



BLACK RIVER AREA DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

2024 ANNUAL REPORT

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends and Supporters,

As we reflect on the past year, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude for the unwavering support and commitment our community has shown to our mission. The 2024 Annual Report summarizes the remarkable achievements, challenges, and stories that define our journey together.

This past year has demonstrated the resilience of our community. We have worked tirelessly to address the pressing needs of our neighbors—providing essential services and advocating for systemic change. Each program and initiative highlighted in this report represents not only our efforts but also the collective strength of our Board of Directors, dedicated employees, supporters, volunteers, and partners who believe in the power of community action.

Our accomplishments would not be possible without the dedication of our board and staff, the trust of our community, and the generosity of our donors. Together, we have made significant strides in poverty alleviation, education, transportation, nutrition access, affordable housing, and energy efficiency. However, our work is far from finished. We still face considerable challenges that require our continued collaboration and innovation.

As you read through the report, I encourage you to reflect on the impact we have made and consider how you can continue to be involved in our mission. Together, we can build a brighter future for everyone in our community.

Thank you for standing with us and believing in the power of change. Let's continue this journey together.

As for my personal plans for the coming year, I will be retiring from my position as Executive Director of BRAD. However, I will never retire from advocating for the population we serve or from supporting the mission and vision of this agency and community action. Serving this agency in various roles over the past 32 years has been a fulfilling and wonderful journey. Thank you all for your unwavering support and love.

With gratitude,



Rhonda Ahrent
Executive Director

BRAD CORPORATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Diana Dalton
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Paige Catt

Mandy Durham

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HELPING
PEOPLE,
CHANGING
LIVES.

MISSION

BRAD empowers individuals and families to overcome barriers, enhance lives, and build self-sufficiency through innovative programs and strong community partnerships.

VISION

Communities where people have a brighter future.

YEAR IN REVIEW 2024

25,376




SERVICES PROVIDED TO:



3,980

FAMILIES

Total services have increased by 4.44%
from the previous year.



504

POSITIVE
OUTCOMES

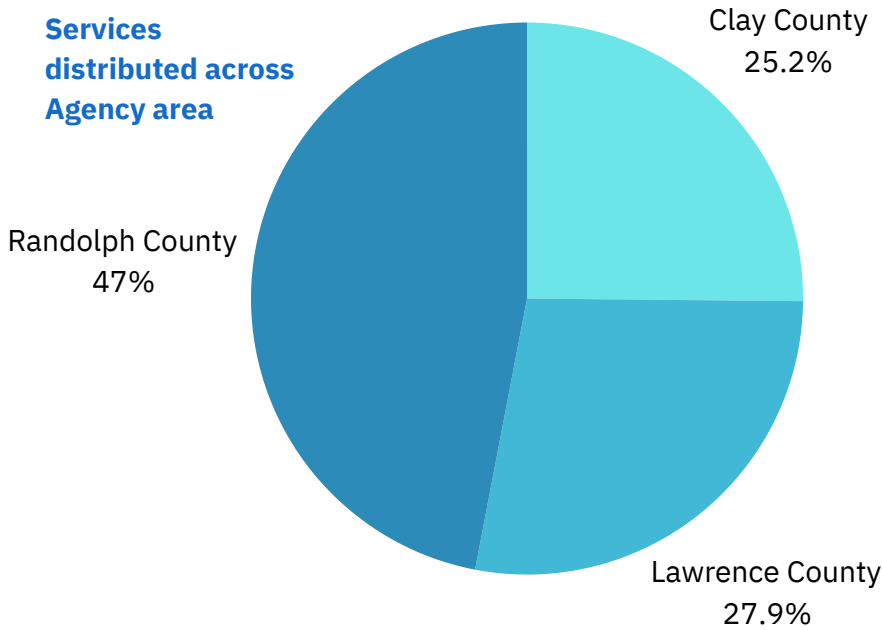


We partner with families to unlock their potential, providing the support and resources they need to thrive.

Our agency is committed to empowering families by offering comprehensive services and fostering self-sufficiency.

