

LINC Commission Meeting

September 20, 2021



Back to **School**
Back to **Friends!**

A LINC staff member helps a student with her mask at Faxon Elementary in the Kansas City Public Schools. LINC Before and After School Programs in KCPS, North Kansas City, Hickman Mills, Center and Grandview School Districts began on Aug. 23rd.



A LINC staff greeter comforts a new Kindergarten student on her first day of school at Millennium in Hickman Mills.



LINC Coordinator Adrian Wilson greets new students at the LINC program at Meadowmere in Grandview.



LINCSM
Local Investment Commission

Local Investment Commission (LINC) Vision

Our Shared Vision

A caring community that builds on its strengths to provide meaningful opportunities for children, families and individuals to achieve self-sufficiency, attain their highest potential, and contribute to the public good.

Our Mission

To provide leadership and influence to engage the Kansas City Community in creating the best service delivery system to support and strengthen children, families and individuals, holding that system accountable, and changing public attitudes towards the system.

Our Guiding Principles

1. **COMPREHENSIVENESS:** Provide ready access to a full array of effective services.
2. **PREVENTION:** Emphasize “front-end” services that enhance development and prevent problems, rather than “back-end” crisis intervention.
3. **OUTCOMES:** Measure system performance by improved outcomes for children and families, not simply by the number and kind of services delivered.
4. **INTENSITY:** Offering services to the needed degree and in the appropriate time.
5. **PARTICIPANT INVOLVEMENT:** Use the needs, concerns, and opinions of individuals who use the service delivery system to drive improvements in the operation of the system.
6. **NEIGHBORHOODS:** Decentralize services to the places where people live, wherever appropriate, and utilize services to strengthen neighborhood capacity.
7. **FLEXIBILITY AND RESPONSIVENESS:** Create a delivery system, including programs and reimbursement mechanisms, that are sufficiently flexible and adaptable to respond to the full spectrum of child, family and individual needs.
8. **COLLABORATION:** Connect public, private and community resources to create an integrated service delivery system.
9. **STRONG FAMILIES:** Work to strengthen families, especially the capacity of parents to support and nurture the development of their children.
10. **RESPECT AND DIGNITY:** Treat families, and the staff who work with them, in a respectful and dignified manner.
11. **INTERDEPENDENCE/MUTUAL RESPONSIBILITY:** Balance the need for individuals to be accountable and responsible with the obligation of community to enhance the welfare of all citizens.
12. **CULTURAL COMPETENCY:** Demonstrate the belief that diversity in the historical, cultural, religious and spiritual values of different groups is a source of great strength.
13. **CREATIVITY:** Encourage and allow participants and staff to think and act innovatively, to take risks, and to learn from their experiences and mistakes.
14. **COMPASSION:** Display an unconditional regard and a caring, non-judgmental attitude toward, participants that recognizes their strengths and empowers them to meet their own needs.
15. **HONESTY:** Encourage and allow honesty among all people in the system.



Monday, Sept. 20, 2021 | 4 – 5:30 pm
Online Meeting

Agenda

- I. Welcome and Announcements
- II. Approvals
 - a. July 2021 minutes (motion)
- III. Superintendent Reports
- IV. LINC Employee Benefits
 - a. 401 K Update
 - b. 401 K Charter Change (Motion)
 - c. Health Insurance Renewal
- V. Caring Communities
 - a. School opening
 - b. Staffing
- VI. Other
 - a. Bicentennial Parade
 - b. Other
- VII. Adjournment



THE LOCAL INVESTMENT COMMISSION – JULY 19, 2021

The Local Investment Commission met via Zoom. Cochair **David Disney** presided. Commissioners attending were:

Bob Bartman
Jack Craft
Tom Davis
Aaron Deacon
Anita Gorman

Tom Lewin
Ken Powell
Marge Randle
David Ross
Marj Williams

A motion to approve the minutes of the June 21, 2021, LINC Commission meeting was approved unanimously.

