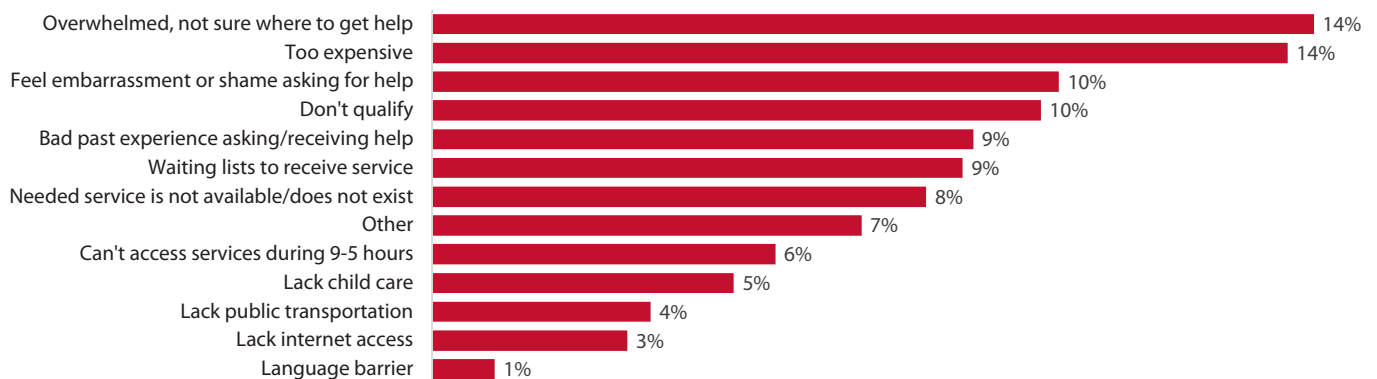
	Year before COVID-19 (March 2019-March 2020)		Since COVID-19 (Since March 2020)		Difference in Percent	
Employment services	31	7%	64	15%	+8	+8
Food Pantry/Food Bank	80	19%	112	26%	+7	+7
Mental health services	96	22%	128	30%	+7	+7
Funding assistance through a non-profit org. or govt. agency	33	8%	65	15%	+7	+7
Head Start services	81	19%	108	25%	+6	+6
Case mgmt. and support services from a non-profit org.	42	10%	65	15%	+5	+5
Other food assistance (i.e., meals on wheels, senior cafes)	23	5%	42	10%	+4	+4
SNAP Benefits	118	28%	134	31%	+4	+4
Housing subsidy	35	8%	44	10%	+2	+2
Support as a caregiver of an older adult	21	5%	30	7%	+2	+2
Energy assistance (i.e., HEAT or Weatherization)	60	14%	68	16%	+2	+2
Adult education services	25	6%	28	7%	+1	+1
Emergency shelter	11	3%	10	2%	0	0
Other	9	2%	7	2%	0	0
Long-term care/home care services	9	2%	5	1%	-1	-1
Substance use treatment	13	3%	8	2%	-1	-1
WIC (Women Infants and Children)	75	18%	50	12%	-6	-6

Barriers to Accessing Services

Clients were given the response options in Figure 4 to better understand their barriers to accessing services they found hard to find (Figure's 2 and 3). Respondents could select all barriers that apply. Figure 4 shows which barriers were selected overall, and Table 4 shows the top barriers selected by specific need.

Figure 4. Overall Barriers Selected

Please select the obstacles or barriers to receiving those services.



Challenges for Service Providers

The main challenges identified by service providers were the ease of finding services for clients, service gaps, the effects of COVID-19 on service provision and funding restrictions. Service providers identified the needs for enhanced collaboration to better meet the needs of their clients, reach more Utahns in need of services, improve data sharing, and maximize available resources. No glaring service overlaps were identified despite other organizations providing similar services.

Finding Services

- The population they serve doesn't necessarily represent the broader population, and they'd like to serve more ethnic minorities, refugees, and non-English speakers.
- There may be cultural or language barriers to accessing their services.
- Some rural Utahns struggle to find needed services.
- They know there are plenty of Utahns that are in need that would qualify, yet don't access their services.

Providers describe word-of-mouth and intra-provider referrals as the main ways people learn of their services, but almost 90% of respondents say outreach methods could be improved, and most providers that serve similar populations are mostly in agreement. The most often cited improvement would rely on strategic partnerships and more targeted outreach. Utilizing all forms of media could also be improved. Another proposal mentioned was having the 211 resource number updated more often, although only four providers specifically mentioned 211 as a way people learn about their services.

Often, outreach limitations are due to funding restraints. Capacity and funding restraints might also stifle providers' ability to serve more people that learn about their services due to improved outreach.