YEAR IN REVIEW 2024

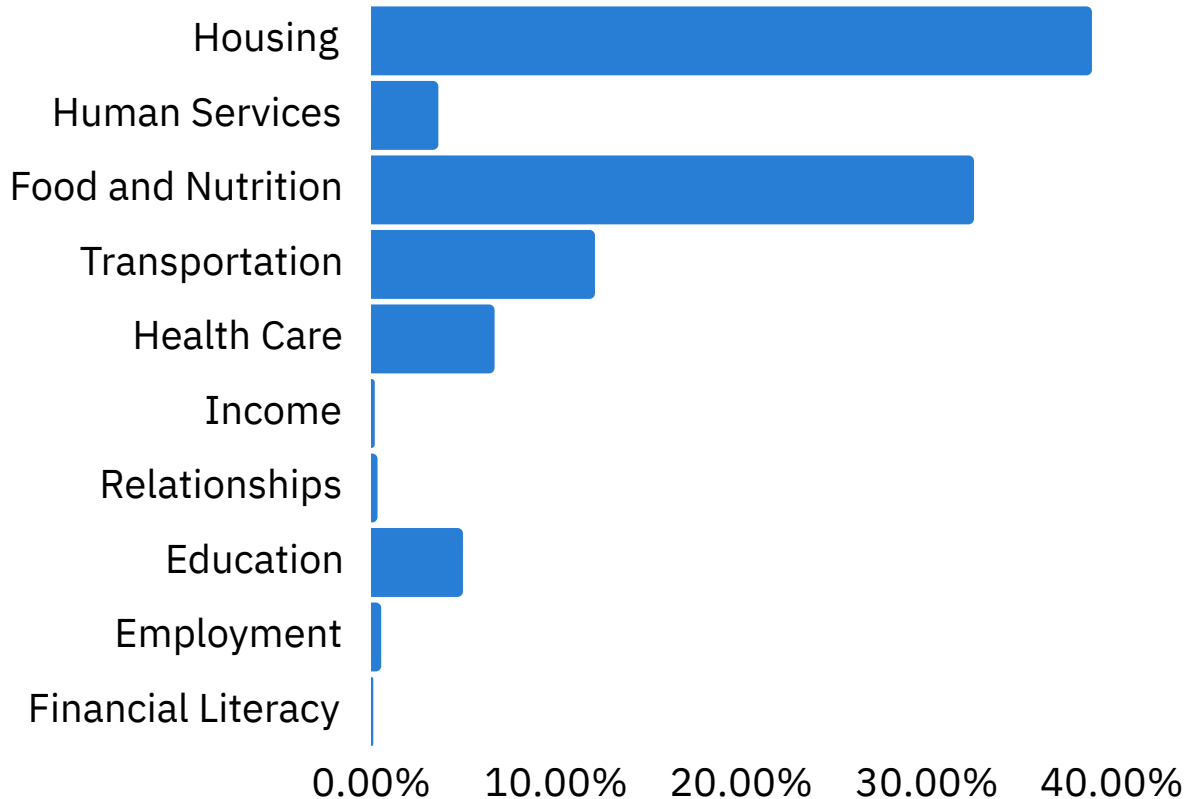
Services distributed across Agency area



We continue to provide quality services that reflect the need of our community.

Food security, housing, senior needs, education, and transportation remain top community priorities as evident in current needs assessments.

