

Program Guide 2017



**Bi-County Community Action Programs, Inc.
(Serving Beltrami & Cass Counties)**

Website: bicap.org

**6603 Bemidji Ave N
P.O. Box 579
Bemidji, MN 56619
218- 751-4631
1-800-332-7161**

**8245 Industrial Park Rd NW
P.O. Box 995
Walker, MN 56484
218-547-3438
1-800-332-7135**

EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

(Michele Andringa, Head Start Director—333-9873)

Early Head Start

Early Head Start (EHS) is an intensive, comprehensive, flexible program that is designed to reinforce and respond to the unique strengths and needs of each individual child and family. EHS programs promote healthy prenatal outcomes for pregnant women, enhance the development of very young children, and promote healthy family functioning.

EHS was created by the U.S. Congress in 1994. There are more than 700 Early Head Start programs throughout the nation.

EHS services at BI-CAP include: quality early education both in and out of the home; parenting education; comprehensive health and mental health services, including services to women before, during, and after pregnancy; nutrition education; and family support services.

BI-CAP offers Early Head Start services to approximately 84 children ages 0-3 and their families. Home based services are provided in Bemidji, Blackduck and Backus. Center based services are provided in Bemidji and Blackduck.

Head Start

Head Start is a national program that promotes school readiness by enhancing the social and cognitive development of children through educational, health, nutritional, social and other services for enrolled children and families. Classroom teams focus on helping preschoolers develop the early reading and math skills and the social skills they need to be successful in school. Head Start has a long tradition of delivering comprehensive services designed to foster healthy development in most vulnerable young children, including those with special needs.

Head Start (cont.)

Head Start programs also engage parents in their children's learning and help them in making progress toward their educational, literacy and employment goals. Significant emphasis is placed on the involvement of parents in the administration of local Head Start programs. Parents are involved through their local parent committees and through the Head Start Policy Council.

There are more than 1,500 Head Start programs nationwide. The Head Start program has enrolled more than 27 million children since it began in 1965.

BI-CAP Head Start offers services to approximately 212 children ages 3 through 5 and their families in Beltrami and Cass Counties. Centers are located in Bemidji, Blackduck, Kelliher, Backus, Walker, Pillager and Remer. There are two types of programs offered:

Center based programs offer 4 days of classroom experience plus 2 home visits and 2 conferences per year.

Combination programs offer 1 to 2 home visits per month and 2 to 3 days of classroom experience per week.

ENERGY PROGRAMS

**(Debbie Johnson, Energy Assistance Program Manager
218-333-9850 or 800-332-7161)**

Energy Assistance

The Minnesota Energy Assistance Program provides financial assistance to households to help pay a portion of their home energy and heating bills. The grants are based on the household size, income, fuel type, and energy usage. Primary Heat grants are sent directly to the household's fuel and/or electric vendors to assist households' ability to maintain affordable and continuous energy by providing grants to lower their energy burden.

Crisis Program

Households are eligible to receive a Crisis Benefit if they were determined eligible for a Primary Heat grant and are in a heating or electric emergency situation that the primary heat grant does not resolve. Crisis requests are addressed immediately to avert life threatening and no heat situations.

Energy Related Repair

This program is available to homeowners experiencing a life threatening situation or a no-heat emergency due to a malfunctioning or nonfunctioning heating system. The program will assist in repairing or replacing the homeowner's primary heating system. Proof of ownership is required. This program is available only to households that were determined eligible for the Energy Assistance Program.

YOUTH PROGRAM

(Chris Mack, YouthBuild Manager—333-9868)

YouthBuild

YouthBuild is a comprehensive work training program with five components: Education, Construction, Leadership Development, Case Management support, and Placement Services. Orientation for entry into the program is announced yearly to the community. Low income qualifying young adults ages 16-24 who have dropped out of traditional high school are eligible for consideration into the YouthBuild Program. Participants average approximately 29 hours/week and earn minimum wage while participating in all components of the 6 month minimum program.

BI-CAP YouthBuild partners with Cass Lake Bena ALC and ABE to provide on-site teaching staff for participants to earn their high school diploma or equivalency. Participants perform skills assessments, explore careers and post-secondary options, write résumés, and learn other life skills, such as: budgeting, cooking, vehicle maintenance, gardening, and more.

Construction is a method by which participants can give back to the community. This teaches them valuable work readiness skills while building a credible work history through the process of building a single family home from ground-up. The home is then sold to a low-income community member. Service Learning and Community Volunteering are also built into the program.

Participants have the opportunity to be a part of the Policy Committee to represent the student body as well as experience increased responsibility as they alternate weekly leadership roles. One to two Interns are also chosen to assist staff based on their attendance and performance over the duration of the program.

YouthBuild staff utilize community partners and program resources to try to help participants resolve barriers, such as: transportation, housing, child care, and acquiring their driver's permit/license. Participants also receive employment and post-secondary placement assistance as they are ready to exit the program.

YouthBuild Registration

If interested in the YouthBuild Program, fill out an application at 3023 Mill St. NE, Bemidji. A weeklong orientation will start on October 30th for the new 2017/2018 school year.

SUPPORTIVE HOUSING PROGRAMS

(Hyacinth Stiffler, Supportive Housing / Resource Development
Director 218-547-3438 X 104

Rental Assistance Program (RAP)

RAP is a rental assistance program funded by MN Housing. BI-CAP administers the subsidy program for 27 families in Beltrami and Cass Counties. Participating families receive a subsidy of up to \$300 per month to help make housing affordable. Families can receive a subsidy for up to 60 months.

Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program (FHPAP)

FHPAP is designed to provide direct service assistance and housing counseling to prevent homelessness and to move homeless families into stable housing. This program, funded through MN Housing, is available in Cass and Beltrami Counties.