Table 1. Needs Gaps of Providers by Sector

	Case Management	Child Care	Affordable Housing	Legal Support	More Providers	Mental Health	Parent Support Groups	Provider-Specific Needs	Transportation
Aging Adults	X		X	X		X		X	X
Child Mental Health						X	X	X	
Child Protective Services			X			X	X	X	X
Domestic Violence			X	X	X			X	X
Financial Services								X	
Homeless Services		X	X		X				X
Housing	X		X			X			
Caller-Identified Services			X					X	X
Legal Services								X	
Wrap Around		X	X						X
LGBTQ Services			X						
Recovery Awareness									X

Service Gaps

Most providers that serve similar populations either believe or are unsure whether needed services are missing for the populations they serve. When asked "thinking about the population you serve, are there services they need that aren't currently offered?" only 11% said there are no additional services needed, which came from food insecurity, housing, and adult care services providers. It should be noted there wasn't necessarily consensus among providers serving similar populations.

The 46% of respondents that affirmed there are missing services were asked what services they notice their population needs but are not offered, as well as what services they'd like to offer that current restrictions prevent.

The table to the right shows needs shared by sector, followed by a comprehensive list of needs they notice are missing for the populations they serve.

“What services are missing for the population you serve?”

“What services would you like to offer that current restrictions prevent?”

Aging Services:

- From an internal needs assessment:
 - Affordable housing, especially considering many seniors are on fixed incomes
 - Legal services
 - Transportation (i.e. rides for necessary errands like grocery shopping)
- Short term case management (to build relationships with those that might need long term care in the future)
- Mental health support; many older adults experience depression, isolation, and hoarding.
- Whole service coordinators that can walk clients through all stages of support offered.
- Adult day care for those with dementia.

Housing Services:

- Would like to offer more properties with supportive services, like case management.
- Would like to offer housing for people with chronic mental illness at high risk of chronic homelessness.

Domestic Violence Services:

- Adequate funds for housing designated for survivors of violence.
- Adequate funds for needed legal support.
- Substance abuse treatment
- Adequate funds for client transportation, who often lack access to cars.
- Increased funding flexibility to allow clients to purchase the things they need, like new identification, gas cards, and debt relief.
- More providers. There are currently only 13 domestic violence service providers in Utah. Similarly-sized states usually have about 40 domestic violence providers. Existing providers are unable to accommodate everyone in need.

Wrap Around Services (holistic approach to services):

- Transportation. Access and funds are limited.
- Affordable housing, especially for those 30-80% of the area median income.
- Affordable infant and toddler child care for low income households.

Child Mental Health Services:

- School-based services to support the school-based concerns monitored and addressed by individual school systems.
- Would like to offer parenting groups.

Financial Services:

- Access to bank accounts.
- Expunged records that impede employment and can lead to homelessness.

Legal Services:

- Would like to offer:
 - More consumer protection and employment services
 - More elder law services, like covering guardianship/conservatorship cases
 - Coverage to people outside current geographic boundaries
 - Counseling
 - Legal separation
 - Coverage for undocumented individuals in family law cases
 - Services for eviction cases as they overlap with protective order cases

Child and Family Services:

- Transportation
- Services for children living with their parents (rather than in foster care which comes with eligibility for services like Medicaid)
- Recovery court
- Affordable recovery options
- Housing options
- Financial assistance for families to afford basic drug treatment
- Therapeutic visits for parents and children
- High conflict parenting classes
- In-home training
- Outpatient and inpatient drug treatment
- Would like to offer:
 - Support groups for parents
 - Therapeutic visits for clients
 - Food assistance

Homeless Services:

- Affordable child care
- Affordable apartments/housing, specifically more low-income housing tax credits that allow lower rents via financial deals.
- Transportation assistance
- Even with multiple providers, the demand for counseling, emergency shelter and affordable housing still exceed availability

LGBTQ Services:

- Income-based LGBTQ senior housing

Recovery Awareness:

- Transportation

Resource information provider: Service gaps found from their internal needs assessment of callers:

- Affordable housing
- Rent assistance programs don't meet demand, especially during COVID-19
- Transportation

Effects of COVID-19 on Service Provision

This year brought unprecedented challenges to the service provider community. Each adjusted service provision quickly to continue to meet need.

COVID-19 has forced some services to go virtual like in-take, therapy and counseling, court hearings, senior programming, and telehealth services. For the vulnerable aging adult population, opportunities for in-person socialization have become virtual – even home health aide visits – which is difficult for those who lack access to computers or internet. While check-ups continue to happen by phone, this has led to increased isolation for some. Some services will continue to be offered remotely even once the threat of COVID-19 is over. Wraparound services like Utah Community Action have redesigned their service delivery model by offering pantry services and meals for children via curbside pickup, and other programs such as Head Start, Adult Education, rent and utility assistance moved to virtual platforms in an effort to continue to provide services. COVID-19 has increased costs due to protective equipment and sanitation, the need for more space for distancing, overtime to cover quarantined staff, decreased revenue due to less intake, or trouble fundraising. These have led to staff layoffs for some providers.