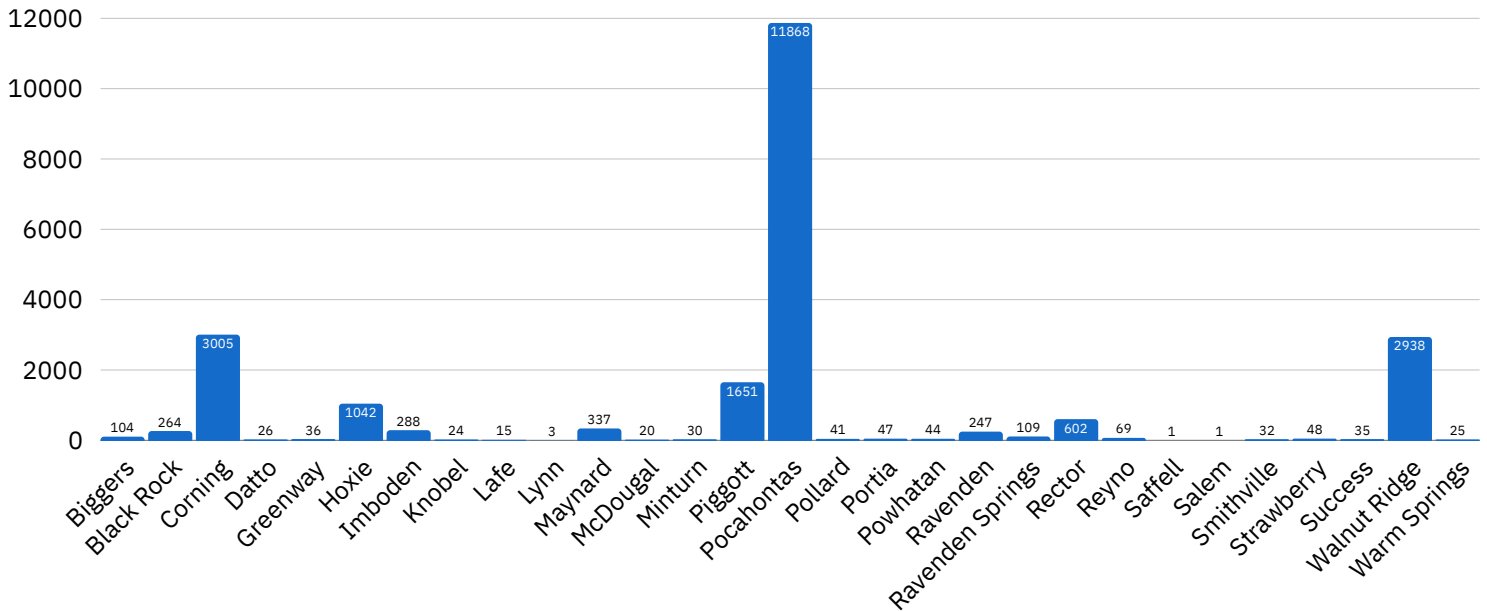
Unduplicated percentage of services rendered to clients by domain



REACH

While most activity centers on populated areas, we actively extend our reach to remote and outlying regions within our service area.

Due to design constraints, this chart may not reflect complete data.



DIGITAL PRESENCE INSIGHTS

We have elevated our online presence to facilitate engagement with a broader client base.

Social Media (2023/2024 comparison)

OVERALL REACH	INTERACTIONS	CLICKS	VISITS
↑ 4.7%	↑ 97.7%	↑ 11.5%	↑ 45.2%

Website Analytics (average 90 day comparison)

ACTIVE USERS
↑ 113.3%

NEW USERS
↑ 106.9%

FAMILY GOALS

Percentage of Family Goals Achieved

Unemployed adults obtaining a living wage.	40.00%
Unemployed adults who obtained and maintained employment for at least 90 days (up to a living wage).	26.67%
Unemployed adults who obtained and maintained employment for at least 180 days (up to a living wage).	100.00%
Employed participants in a career-advancement related program who entered or transitioned into a position that provided increased income and/or benefits.	50.00%
Individuals who demonstrated increased nutrition skills (e.g. cooking, shopping, and growing food).	100.00%
Individuals who demonstrated improved physical health and well-being.	8.33%
Individuals who demonstrated improved mental and behavioral health and well-being.	33.33%
Individuals who improved skills related to the adult role of parents/ caregivers.	50.00%
The number of seniors (65+) who maintained an independent living situation.	60.00%
The number of individuals with disabilities who maintained an independent living situation.	25.00%
The number of individuals with chronic illness who maintained an independent living situation.	100.00%
The number of households experiencing homelessness who obtained safe temporary shelter.	61.54%
The number of households who obtained safe and affordable housing.	59.18%
The number of households who maintained safe and affordable housing for 90 days.	73.53%
The number of households who maintained safe and affordable housing for 180 days.	71.43%
The number of households who avoided eviction.	21.43%
The number of individuals who achieved and maintained capacity to meet basic needs for 90 days.	6.25%
The number of individuals who opened a savings account or IDA.	37.50%
The number of individuals who increased their savings.	20.00%
The number of individuals engaged with the Community Action Agency who report improved financial well-being.	57.14%