Superintendents Reports

- **Yolanda Cargile**, Superintendent (Center School District), reported on masking protocols for staff and students and on new principals hired for the coming school year. A ribbon cutting ceremony for the new Indian Creek Elementary building will be held Aug. 19. The school board will vote next week on the new strategic plan.
- **Steve Morgan**, Asst. Superintendent (Fort Osage School District), reported on new masking protocols in accordance with county guidelines. District convocation will be held Aug. 16. Bond-funded campus projects are proceeding. Fort Osage was recognized by Mid-Continent Public Library at its Legacy Luncheon last week. The district purchased the Rockin' B Coffeeshop, which will be run by students in the district Career and Technology Center; other students will be engaged in learning projects there, too; a video produced by LINC was shown.
- **Joana King**, Asst. Superintendent (Grandview School District), reported that five Grandview teachers participated in a two-week externship with Honeywell. Next school year 150 students will be in mentorships with Honeywell, which employs over 25 Grandview graduates. Grandview partnered with LINC on the first session of its summer school program and will partner with Barstow School for the second session.
- **Carl Skinner**, Asst. Superintendent (Hickman Mills School District), reported bond construction is happening now at most buildings. A new principal has been hired at Santa Fe Elementary. The district partnered with Urban Community Connection to provide family resources at schools. The district held in-person summer school and is now holding a virtual summer school program. A new Price Chopper on Bannister Road will open soon and will employ some high school students.
- **Kevin Foster**, Executive Director (Genesis School), reported Genesis is operating summer school in partnership with Boys and Girls Clubs and Emmanuel Early Childhood Development Center. Genesis is engaging families around back-to-school with Project Prepare on Aug. 7. Genesis will use a federal School Literacy Grant in its efforts to better leverage technology, track student learning, and develop other strategies to improve learning for students grade 7-8.
- **Brad Smith**, Coordinator (Education Policy Fellowship Program), reported the next cohort of fellows will start the program in the fall; recruitment efforts are under way. Several LINC staff participated in the latest program year, which ended in May.

LINC Treasurer **David Ross** requested a motion to approve the LINC FY22 budget on the recommendation of the LINC Finance Committee.

The motion to approve the LINC FY22 budget was approved unanimously.

Clyde McQueen, CEO of the Full Employment Council (FEC), reported on workforce development issues. The State of Missouri Performance Report Card shows that Kansas City and Eastern Jackson County had the top outcomes with respect to credentials earned, skills gained, and employment secured. The work of FEC and its partners, including LINCWorks and area educational institutions, showed that certification (as opposed to degrees) can lead to good jobs. The pandemic has shown that childcare is necessary for a strong workforce and should be considered a crucial component of infrastructure; transportation and housing are also major issues.

Marge Randle reported that the area workforce development initiative partnership has been effective because of respect between the partners.

LINCWorks Director **Dawn Patterson** reported that the pandemic revealed workforce development needs and the needs of participants that must be met in order to obtain and retain jobs. The partnership between LINC and FEC puts the needs of families and community first.

LINC Deputy Director **Brent Schondelmeyer** introduced a presentation on utility assistance. LINC staff **Bryan Shepard** reported that LINC has distributed \$421,000 in utility assistance to renters through the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) so far. Processing of cases has gradually increased as more staff have become involved and intake clinics have been held at Morning Star Youth and Family Life Center.

John Rich, Executive Director of Mid America Assistance Coalition (MAAC), reported on the partnership with LINC and other area agencies to process ERAP applications. MAAC has applied for an additional round of funding and looks forward to partnering with LINC on future utility assistance efforts.

Discussion followed.

LINC Vice President **Janet Miles-Bartee** introduced a discussion of Covid vaccinations. A high number of LINC staff have already been vaccinated. A vaccination clinic at Morning Star will resume on July 27. LINC HR Director **Trent DeVreugd** reported the delta variant is causing a rise in cases, with positivity rates now similar to those in spring and with rising hospitalizations. LINC President **Gayle A. Hobbs** reported LINC has been responding individually to any staff concerns over vaccinations; the main office reopening will take place in a way that makes sense.

Ross requested a motion that all LINC Commissioners should be vaccinated by Sept. 1, 2021.

The motion was approved unanimously.

Hobbs reported the next meeting will be held in September.

The meeting was adjourned.

Emotional day: LINC school families enjoy safe, joyful reunions

Aug. 24, 2021

By Joe Robertson/LINC Writer



LINC Caring Communities Coordinator Adrian Wilson addresses children on the first day during snack time at Meadowmere Elementary School.