It has been harder to offer services to those who have tested positive, leaving some in potentially unsafe situations. Some services are seeing increased use by Utahns they've never served before, especially services that provide food, rental and utility assistance, and landlord tenant mediation services. At the time of the survey, service providers were able to meet the needs of these new clients.



Funding Restrictions

Most organizations indicated that funding requirements can hinder or restrict service provision. In some cases, funds could be used to better meet the needs of their clients but they're bound by inflexible definitions of what specific services are allowed to perform and who they are allowed to serve due to strict age, income, and specific population limits. This can result in inflexible programming, increased paperwork, and some easy-to-meet needs going unmet. The ability to receive continual funding is dependent on adherence to these requirements.

Of course, requirements have been set for good reason; funders want to avoid misuse and abuse of funds. Still, service providers understand the needs of their clients best and would prefer to work with funders to create more flexibility while still ensuring accountability.

Internal Needs Assessment of Staff Members

From housing case management, pre-k education for low-income children, utility bill assistance, and nutrition and weatherization services, the services Utah Community Action (UCA) provides are comprehensive and far-reaching. With a global pandemic resulting in job loss and economic uncertainty, the services are more relevant today than ever.

In order to best serve those in need, UCA leadership wanted to better understand how their staff view themselves within the broader mission of the organization. UCA staff know their work contributes to the well-being of those who most need help and mirror similar values in themselves.

A strong, relevant, meaningful mission:



98%

Agree their job is
Essential to the
organization.



97%

Agree:

What UCA stands for is important to them.
The mission of UCA is still relevant today.
Their job requirements meet the mission.



96%

Feel they make a difference to the children and families UCA serves.

Agree their work contributes to
success UCA seeks to create.



Areas that could use more focus:

- Reaching essential populations
- Employee appreciation
- Responsiveness of leadership

“ I would not be here for as long as I have
been, giving my all for an agency that
I felt did not uphold the same values and
morals as I hold myself too. ”

I have watched UCA evolve and grow into
something I am proud to be a part of.

Demographics

For Head Start staff, 62% identified as white, 23% as Hispanic or Latino, 4.6% as Asian, 1.8% as Black or African American, 1.6% as Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, 1.4% as American Indian or Alaskan Native, and 5.4% as two or more races.

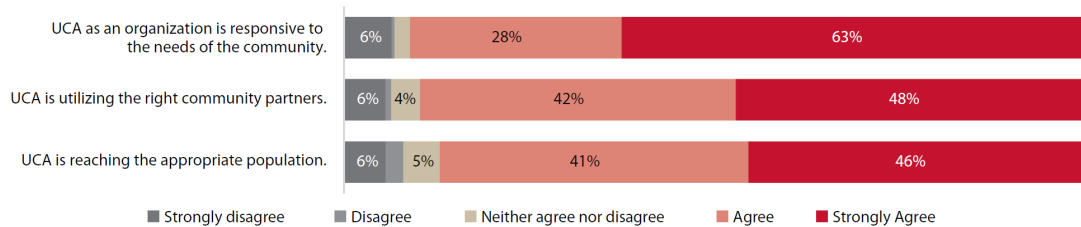
For educational attainment, 0.2% have a doctorate degree, 4.8% have a masters, 30.8% have a bachelors, and 57.3% had a high school education or less.

Means Analysis

The following statements were asked on a scale of 1 through 5, 1 meaning they strongly disagree, and they strongly agree.

Community & Partners

Staff spoke of the impressive work UCA has done in providing services but also noted the need for continued outreach efforts to raise awareness for underserved populations.



+ During the COVID-19 crisis, UCA has been proactive in every aspect of addressing the needs of parents, students, family and staff. They are to be commended for their caring and attention.

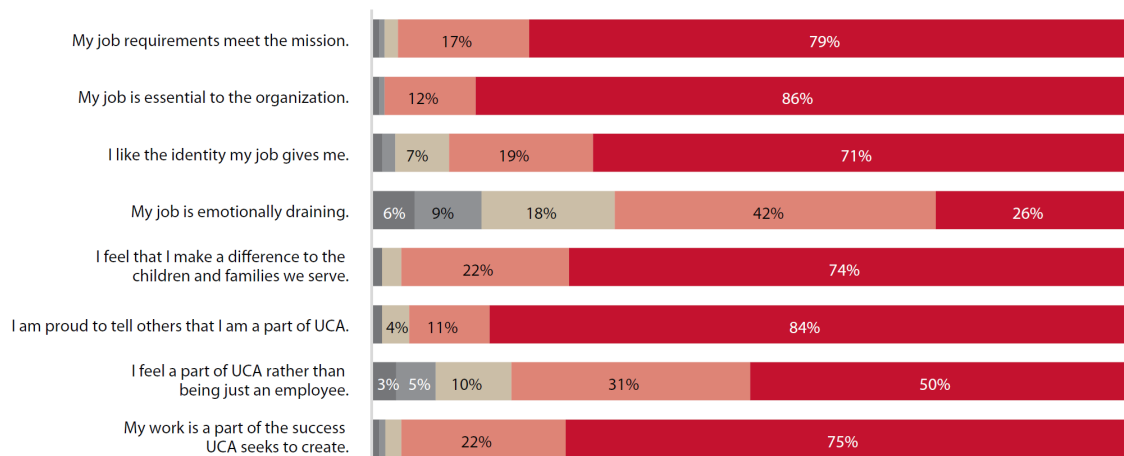
+ We serve the families in all areas they might need assistance, and I feel like that's what makes this agency so valuable to the community. It's a one stop type of deal where you have housing, food pantry, clothing, transportation, and also education not just for children but the parents as well.