FUNDING ANALYSIS

FUNDING SOURCE	PROGRAM	FYE 04/30/2024 AUDITED
US DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HEAD START • EARLY HEAD START • EXPANSION & EXPANSION CARES 	\$ 1,644,727 \$ 1,854,186 \$ 1,914,567
ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCDF - CHILD CARE DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT • ARPA OPERATIONAL AND QUALITY COMMUNITY SERVICE BLOCK GRANT • SENIOR CITIZEN MEDICAID - HOME DELIVERED MEALS 	\$ 1,062,774 \$ 201,495 \$ 287,243 \$ 75,210
ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ARKANSAS BETTER CHANCE 	\$ 461,534
US DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CHILD AND ADULT FOOD PROGRAM 	\$ 522,440
ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WEATHERIZATION - LIHEAP • HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE 	\$ 535,567 \$ 810,908
US DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HUD SECTION 8 	\$ 585,226
EAST ARKANSAS AREA AGENCY ON AGING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SENIOR CITIZENS - CONGREGATE AND HOME DELIVERED MEALS 	\$ 528,703
ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WEATHERIZATION - DOE 	\$ 154,959
ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (ARDOT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SECTION 5311 - PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION 	\$ 333,458

TOTAL GRANT FUNDING: \$ 10,972,997

BUDGET ANALYSIS

Head Start Specific - Explanation of budgetary expenditures and proposed budget for the fiscal year.

Following the 2024 BRAD Audit, Welch, Couch, and Associates, PA, issued an unmodified opinion with no significant deficiencies identified.

HEAD START / EARLY HEAD START		
YEAR-END APRIL 30, 2024		
	BUDGET/ ALLOCATION	ACTUAL EXPENSE
PERSONNEL	2,209,861	2,014,871
FRINGE	404,008	346,656
OUT OF AREA TRAVEL	212,050	203,502
INDIRECT	7,000	317
SUPPLIES	22,950	22,950
CONTRACTUAL	166,678	311,869
OTHER	17,385	16,518
T&TA	404,249	385,375
	3,498,913	3,498,913

EARLY HEAD START EXPANSION		
YEAR-END APRIL 30, 2024		
	BUDGET/ ALLOCATION	ACTUAL EXPENSE
PERSONNEL	1,343,783	1,123,401
FRINGE	199,160	196,502
INDIRECT	129,003	113,419
SUPPLIES	94,500	211,286
CONTRACTUAL	307,461	394,264
OTHER	7,250	6,790
T&TA	42,370	77,865
	2,123,527	2,123,527

EDUCATION

577 Children and Families Served in
Child Development Programs

BRAD Child Development Programs provide high-quality services to prepare children for school and life through tailored learning experiences and a holistic focus on early learning, health, and family well-being. Recognized for meeting all standards in 2023 by the Office of Head Start, BRAD remains committed to school readiness and positive outcomes through staff dedication and parent engagement.