The first school day's good-byes trickle out one at a time — like every day — as parents arrive sporadically to pick up their children from LINC.

But when you're a new kindergartner, like 5-year-old Camryn, hearing your name on the walkie-talkie, and a LINC staffer is walking you alone that first time down the hallway, seemingly leaving new friends behind . . .

You wonder what's going on.

Dad's there with a big smile behind his mask to greet her in the front office at Meadowmere Elementary School in the Grandview School District.

"Did you have a good day?" Cody Hastings asks. And his daughter, holding onto a paper crown she decorated as a first-day kindergartner, nestles into her father's hug, then looks up and speaks barely above a whisper.

"I want to go to LINC," she says.

"Awwww," Hastings says, as LINC staff laugh and smile with them. Another beautiful relationship is in the making.

"You'll be back tomorrow morning," Hastings says. "Tell 'em good-bye." And now everyone is waving. "See you in the morning!"

The promise of a new year, new friends, new games and educational adventures unfolded across some 40 LINC Caring Communities before- and after-school programs Monday in the Kansas City, Hickman Mills, Center, North Kansas City and Grandview school districts.

It's a bit tricky, said LINC Lead Staff Alique Ramsey at Meadowmere, with so many Covid-19 safety protocols to learn and practice.

"But we are excited to be back," she said. "The kids missed us. We missed the kids. It's exciting to see our old kids and how much they've grown. It's exciting to see new kids."

It was an emotional day for new parents too.

"I was extremely excited," Hastings said. "And then today, when it was time to drop (Camryn) off, I got real sad. And then about mid-day I thought to myself, I can get used to this, and I got happy again."

And clearly, he nodded at Camryn and her eagerness to return, "she likes LINC."

At all of the LINC sites, teams are ready to bring back the full range of activities that were missing for so much of last school year — with mask requirements, cleaning protocols and commitments to full vaccination.

At Carver Dual Language Elementary School in the Kansas City Public Schools, classmates Jazlyn Vazquez and Jacqueline Hernandez, both 10, found out that much of Day One was finding fun ways for students and LINC staffers to get to know each other.

It's a good way to get over "being nervous," Jazlyn said.

"We can learn stuff about the LINC teachers," Jacqueline said. "We got to write things about ourselves. It's fun to be back."

That's how the new year begins, said LINC's Carver Lead Staff Anthony Jappa.

"We're finding out what they did this summer, what classes they're in, what they're worried about, what they're looking forward to," he said. "It's about getting to know the kids that are new and reconnecting with the kids we've had before."

The joy circulated across the city, beginning with the early morning reunions at the before-school programs at all LINC sites, including Kansas City's Faxon Elementary School.

Everywhere there were feelings of "excitement and anticipation," said LINC's Faxon Lead Staff Markis Samuels.

Rituals were back, like Bernell Miller's grandchildren posing for a picture outside Faxon before ducking into the front doors — pausing to get their temperature taken and their masks secured.



5-year-old Camryn walks the hall with Lead Staff Alique Ramsey, top picture, then waves good-bye with her dad, Cody Hastings.



LINC Children head out to a gym activity to get to know each other at Carver Dual Language Elementary School.



LINC children enjoy playground time at Millennium at Santa Fe Elementary School.



Children get their masks right before heading inside to LINC's program at Faxon Elementary School.

"I'm happy because they're happy," Miller said. "They're happy to come back because, you know, last year they couldn't come back."

LINC is taking full precautions to help families feel secure during the pandemic, said Drake Bushnell, LINC's Caring Communities Coordinator at Millennium at Santa Fe Elementary School in Hickman Mills.

"The kids want to learn with us . . . and they're being safe," Bushnell said. "The kids are pretty good at wearing masks."

LINC's "Safe to Serve Workforce" banner hanging inside Santa Fe's entry means to comfort parents that LINC is doing everything possible to keep everyone safe.