Transitional Housing

BI-CAP owns and/or manages 11 scattered-site transitional housing units throughout Beltrami and Cass Counties. The housing is interim shelter between homelessness and permanent housing for families with children. Utilizing the home visiting model, counselors and families work together to overcome barriers, develop skills, and create a permanent housing plan.

Foreclosure Prevention Assistance Program (FPAP)

Funded through MN Housing, FPAP provides trained/certified counselors to assist with mortgage foreclosure prevention in Cass and Beltrami Counties.

Beltrami County Housing Locator Program

The Housing Locator program works with Serious Mentally Ill individuals who are referred by Beltrami County case workers. The Housing Locator works closely with participants to secure housing and assists the client to locate units and work with landlords. Program funds are provided by Beltrami County.

Emergency Solutions Grant-Rapid Rehousing (ESG-RR)

A program funded through MN Department of Human Services designed to get people into housing as soon as possible with minimal time spent homeless. The program provides for short to medium term rental assistance and accompanying case management to address barriers, identify goals and work toward a permanent housing solution. Available to those at or below 30% Area Median Income. Tenants must pay 30% of their income toward rent.

HUD Scattered-Site Transitional Housing

Available in Cass County for homeless families and individuals. Participants in this program find affordable units on the open market and pay 30% of their income towards rent. Services include case management for up to 24 months supporting the household to develop a permanent housing plan and address barriers.

DHS Homeless Services Grant

BI-CAP is one of nine partners (five Community Action Agencies, three Indian Reservations and Evergreen Family Services) implementing the DHS Service Grant. Service dollars are available to households who are experiencing long-term homelessness by MN State definition. Services include case management and direct financial assistance. To qualify, participants must have experienced one year of consecutive homelessness or have experienced four episodes of homelessness in three years. This program is available in Cass and Beltrami Counties and is funded by the State Department of Human Services. (DHS)

Long Term Homeless Rental Assistance Program (LTH)

LTH Rental Assistance is accessible to clients who qualify for the DHS Services Grant. The program provides a rental subsidy based on income for up to 60 months. The program is available in Cass and Beltrami Counties, has the capacity to serve 72 households and is funded by MN Housing.

Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP)

Emergency Food and Shelter Program funds are available in both Cass and Beltrami Counties. A local board for each county, consisting of representatives from various organizations, determines how funds are distributed. BI-CAP's portion is used primarily for first month's rent and eviction and foreclosure prevention as well as utility assistance. Portions of the funding are also distributed to other local organizations and agencies such as food shelves, soup kitchens and homeless shelters.

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)

Permanent Supportive Housing serves homeless individuals with a documented disability. Participants receive a rental subsidy and support services including case management. PSH is offered in both Beltrami and Cass Counties.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

BI-CAP outreaches and assists potential applicants to apply for food support.

WEATHERIZATION HOUSING PROGRAMS

(Jeff Farr, Weatherization Manager—333-9841)

DOE Weatherization

Bi-County CAP, Inc. Weatherization department works with clients to improve the energy efficiency, health and safety, and to decrease the energy consumption of their home. Homeowners who applied for Energy Assistance are referred to this program. Priority is given to elderly and handicapped households with high energy consumption and single head of households with children. The following energy saving measures are eligible activities: air sealing, upgrading furnace efficiency, insulation for homes shell, health and safety measures, and in some cases door and/or window replacement in mobile homes only. Agency Energy Auditors perform pre- and post-inspections with the use of blower doors. This test checks the air tightness of the home, allowing the energy auditor and contractor to identify air leaks, central air quality, and prevent over tightness. All measures performed must be determined to ensure cost effectiveness utilizing the Weatherization Assistant software.

Crow Wing Power Conservation Improvement Program

The Crow Wing Power Conservation Improvement Program is designed to help income qualified Crow Wing Power customers save money on their energy bills. To assist clients with refrigerator replacements and/or water heater replacements we make direct referrals to Crow Wing Power.

Otter Tail Power Conservation Improvement Program

The Otter Tail Power Conservation Improvement Program is designed to help income qualified Otter Tail Power customers save money on their energy bills. Agency Energy Auditors perform an electric analysis and a few of the items provided for the household include: LED bulbs, aerators, engine block heaters, refrigerator replacement, freezer replacement, and water heater replacement that can be put on off-peak. If electric is the primary heat, additional weatherization measures may be provided such as insulation and air sealing.

Beltrami Electric Coop Conservation Improvement Program

The Beltrami Electric Coop Conservation Improvement Program is designed to help income qualified Beltrami Electric customers save money on their energy bills. Agency Energy Auditors perform an electric analysis, and a few of the items provided for the household include: LED bulbs, aerators, refrigerator replacement and attic and wall insulation.

Minnesota Power Conservation Improvement Program

The Minnesota Power Conservation Improvement Program is designed to help income qualified Minnesota Power customers save money on their energy bills. Agency Energy Auditors perform an electric analysis and a few of the items provided for the household include: compact fluorescent bulbs, aerators, refrigerator replacement, freezer replacement, and water heater replacement.

Lake Country Power Conservation Improvement Program

The Lake Country Power Conservation Improvement Program is designed to help income qualified Lake Country Power customers save money on their energy bills. Agency Energy Auditors perform an electric analysis and a few of the items provided for the household include: compact fluorescent bulbs, refrigerator replacement, freezer replacement, water heater replacement, window air conditioner replacement, and washing machine replacement.



MISSION STATEMENT: BI-CAP helps low income people obtain self-sufficiency.

VISION STATEMENT: To eliminate poverty in Beltrami and Cass Counties