- We should do more to reach out to immigrants, refugees and other communities of color in our service area - we need to make our spaces inclusive.

- I still feel we have so many more individuals and groups to reach and educate about our agency and what exactly we provide in our state.

Perceptions of Job

Overall, the majority of staff felt that their job makes a difference in the community. Staff noted the emotional drain of the work, especially during COVID-19.



+ This is the first time in my career that I feel like part of a family and not just a replaceable employee.

+ I feel as if UCA supports me and understands how emotionally draining our jobs are as the front line staff and the million things we accomplish in an hours' time, let alone the 6 hour day with families and children. I feel as though I am supported 100% and recognized by leadership, therefore it makes me want to give that much more for our agency and the community we serve.

- Now with COVID-19, I feel like I am giving a lot more to my job (emotionally) than before. I feel so much more compassion fatigue and I myself and my family am just drained. But we are moving forward and getting support we need with self-care workshops.

Opportunities

Service Provider Coalition

The chief opportunity the Gardner Policy Institute suggests is a establishing a coalition of service providers that meets quarterly. There is overwhelming interest and enthusiasm for the benefits collaboration can provide for both providers and the communities they serve (see “Collaboration” section). The institute recommends Utah Community Action host an initial facilitated roundtable to gather feedback about composition of the coalition, structure, leadership, and expectations. This study uncovered specific opportunities for the coalition:

- Establish a data sharing subcommittee to spearhead a community-wide data collaboration effort to better understand and anticipate community needs.
- Collective post-COVID planning to determine whether there are there permanent changes anticipated that could benefit from collaboration.
- Establish a resource data base for providers for referral purposes.
- Advocate for shared needs as a coalition, like for specific affordable housing, mental health support, and transportation options.

Funder’s Study

Providers indicated funding requirements related to eligibility, population, and other factors frequently restrict their ability to meet malleable and complex need. The Gardner Institute suggests facilitated roundtable discussions including funders and providers, both separately and together, to identify challenges and find solutions that work for both parties.

Biennial Community Needs Assessment

A community-wide needs assessment should be conducted biennially to best understand the changing needs of clients post-COVID-19, and determine outcomes of any implemented suggestions from past assessments.



Conclusion

Utahns are struggling and have increased needs since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The most urgent and growing issues are job loss and inability to make housing and utility payments. Important corresponding needs include affordable housing, mental health support, unemployment services, and food security.

It is hardest for clients to find help with affordable housing, physical and mental health care, child care, legal services, food, and clothing. These services exist, but providers either don't have the capacity, funding, or sufficient outreach to help all those who need services.

Utah is fortunate to be served by dedicated service professionals. Organizations have been established to meet Utahns' growing needs, yet crucial needs remain. Most organizations see the same needs for their own clients and therefore, increased collaboration and coalition power would benefit Utahns in need.

Section 6: Community Resources

Additional Resources for Children and Families



Utah Community Action recognizes many resources available within our agency and among partners in our community that may be used to address the needs of Head Start eligible children and their families, as well as clients of other Utah Community Action services. We engage in partnerships designed to not only meet the health and education needs of children but also the comprehensive needs of income-eligible individuals and families. Resources may be found throughout this assessment.

Care About Childcare provides families looking for childcare with profiles of licensed childcare providers located throughout Utah. It also provides comprehensive resource lists for parents of young children. Services are widely available.

Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting is a community-based service designed to enable and empower families by building on individual family qualities that support and strengthen parenting capabilities and overall family functioning. Programs are voluntary, some beginning during pregnancy, and may continue until children are school-aged. There is a waitlist to receive services.

South Valley Services is a domestic violence service provider that provides safe shelter and supportive services to women, men, and their children who have been impacted by domestic violence. Services available.

The Road Home provides emergency shelter and a variety of programs that help individuals and families step out of homelessness and back into the community. The Road Home maintains a family shelter that is open year-round to meet increased demand. Services are available. Utah Community Action partners with The Road Home to provide intake and diversion within the family shelter. Utah Community Action also provides a homeless resources phone line at the family and other shelters.

The UNP Hartland Partnership Center is a partnership-based community center that offers resources such as English language instruction, mental health support, citizenship classes, employment workshops, afterschool and summer programs, and educational resources to the Salt Lake City community. Services are available.

Utah Foster Care is a nonprofit authorized by the Utah State Legislature that finds, educates, and supports families to care for children placed in foster care. Services are available.