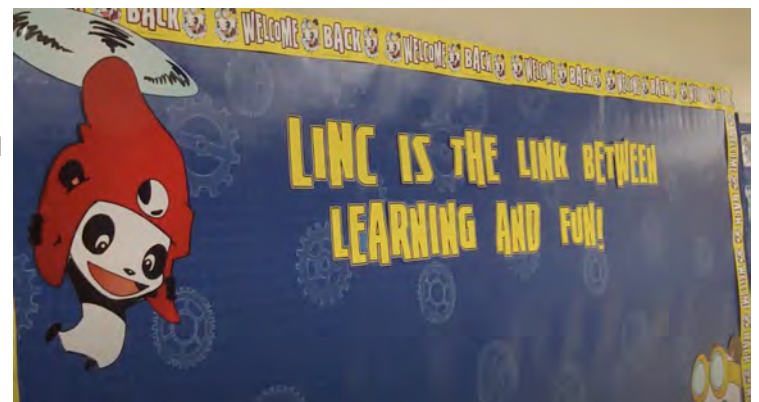
"We've been really pushing the vaccine in all our company," he said. "We're treating this diligently and safely and that makes everyone more comfortable — not just the staff for the parents as well."

And the precautions will help keep everyone together, which is good news to 10-year-old Madison Ratcliff at Meadowmere.

"LINC is fun all the time," she said. "I got to see my friends. Everybody was here . . . It felt good today."



Showing off toy creations at Millennium at Santa Fe.



The message board at Carver is ready for the school-year's collection of pictures and mementos from LINC activities to come.

'Justice in the Schools' legal help for families expanding to Center School District

September 13, 2021

By Joe Robertson/LINC Writer

Legal assistance for housing problems, eviction threats, foreclosure, consumer complaints and other matters is coming to the aid of Center School District families.

LINC is expanding its support of the Justice in the Schools program to give Center households protection that has already been successful [in Hickman Mills](#) and the [Kansas City Public Schools](#).

Attorneys from [Legal Aid of Western Missouri](#) have been helping qualifying families stand against destabilizing threats since 2018 so their children can be safe and stay in school.

"I hope it is helpful to families to have an advocate," Justice in the Schools Attorney Garrett Christensen said. "Our goal is to assist families in stressful and unfair situations."

LINC has been a supporter of the Legal Aid program since it began in the Kansas City Public Schools, and LINC provided the funding to bring Christensen to Hickman Mills in the 2019-2020 school year.

Center School District Superintendent Yolanda Cargile, who was the superintendent for Hickman Mills when the program opened there, supported LINC's plan to expand Christensen's work to Center as well.

"I know Dr. Cargile is passionate about the project," Christensen said. "We've learned some lessons (in Hickman Mills) on outreach and how to connect with families and it's an exciting opportunity to provide the services in Center."

Since January 2020 in Hickman Mills, Justice in the Schools has opened 169 cases for families, affecting 184 students and 13 Hickman Mills staff.

The work has involved 56 housing cases including eviction defense, 48 family law cases such as custody, divorce and adoption issues, 37 guardianship cases, and 14 consumer cases including bankruptcy and debts.

Legal Aid of Western Missouri and the Legal Services Corporation have been working with the school districts to give families critical help with LINC's support.

The legal support was largely inspired by a community-wide desire [to protect families from eviction](#) and the destabilizing pressures that cause high mobility rates. Families too often, by force or necessity, move in and out of neighborhoods, changing schools, many times going through episodes of homelessness.



Troost Elementary School students at LINC display civil rights signs for Black History Month, February 2020.



Justice In the Schools Legal Clinic

School-Based Services and Family Empowerment

We can help with:

- Landlord/Tenant Law (eviction defense)
- Public & Subsidized Housing Issues
- Foreclosure Prevention
- Family Law and Guardianships
- Domestic Violence Protection
- Healthcare
- Food Stamps, TANF, & SSI
- Consumer Matters (car titles, loans, bankruptcy)
- Tax Law Clinic
- Denial of Unemployment Benefits

FREE to eligible Center & Hickman Mills families and district employees.