93%

Percentage of Eligible Children Served

The percentage of enrolled children that
received medical and dental exams

Head Start

Physicals - 92%

Dentals - 82%

Lead - 94%

Early Head Start

Physicals - 91%

Dentals - 95%

Lead - 91%

Average Monthly Attendance

Head Start 82.76%

Early Head Start 83.24%

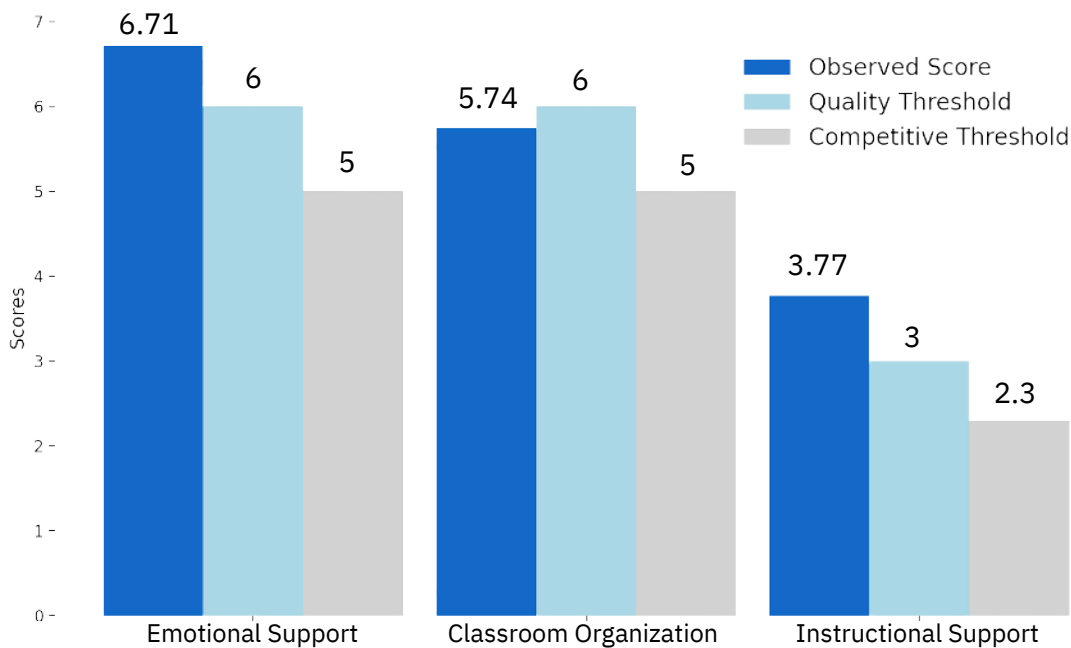
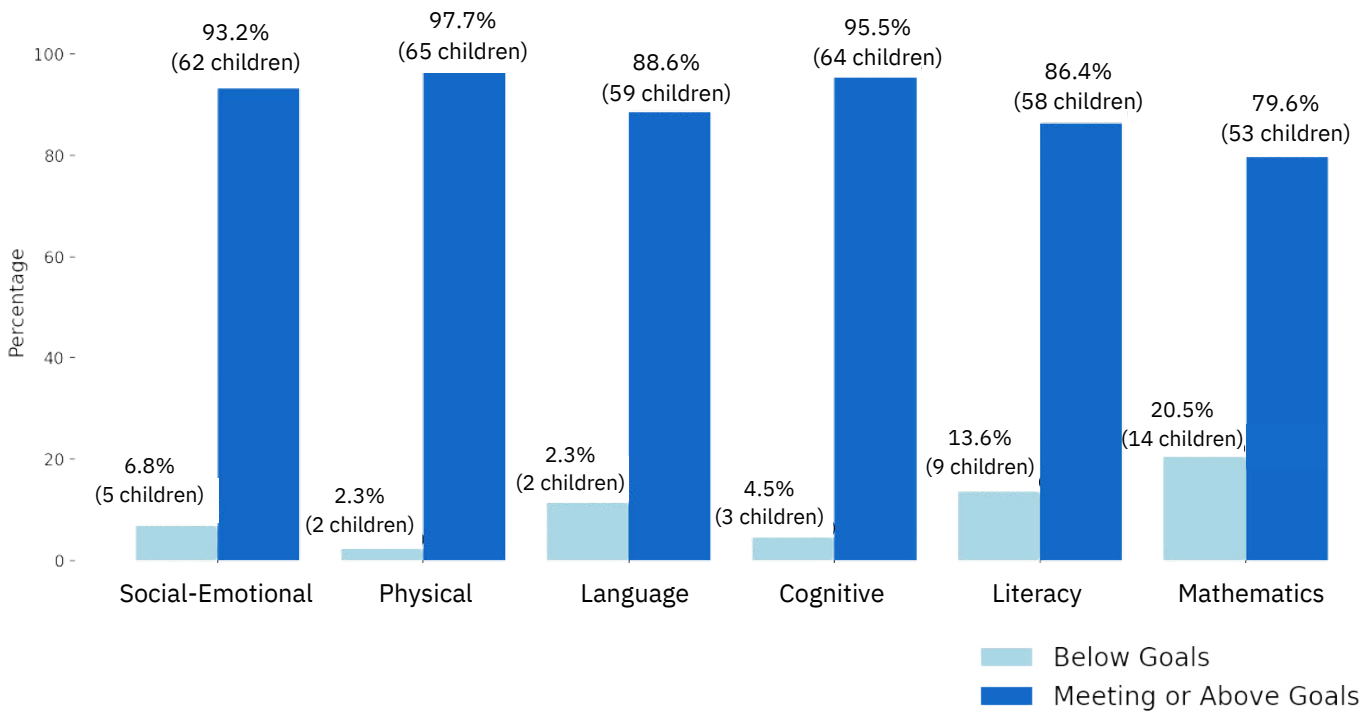