The **Utah Intergenerational Poverty Mitigation Act** was passed in 2012 and directed state agencies to undertake an initiative to improve coordination and alignment among state agencies serving the needs of vulnerable children and families. As a result, the Department of Workforce Services (DWS) has combined forces with other state agencies to measurably reduce the incidence of children who remain in poverty as they become adults. Services focus on the core areas of early childhood development, education, economic stability, and health. IGP is not a direct service; services are available through DWS.

Women, Infants & Children Program (WIC) is a nutrition program that helps pregnant women, new mothers, and young children eat well, learn about nutrition, and stay healthy. Services available for those who meet the eligibility criteria.



Children With Disabilities

Cornell University's Disability Statistics Center estimates that 0.6% of all children ages 0-4 in Utah have a disability (based on ACS 2017 data). That's roughly 1,500 young children across the state with reported disabilities, although the prevalence of reported disabilities significantly increases with age. Among children aged 4 and younger, .5% reported a visual disability, .4% reported a hearing disability. Reported disabilities for this population include sensory disabilities only, whereas other age-group populations report on additional types of disabilities, including ambulatory and cognitive. For children ages 5 to 15 years, 5.2% of the total population or roughly 29,700, reported disabilities. Overall in Utah, 9.8% of the total population are reported to have disabilities.

Resources for Children with Disabilities	Programs/Services Offered
Baby Watch Early Intervention	Provides early identification and treatment for children from birth to age three with developmental delays and/or disabilities. There is a 45-day intake period for evaluation and assessment. Services are readily available.
Baby Your Baby Outreach Program	Provides prenatal and well-child care information and referrals. No direct clinical services are provided. There is an approximately 3-5 day wait period to obtain services after a telephone interview.
The Carmen B. Pingree Autism Center of Learning	Provides comprehensive treatment, education, and related services for children with autism and their families, including preschool services for children ages two through five.
The Child Development Center	Provides comprehensive evaluations for children from birth through age five with developmental, behavioral or emotional problems and for multiple-handicapped children up to 18 years of age.
The Children's Behavior Therapy Unit	Provides day treatment in a school setting for children with Autism who need more structure than a self-contained classroom. The agency's focus is on education, social skills, therapy, and medication management. Utilize a higher teacher to child ratio. Use behavior modification techniques to transition children to a general educational setting. CBTU serves 54 children with an average of 18 weeks for children 5-12 years of age. There is typically a 3-week waiting period and availability is very limited.
The Children's Center	Dedicated to helping preschool-aged children who suffer emotional and behavioral disturbances. The Center serves children and families who may need support through family crisis. The Children's Center currently serves 150 children through day treatment and 200 through outpatient services. Their waiting list runs from 3 weeks to 2 months.
DDI Vantage Early Intervention	DDI Vantage is an Early Intervention Program which provides services for children under the age of three who have developmental delays and disabilities and their families by offering a full range of services to meet their individual needs. Their goal is to minimize the effects of the delay thereby reducing the need for long-term intervention throughout the child's school years. Serving Salt Lake, Tooele, and Duchesne Counties.
The Division of Services for People with Disabilities	Operates as a division of the Utah Department of Human Services. DSPD promotes opportunities and provides supports for people with disabilities to lead self-determined lives by overseeing home and community-based services for more than 5,000 people who have disabilities. The programs attend to issues related to mental retardation, developmental disabilities, family support, group homes, and day training for employment, support for employment, and a personal assistance program, among others. There is a waitlist for services.
The Learning Disabilities Association of Utah	Dedicated to a world in which all individuals with learning disabilities thrive and participate fully in society, and to a world in which the causes of learning disabilities are understood and addressed. LDAU is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for all individuals with learning disabilities and their families, alleviating the restricting effects of learning disabilities, and supporting endeavors to determine the causes of learning disabilities. No information available on availability of services.
The Neonatal Follow-up Program	A statewide program whose main purpose is to provide specialty services through an interdisciplinary team for the first five years of the child's life. Children qualify by meeting a weight requirement and are born in the state of Utah. Services are readily available.
The University Developmental Assessment Clinics	Provides clinical evaluation of children with or at risk for developmental delays throughout the state of Utah and the western frontier region. These clinics will provide developmental assessments and management recommendations for infants and children. UDAC partners with primary care providers to offer children the best services possible and assist families in the coordination of their child's ongoing developmental needs through available services including local community resources and family support services.
The Utah Parent Center	Offers parent training, information and referral services. They also provide outside education to groups upon request such as the Individual Education Plan (IEP) process, stress management, etc. Services are offered for individuals from birth to age 22 in both English and Spanish. Services at UPC are typically free.
United Way 2-1-1 Information and Referral	A statewide service of United Way of Salt Lake. 2-1-1 is an easy-to-remember information and referral telephone number that people dial to get connected and get answers. 2-1-1 connects people to important health, human, and community service programs including emergency food pantries, rental assistance, public health clinics, childcare resources, support groups, legal aid, and a variety of nonprofit and government agencies.
Utah Children with Special Health Care Needs	CSHCN is a part of the Utah Department of Health, Division of Family Health and Preparedness. Utah Department of Health (UDOH) is the state Maternal Child Health (Title V) agency for Utah. CSHCN provides and promotes family-centered, coordinated care and facilitates the development of community-based systems for these children and their families.