(816) 410-8432

kclinc.org/justiceintheschools





Justice in the Schools – Hickman Mills

Monthly Progress Report

Progress Report #: 8 of 12

Reporting Period: 7/29/2021–8/26/2021

Submittal Date: 8/26/2021

Staff Attorney: Garrett Christensen

Impact During Clinic Lifespan *(From Jan 2020 to August 2021)*

<u>Overall Caseload</u>	<u>Overall Students Impacted</u>	<u>Overall Active Cases</u>	<u>Overall Staff Served</u>	<u>Overall Acceptance Rate</u>
169	184	40	13	83%

Impact During This Reporting Period

<u>Intakes Opened</u>	<u>Students Impacted</u>	<u>Staff Served</u>	<u>Acceptance Rate</u>
14	9		100% (3 pending)

Client Issue Types

<u>Year</u>	<u>Housing</u> <i>(Evictions, Public Housing, LL Complaints, etc.)</i>	<u>Family Law</u> <i>(Custody, Divorce, Adoption, Child Support, etc.)</i>	<u>Guardianships</u> <i>(Adult/Minor)</i>	<u>Consumer</u> <i>(Bankruptcy, Loans, Debt, etc.)</i>	<u>Federal/Public Benefits</u> <i>(Medicaid, SSI, Unemployment, etc.)</i>	<u>Misc.</u> <i>(Wills/estate planning, etc.)</i>
2021	32	15	19	7	4	3
2020	24	33	18	7	7	0

(OVER)



Client Success Story:

Jessica is a single mother of three children and has one student in the Hickman Mills School District. She left her job as a truck driver when COVID-19 hit to care for her children. Shortly thereafter, Jessica noticed mold in her apartment and contacted the Healthy Homes Inspection Program. Independent mold testing showed moderate levels of mold in the unit. When presented with this information, the landlord moved her to another unit without mold.

However, Jessica fell several months behind on rent. When her landlord filed an eviction for unpaid rent, Jessica contacted the Justice in the Schools Legal Clinic. Her attorney filed an answer in court regarding the mold issue and its effect on Jessica's family. We negotiated down the amount owed due to the mold and insured that Jessica would not be moved back to the unit with the mold unless and until the mold was remediated to her satisfaction. We helped Jessica get back rent and forward rent so that she could focus on her children and obtaining employment. We also secured an early termination option in Jessica's lease so that she could find alternative housing. Ultimately, we held the landlord responsible for providing safe housing, kept an eviction off of Jessica's record, worked closely with her CAC caseworker on an action plan so that Jessica could focus on reemployment and childcare, and helped secure a better housing situation for Jessica and her children. Jessica recently messaged our office ecstatic that she had a new, well-paid truck driving position and is optimistic about her future.

Outreach Efforts

- Attended each school's Back to School Rally on August 18th and 19th for tabling, flyer distribution, and direct connection with district families and personnel. 185 direct contacts made and additional flyers left with HMC-1 staff and LINC staff
- Attended Community LINC Back to School event on 8/21 for tabling, flyer distribution. Over 40 direct contacts made
- Attended IMPACT Hickman Mills meeting with partner agencies to share about project and join collaboration
- Weekly check-ins with district-level student services specialist and regular communication with HMC-1 enrollment coordinator

Fort Osage breaks ground on new administration, transportation facility

Aug. 26, 2021

By Joe Roberston/LINC Writer



The Fort Osage school board and its constituents had a pretty big wish list for its community and its construction partners when it put two ballot issues before voters last April.

Thursday morning, the first ceremonial shovels of dirt got turned for the big-ticket item — a new building for transportation, maintenance and administration.

“I’m so very proud of this district,” school board President Floyd Hawkins told a gathering of supporters under a giant shade tree.

“I want to thank the patrons of this district . . . for your trust through the years.”

Cicadas buzzed. Highway 24 traffic rushed. And a trio of heavy construction dozers waited in the blazing sun as district officials, supporters and construction team leaders with shovels marked the moment in white hard hats.

The \$20 million bond issue and a 32-cent transfer between the district’s debt service and operating levies passed overwhelmingly in April, allowing the district to continue work on its master plan.

The new facility, which is being built directly east of Fire Prairie Upper Elementary School on the east edge of the district’s sprawling campus at Twyman Road and U.S. 24, is expected to open in the fall of 2022.

Other bond issue projects include renovating kitchen facilities and building various parking lot and driveway improvements.

The shift of funding from the debt service levy will help the district maintain competitive salaries for its staff and support on-going programming as well as build a new gym and expand and renovate the band room at the high school.

'You see me smiling?' LINC beats barriers plaguing utility bill assistance

Sept. 10, 2021

By Joe Robertson/LINC Writer



Dezhanae Scott is one of hundreds of Kansas City renters who have connected to pandemic utility bill assistance with LINC's help at Morning Star's Youth and Family Life Center at 27th and Prospect.