Family and Community Engagement flourished throughout the year with events like Family Game Nights, Family Photos, and Friendship Celebrations. Committees organized clothing and food drives for local and national causes, including hurricane relief. Community partners visited monthly, featuring lifeguards, firefighters, police, Smokey the Bear, and others. Librarians regularly registered children for the Dolly Parton Imagination Library to support literacy. Parents contributed volunteer hours, assisting with lesson plans, cultural food demonstrations, and musical presentations to enrich classroom learning.

EDUCATION

End of Year Child Outcomes 2023-24

Data from the Teaching Strategies Gold platform on final child outcomes showed a 35% IEP/IFSP enrollment in Head Start children and 18% in Early Head Start. There was an overall increase in four-year-olds meeting or exceeding school readiness goals, with most other age groups also improving. The Teaching Strategies Cloud tool, introduced mid-year, enhanced individualized planning, instruction, and curriculum fidelity for classroom staff.



The CLASS® tool, which evaluates three domains and ten dimensions of teacher-child interactions on a seven-point scale, showed improvement in all assessed areas compared to last year.

SENIOR CITIZENS

676

Individual Seniors (65+)
Receiving Services

16,567

Congregate Meals served across our
wellness centers.

33,749

Home Delivered Meals distributed to
homebound clients.

13,111

Senior Socialization instances and events.

5,557

Transportation units to Senior activities.



Our Agency is committed to providing high quality services to our older populations. We collaborate with partners across our service area to find creative ways to take care of those who took care of us.

HOUSING

63 Housing Placements

Housing remains at the top of community needs. We work together as an Agency through our Housing Department, Energy Programs, Case Management, and mediation between landlords and clients to prevent homelessness, ensure area housing is safe and affordable, reduce energy burden, and enable clients are to maintain a stable home environment.

3,065	2,312	45	13
Utility Payments	Monthly Housing Payments	Homes Weatherized	Homeless Clients Placed In Housing

90%

Newly placed clients maintaining housing for the year.