Other Child Development & Childcare Programs

The Utah Department of Workforce Services Office of Childcare operates the Care About Childcare website to assist parents with locating care options for their children. Not all of the childcare providers listed may provide services affordable to income-eligible families. A number of affordable preschool options do exist in our service area. The following is a list of programs serving income-eligible children and families.

Childcare Programs for Income-eligible Children	Programs/Services Offered
Canyons School District	The Canyons District Early Childhood Program integrates tuition-paying students to serve as peer models in the classroom with students with special needs, is for 3-and 4-year-old children. Canyons offers three ways to participate in preschool: special education, Title I, and tuition. Each class has between 12-15 students and is taught by a teacher certified in Early Childhood Special Education and three assistants. Tuition to participate in the program is \$100 a month for classes that take place two days a week, either in the morning or afternoon, for about two hours. Acceptance into the program is determined on a first-come first-served basis.
Children's Services Society	The Children's Service Society of Utah empowers families and caregivers through services that support the safety and well-being of children. They operate on referral only, providing free childcare referrals and family support referrals services.
DDI Vantage Early Head Start	DDI Vantage is an Early Head Start provider in the Salt Lake County area. The agency serves children up to 130% of federal poverty in accordance with Head Start/EHS regulatory requirements. In 2016, DDI Vantage Early Head Start served 194 EHS Home Base and 101 EHS Child Care families.
Family Support Center	The Family Support Center KidStart Daycare offers low cost, quality and curriculum-based childcare for ages newborn to five years. FSC also operates a free 24/7 crisis nursery care for any child ages 0-11 in three locations in the Salt Lake Valley, and other services.
Granite School District	Granite School District has 21 Title 1 preschools with a comprehensive program, qualified staff, and a 1:10 staff to child ratio. Each class has a lead teacher, assistant teacher, and support staff. Classes are housed in district facilities for added security. Teachers and parents work together to help children grow and progress. Costs are researched annually and are set at or below neighboring preschools, a sliding scale is available for tuition assistance. Serves approx. 3,800 preschool-aged children.
Guadalupe Early Learning Center	The Guadalupe Early Learning Center has five unique programs that offer quality education at every stage of life from infants to adults. The preschool program takes up to 80 early learners aged 3-4 years old. Class size is no more than 20 children per class with 1:7 adult to child ratio. All programs are free, but there is a waitlist. Serves 80 preschool-aged children.
Jordan School District	The Jordan Child Development Center (JCDC) offers early intervention services and a preschool program. Early intervention services are available for children who have developmental delays, diagnosed conditions or syndromes, ages 0-3. Early intervention service tuition is on a sliding fee scale, based on income and other family factors. Families that are unable to pay are not denied services. The preschool program offers free services for children with disabilities, ages 3-5. Tuition for non-delayed children is \$95 per month with a non-refundable registration fee of \$40.
Murray School District	Murray Early Childhood Education Center preschool programs are designed to promote the development of the whole child. Offers a variety of scheduling options for preschool-aged children. Registration for the school year is on a first-come first-served basis, and is open as long as space is available. A registration fee of \$75 must be received for each child you are registering. Tuition is due on a monthly basis. Serves approx. 142 preschool-aged children.
Neighborhood House	A NAEYC accredited non-profit providing quality preschool and daycare services based on each client's ability to pay. Neighborhood House's approach encourages language development, creative expression, motor coordination and social and emotional skills. Serves approx. 100 preschool aged children.
Salt Lake City School District	The Salt Lake City School District offers Early Childhood programs to support children and their families, birth through age 5. Programs are designed to give students the assistance they need to prepare them for school success. Programs include Parents as Teachers, a free home visitor program available to all families with children birth to 5 who live within Salt Lake City School District boundaries, and Parent and Child Preschool Classes, which offers parent and child education classes for 3-year-old children. Pre-Kindergarten Classes provide a child-centered environment, safe materials, meaningful and engaging instruction, and emotional support, and Summer Kindergarten Readiness prepares children for kindergarten. Tuition is based on a sliding scale with proof of income and dependents. There is a non-refundable registration fee of \$20 for Title 1 schools, \$75 for non-Title 1 schools. Serves approx. 886 preschool-aged children.
The Boys & Girls Club	The Boys & Girls Clubs serves children at 7 locations in Salt Lake and Tooele counties. Last year, over 7,000 youth attended Salt Lake & South Valley Boys & Girls Clubs with over 1,400 members coming to the Clubs each day. The Sugarhouse & Murray locations offer licensed full-day preschool and Kindergarten Care, half-day Kindergarten care, and before and after school programs. Prices range from \$90-\$110.
Toole School District	The Early Learning Center is a developmental preschool for children ages 3 to 5 years old. Providing free monthly assessments, monthly clinics are offered at no cost. Preschool programming is offered for children with developmental delays and typically developing children. Classrooms are staffed with certified teachers and supported with related service personnel including, para-educators, occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech and language pathologists, and adaptive P.E. specialists. Serves approx. 332 preschool-aged children.
YWCA	The Lolie Eccles Early Education Center in Salt Lake City is NAEYC accredited. The Center provides full time or half time preschool, Half-day kindergarten, and a full-day kindergarten program, which includes before & after school as well as day camps during school closure days. Payment arrangements can be worked out with DWS if the family qualifies. Serves approx. 97 preschool-aged children.