The man who stepped off the bus at 27th and Prospect had a lot of trouble on his mind:

More than a thousand dollars in back-due utility bills. Shut-off warnings. And eyesight so bad he couldn't read any of them himself.

At that moment, among renters who would qualify for federal help with their debts, he was like the roughly four out of five in Kansas City and the U.S. who haven't gotten help because they either don't know about the pandemic relief funds or can't unravel the technological and bureaucratic knot jamming the system nationwide.

But he had a tip that would change everything. *Go to Morning Star.*

There, Rene Jones was one of the members of LINC's team waiting inside Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church's Youth and Family Life Center, not 100 feet away from where the city bus left him.

"He was a walk-in," Jones said.

Many arrive this way, hearing from a friend or a family member about what has been happening at Morning Star since utility companies and area relief agencies sought help last spring accessing the region's share of several billion dollars of federal relief.

All the man knew was that somehow LINC could help him.

But what LINC has done to uncork a severely backlogged relief operation has been remarkable, said John Rich, the executive director of the Mid-America Assistance Coalition, which is helping facilitate the massive fund distribution.

"Thank goodness LINC decided to do the hard part," he said, "day-in, day-out, working with clients, getting their documentation put together."

Even now, with multiple agencies trying to help in the process, the relief funds at the area's disposal are only reaching about 20% of the eligible households, Rich said.

The applications have to be completed online, are many pages long, and require the uploading of bills and rental agreements that then have to pass through a layered digital journey to get funds approved and distributed to utility companies and landlords.

To help people like the man who stepped in off the bus, Morning Star's team has to manage six different data systems that "currently do not talk to each other," said LINC Communications specialist Bryan Shepard, who built Morning Star's utilities relief operation.

LINC created guides and training videos for the staff, he said, but each client's case is unique with multiple variables at play in determining how much aid can be distributed. Data has to be entered and tracked through multiple systems, guarding against entry errors every step of the way.

"It's a very time-consuming and at times frustrating process," Shepard said. And dealing with it has required "more staffing and brute force to push the cases through."

LINC deployed and trained staff, without seeking funding help, at a time when many other non-profit agencies doing similar work were dealing with the loss of staff and volunteers during the pandemic, Rich said.

As of Sept. 9, LINC's operation at Morning Star had processed more than \$784,000 in utility aid, serving more than 535 households, averaging some \$1,460 for each.

The impact of the relief across the city is enormous, Rich said.

For much of the past year and a half, renters were protected by moratoriums on evictions and utility shutoffs, but the moratoriums have ended and debts on all those bills still have to be paid. Many arrearages are in the thousands of dollars.

"Housing stability and the utilities in your home . . . go hand in hand," Rich said. "Health and education are all impacted."

Dezshanae Scott of Kansas City was one of dozens of people who came to utility aid clinics that LINC arranged with utility companies earlier this year to help with the application process.

"I heard about it from a friend that told a friend," she said. "They help you out. They're real nice too. Because I was going through a lot." But now, "you see me smiling, right? That's what this means."

LINC's work at Morning Star complements the more than 50 Caring Communities programs LINC anchors at school sites across multiple school districts. Here LINC merges its mission with the church, adapting to the needs of the community — including setting up vaccination clinics and supporting the church's weekly food distributions.

Phone calls come into Morning Star, and many times the caller is crying, said Kachina Powell, who works alongside Jones. "They're trying to hold it together."

Many are single parents, some having lost jobs, or they had children back at home with no child care when schools closed their buildings, Jones said. Many are grandparents who have grown children and grandchildren back in their care.

Many, when they come with their bills, have been making small, good-faith payments over the past year-and-a-half. Many are asking for help for the first time.

"They can't get on top of their bills," Jones said.

Many times the caller is frantic, having made an online application for help weeks or even months ago, never hearing from anyone



LINC staff Kachina Powell, left, and Rene Jones process applications for utility bill assistance at Morning Star.



Dozens of renters came to a clinic at Morning Star in May to get help applying for federal funds for utility assistance. LINC's team at Morning Star, as of Sept. 9, has processed more than \$780,000 in utility assistance.

— but now suddenly their electricity or water has been shut off.

If they've applied, often LINC's team can find their case file in the regional system, complete the processing and get utility service restored and cut-off notices paused.