NUTRITION



1,536

Food Distributions/Food Vouchers
Provided to Families and Individuals

352

Unduplicated Children Receiving USDA
Prepared Meals in the Classroom

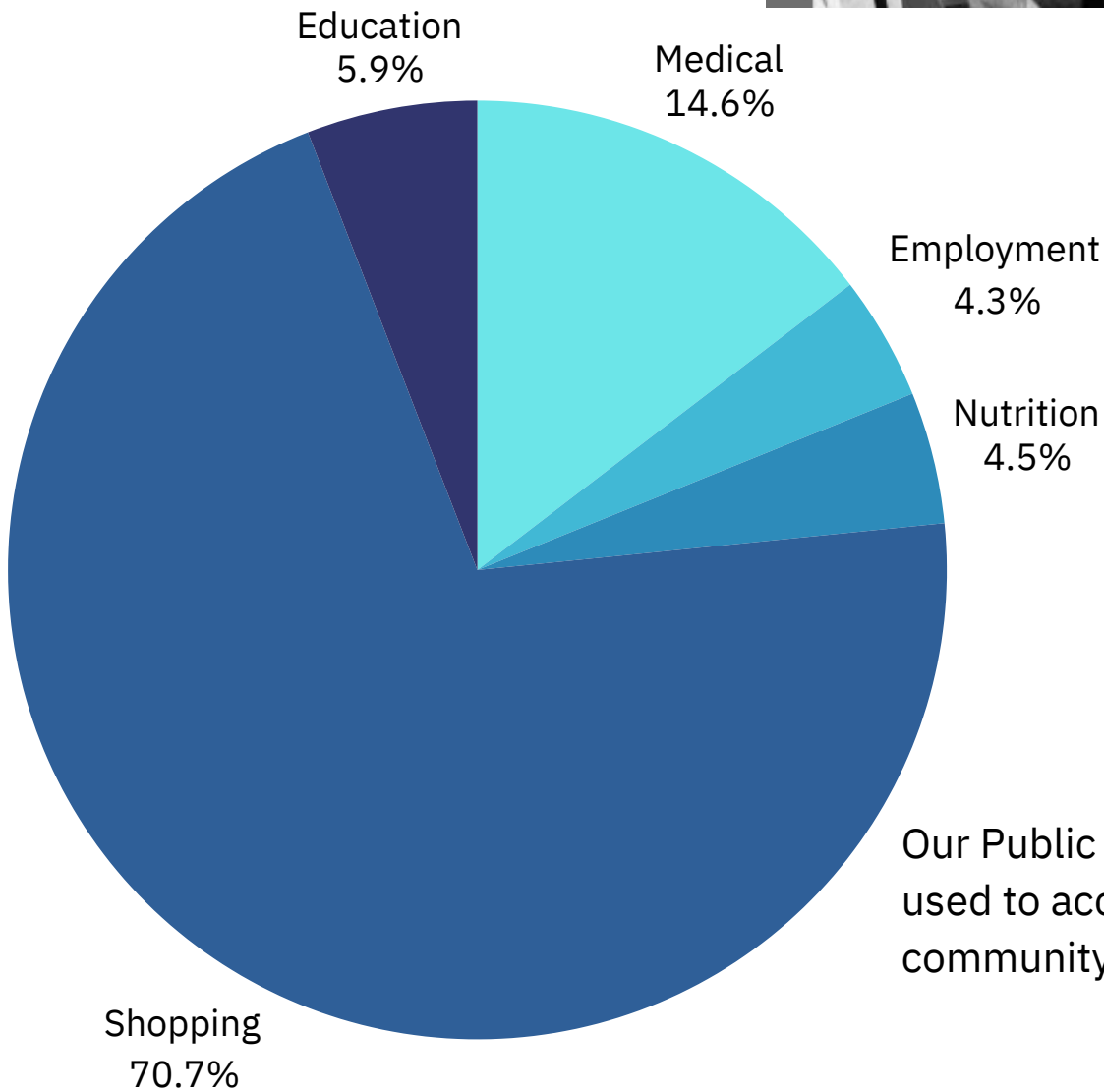
By partnering with the community and advocating for change, we're fighting hunger and promoting healthy choices. Our food voucher system and targeted distribution events aim to ensure that everyone has access to nutritious food.

Our community benefits from involved youth who are excited about doing their part to tackle food insecurity, such as conducting food drives.