Section 7: Strategic Plan

This past year, UCA also engaged Tanner LLC to assist in the strategic planning process in order to take a longer term look at what role our agency can play in meeting the growing needs in Utah. Through this process four strategic imperatives were identified--client, staff, and community experience as well as measuring impact.

In all, over 200 employees responded through the survey, and over 150 staff and managers participated in facilitated dialogue sessions. Participants in the process were open in sharing challenges they see, as well as opportunities for improvement that they feel would benefit UCA if implemented.

After digesting feedback from the survey and dialogue sessions, a two-day strategic planning offsite was conducted. The first day included over 20 program managers and leaders, and the second day included the executive team. After the offsite meetings, a strategic planning document was developed and further refined through additional meetings with the Board and leadership. The document that follows was presented to the Board for final approval and adoption in August 2019.

This plan is intended to provide focus to allow each member of the team to see how they can impact UCA's most important priorities. UCA fully expects that this will become a living document with periodic revisions as the environment changes. Detailed implementation plans have been developed that align with the priorities articulated in this plan and are not included here.

The graphic below outlines the strategic plan. The following pages outline key external trends UCA must prepare for, challenges faced, and strengths that can be leveraged.



Key Trends Impacting Our Strategy

1. Growing National and Regional Economic Disparity – With growing income inequality, stagnant wages, and high rates of intergenerational poverty (poverty that is transmitted from one generation to another, with children, born into poverty more likely to become disadvantaged adults themselves), the number of individuals needing services aligned with UCA's offering is increasing and appears likely to steadily increase over the next decade.

2. Emerging Skills Gap in General Public – The sweeping technological changes that enable automation of large segments of the economy previously performed by humans have important implications for workforce skills. For example, the number one occupation worldwide is driving. Many predict that autonomous driving technologies will displace significant numbers of workers and create a need for reskilling. Adult education will likely play a key role in helping workers displaced by automation to develop the skills needed to perform future jobs.

3. Massive Projected Population Growth and Urbanization in Utah – With the state's population anticipated to double by 2050, and the increase in urbanization that will accompany this growth, the number of at-risk families will only increase. Current organizational infrastructure must be prepared to grow in order to effectively anticipate this significant growth in public needs.

4. Increased Competition from Public Schools – To address the growing needs of at-risk families in Utah, many public school districts in the area are beginning to offer limited pre-k daycare service. If Public schools continue this expansion into pre-k, this would directly compete with UCA's Headstart program.

5. Recurring Difficulties Associated with Intergenerational Poverty – As previously stated, high rates of intergenerational poverty prevent clients from reaching a level of self-reliance that is needed for the agency to expand services to new clients. UCA must continue to focus efforts on building self-reliance among families that seek assistance.

6. Growing Multi-Generational Needs – As the median age in Utah increases, the number of middle-aged and elderly in need of services also increases. UCA must be aware of emerging needs for those in more advanced age groups.

7. Need for More Integrated Approach to Services – To address trends with intergenerational poverty, service providers must develop a family system approach, where holistic needs are evaluated and addressed. Services need to be integrated in a way that assist the entire family, and not just the individual. By looking at holistic rather than narrow needs, services providers can address the several issues facing at-risk clients simultaneously and build greater self-reliance.

8. Technological Capabilities that Enable Lower Costs of Integrated Service Approach – As IT capabilities continue to improve, the cost of an integrated service approach will steadily decrease, and the ability to data share, automate processes, and better communicate with clients and other agencies becomes more feasible.

9. Continued Need to Collaborate with Other Organizations – As growth continues and demand for services increases, collaboration with other organizations will become increasingly important. To prepare for the evolving needs of clients, UCA must cultivate strong relationships and communication channels with other service providers, governmental entities, and private sector supporters.

10. Donor Expectations for Outcome Data – With the number of nonprofits seeking funding today, donors are increasing expectations that their support will lead to quantifiable outcomes. Service providers must build the capabilities to track and report outcome-focused data, rather than simply reporting activities and qualitative efforts.