On one typical September morning, Jones and Powell were working through a list of 42 people with applications who were at risk of having utilities shut off.

So many of the calls that people in distress make elsewhere lead only to recorded voices asking the caller to leave a message, or someone on the line who can only refer them elsewhere.

When they reach Morning Star, "they're so relieved to have someone talking to them," Powell said.

And it is a good feeling, Jones said, to be able to talk them through the logistics and tear down the technology barriers.

"We can have an immediate impact," Jones said. "We are changing the direction of some lives."

Unique Brown of Kansas City had been threatened with cutoff notices when she came to Morning Star earlier this summer. She lost her job during the pandemic and she had arranged with her utility company for a payment plan to deal with the debt. But she missed one of the payments and now had to pay the whole bill to keep her power on.

It's been hard, Brown said, "with lights, gas and water (bills) so high because of the pandemic going on."

But she left relieved.

"They stopped all my disconnects," she said. "So I'm grateful for that."

The personal attention may be the most-cherished part of the work, for both the clients and the LINC staff.

The man off the bus has been coming back regularly since that day Jones helped him with his bills. Sometimes he brings mail that looks like it might be important and Jones becomes his eyes, reading it to him.

"He says, 'You're probably getting tired of seeing me,'" Jones said.

Jones has reached out to Truman Medical Centers to get the man a caseworker to get him the professional health care he needs, but of course he can always drop in.

LINC's Caring Communities at Morning Star keeps the door open.



"They stopped all my disconnects," said Unique Brown after getting help from LINC at Morning Star at a clinic in July. "I'm grateful for that."

Income, Poverty and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2020

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2021

SEPTEMBER 14, 2021
RELEASE NUMBER CB21-151

SEPT. 14, 2021 — The U.S. Census Bureau announced today that median household income in 2020 decreased 2.9% between 2019 and 2020, and the official poverty rate increased 1.0 percentage point. Meanwhile the percentage of people with health insurance coverage for all or part of 2020 was 91.4%. An estimated 8.6% of people, or 28.0 million, did not have health insurance at any point during 2020, according to the 2021 Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement (CPS ASEC).



[/library/visualizations/2021/com/m/measuring-nations-well-being.html]

Median household income was \$67,521 in 2020, a decrease of 2.9% from the 2019 median of \$69,560. This is the first statistically significant decline in median household income since 2011.

Between 2019 and 2020, the real median earnings of all workers decreased by 1.2%, while the real median earnings of full-time, year-round workers increased 6.9%. The total number of people with earnings decreased by about 3.0 million, while the number of full-time, year-round workers decreased by approximately 13.7 million.

The official poverty rate in 2020 was 11.4%, up 1.0 percentage point from 2019. This is the first increase in poverty after five consecutive annual declines. In 2020, there were 37.2 million people in poverty, approximately 3.3 million more than in 2019.

Private health insurance coverage continued to be more prevalent than public coverage, at 66.5% and 34.8%, respectively. Some people may have more than one coverage type during the calendar year. Of the subtypes of health insurance, employment-based insurance was the most common subtype of health insurance, covering 54.4% of the population for some or all of the calendar year.

These findings are contained in two Census Bureau reports: Income and Poverty in the United States: 2020 [<https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2021/demo/p60-273.html>] and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2020 [<https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2021/demo/p60-274.html>]. For consistency with past reports, the income and poverty estimates in the Income and Poverty in the United States: 2020 report are based on the concept of money income, which is pretax and does not include stimulus payments and tax credits. An appendix to the income and poverty report provides post-tax estimates of median household income and income inequality metrics that do reflect the stimulus payments.

Another Census Bureau report, The Supplemental Poverty Measure: 2020 [<https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2021/demo/p60-275.html>], was also released today. The Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM) rate in 2020 was 9.1%. This was 2.6 percentage points lower than the 2019 SPM rate. The SPM estimates reflect post-tax income that include stimulus payments. The SPM provides an alternative way of measuring poverty in the United States and serves as an additional indicator of economic well-being. The Census Bureau has published poverty estimates using the SPM annually since 2011 in collaboration with the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

All three reports are based on data from the CPS ASEC. The Current Population Survey [<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps.html>] (CPS), sponsored jointly by the Census Bureau [<https://census.gov/>] and BLS [<https://www.bls.gov/>], is conducted every month and is the primary source of labor force statistics for the U.S. population. It is used to calculate monthly unemployment rate estimates. Supplements are added in most months. The CPS ASEC – conducted in February, March and April – is designed to give annual, national estimates of income, poverty and health insurance numbers and rates. It collects information about income and health insurance coverage during the prior calendar year.