TRANSPORTATION

11,617

Round Trip Transportation
Units Provided



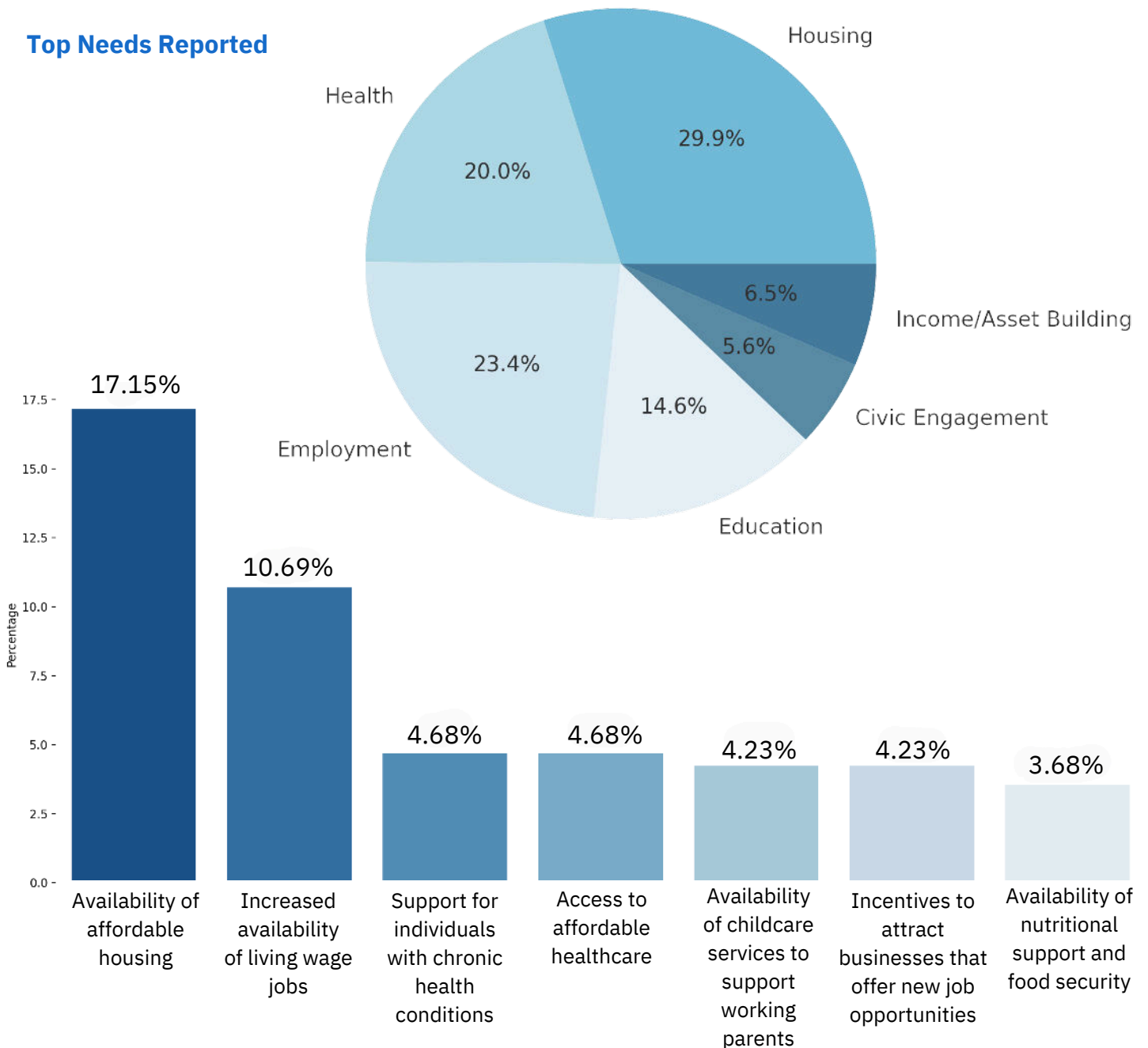
Our Public Transit system is used to access a variety of community resources.

COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

Surveys conducted in the community resulted in the following areas identified as of most need.

A total of 467 responses were recorded.

Top Needs Reported









**1403 Hospital Drive
Pocahontas, AR 72455**

**bradcorp.org
870.892.4547**

Clay County, Lawrence County, Randolph County