Challenges

Staff Retention – Based on current funding mechanisms which seem unlikely to change in the foreseeable future, UCA pay scales and benefit packages will continue to lag behind school districts and other potential employers. In addition to wages, organizational culture and a sense of purpose are becoming more important to staff, and the need to engage every employee in finding meaning in their work and seeing the impact of that work is imperative to staff retention. This is especially true as public schools expand pre-K services, offering almost identical positions to many staff at UCA. Lastly, serving clients facing extreme hardships often exposes employees to secondary trauma, causing burnout and many employees to leave the childcare industry altogether. The market for individuals with skills in early childhood education will only continue to become more competitive, and UCA's long-term strategy must address these challenges.

Limited Resources – As community needs continue to grow, UCA recognizes that it cannot meet every need. With limited resources, this raises the importance of partnering with other agencies in addressing client needs. However, with the high growth rate in the Greater Salt Lake Area, this collaboration is likely to become increasingly more complex.

Many Multi-Generational Needs Fall Outside of UCA's Expertise – As intergenerational poverty and multigenerational needs remains a long-term impediment to building self-reliance in UCA's clients, many of these needs fall outside of UCA's direct experience. For example, as demand for a skilled workforce and adult education grows, UCA will likely face a steep learning curve in developing offerings to meet these emerging needs. Because of the need to diversify service offerings, the challenge of finding and building effective collaborations and partnerships continues to impact the agency's ability to address holistic needs of its clients.

Increased Growth and Urbanization Along the Wasatch Front – In line with projected growth trends for Utah, the rate of Urbanization along the Wasatch Front means a geographic shift in the proximity of at-risk families to existing UCA facilities. This can impact UCA's ability to effectively address the needs of the populations it serves.

Current IT Infrastructure – While donors and funders are steadily demanding more outcome-based reporting, UCA's workflows and information systems need to be updated in order to cost-effectively meet these demands. Recruiting and retaining the talent for this task is a constant challenge due to more lucrative opportunities in the private sector for individuals with these skillsets.

Strengths

Public Awareness and Reputation – UCA has served the public for over 55 years and has established a strong presence and reputation in the community at-large. Organizations throughout the state recognize UCA as a leader in early childhood education and services to the most vulnerable members of our communities. More important than simply being recognized for the services it provides, UCA is trusted by the families it serves as a source of assistance, and the community associates UCA with a standard of excellence matched by few non-profits.

Extensive Network of Locations – UCA currently operates out of over 40 locations in the Greater Salt Lake Area and is uniquely positioned to accommodate lower socioeconomic communities throughout this region. This positioning gives UCA access to these communities, helping build trust and public awareness in the areas where services are needed most.

Size and Scale – With the sheer number of locations, the organization has created a network effect that is earned through scale. This impacts UCA's ability to maintain a recruiting pipeline, effectively advocate collaboration between public agencies, and impacts a large number of families with its services. UCA's scale also has forced the agency to adopt formalized routines to effectively process families and the documentation required by the government and other stakeholders, including its IT infrastructure. Additionally, UCA's financing structure has become consistent allowing the organization to use a longer-range planning horizon.

Purpose-Driven Staff – During meetings with staff, it was clear that employees feel a sincere desire to assist clients and care deeply about the work they do. This level of commitment is unique to UCA compared to other nonprofits. While many nonprofits aim to serve people in need, UCA staff directly interact with these individuals daily, creating a tangible purpose and meaning. With this purpose-driven mindset, UCA has an opportunity to develop a strong and unified culture where employees feel like they are a part of a bigger team, doing work that makes a meaningful difference for those in need.

Section 8: Conclusion

Utah Community Action has well-run programs and active risk management practices. Typical challenges faced by non-profit organizations are active here also. Examples include funding uncertainty, resource shortages, and the challenge of operating a program while under scrutiny from clients, community, and government. Strengths that were noted include Utah Community Action's leadership team and the dedication of staff members. Competitive advantages include an automatically renewing grant funding stream, a 55-year successful operating history, and strong community connections. Weaknesses include a strong reliance on federal and state funding, increasing demands for services, and maintaining staff.

Due to COVID-19, there are an increased number of clients seeking services, resulting in a greater demand on staff and leadership. In light of the disproportionate impact the pandemic has caused on the population that UCA already serves, staff shared that they are forming greater connections to their clients. Families are eager for assistance, and staff are able to refer families to additional services that UCA provides, building trust with the families that they serve in the process. UCA has made significant efforts to support staff during this time and modify services to best meet the needs of clients, and will need to continue to adapt to maintain high-quality services.

For the community as a whole, the primary concerns identified by providers, staff, and clients are a lack of affordable housing and the need for mental health services. Providers and staff also noted the need for enhanced outreach efforts in order to provide vital services for our community's most vulnerable members. Community strengths include the availability of service-providers and their willingness to collaborate in order to best meet community needs.

Looking forward, there are many challenges ahead, especially as it relates to the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite those challenges, UCA is poised to continue providing high-quality programs to empower individuals, strengthen families and build communities.

Data Sources

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