The Impact of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic on the CPS ASEC

The Census Bureau administers the CPS ASEC each year between February and April by telephone and in-person interviews, with the majority of data collected in March. In 2020, data collection faced extraordinary circumstances due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic as the Census Bureau suspended in-person interviews and closed both telephone contact centers. The response rate for the CPS basic household survey was 73% in March 2020, about 10 percentage points lower than preceding months and the same period in 2019, which were regularly above 80%.

During collection of the 2021 CPS ASEC, for the safety of both interviewers and respondents, in-person interviews were only conducted when telephone interviews could not be done. In March 2021, the response rate for the CPS basic household survey improved to about 76%, though not quite returning to the prepandemic trend. While the response rate improved, it is important to examine how respondents differ from nonrespondents, as this difference could affect income and poverty estimates. Using administrative data, Census Bureau researchers have documented that the nonrespondents in both 2020 and 2021 are less similar to respondents than in earlier years. Of particular interest, for the estimates in this report, are the differences in median income and educational attainment, indicating that respondents in 2020 and 2021 had relatively higher income and were more educated than nonrespondents. For more details on how these sample differences and the associated nonresponse bias impact income and official poverty estimates, refer to our Research Matters blog.

[<https://www.census.gov/newsroom/blogs/research-matters/2021/08/how-did-the-pandemic-affect-survey-response.html>]

Income

- Median household income was \$67,521 in 2020, a decrease of 2.9% from the 2019 median of \$69,560.
- The 2020 real median income of family households and nonfamily households decreased 3.2% and 3.1% from their respective 2019 estimates. The difference between the 2019 to 2020 percent changes in median income for family and nonfamily households was not statistically significant.
- Real median household incomes decreased 3.2% in the Midwest and 2.3% in the South and the West from their 2019 medians. The change for the Northeast was not statistically significant. The differences between the 2019 to 2020 percent changes in median household income among all regions were not statistically significant.
- The Gini index is a statistical measure of income inequality ranging from 0.0 to 1.0. It measures the amount that any two incomes differ, on average, relative to mean income. It is an indicator of how far apart or “spread out” incomes are from one another. A value of 0.0 represents perfect equality, and a value of 1.0 indicates total inequality. The money income Gini index was 0.489 in 2020, not statistically different from 2019.

Post-tax Income and Inequality Estimates

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Congress passed legislation to aid individuals and families. This legislation included the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act); the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA Act); and the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA). The CARES and CRRSA Acts provided households with additional income in the form of stimulus payments and tax credits. Given the large scale of the stimulus payments, the income and poverty report includes an appendix which compares household median income and inequality measures based on post-tax income.

- Post-tax, real median household income increased 4.0% between 2019 and 2020.
- The Gini index based on post-tax income fell 3.1% from .442 in 2019 to .428 in 2020.

Race and Hispanic Origin

Race data refer to people reporting a single race only. Hispanics can be of any race.

- The 2020 real median incomes of non-Hispanic White, Asian and Hispanic households decreased from their 2019 medians, while the change for Black households was not statistically different. Between 2019 and 2020, median incomes declined 2.7% for non-Hispanic White, 4.5% for Asian, and 2.6% for Hispanic households. However, the differences between the 2019 to 2020 percent changes in median household income among the race groups were not statistically significant.

Earnings

- In 2020, real median earnings of those who worked full-time, year-round increased 6.9% from their 2019 estimate. Median earnings of men (\$61,417) and women (\$50,982) who worked full-time, year-round increased by 5.6% and 6.5%, respectively. The differences between the 2019 to 2020 percent changes in median earnings among all full-time, year-round workers; male full-time, year-round workers; and female full-time, year-round workers were not statistically significant.
- The real median earnings of all workers age 15 and over with earnings decreased 1.2% between 2019 and 2020, from \$42,065 to \$41,535.
- The total number of those who worked full-time, year-round declined by 13.7 million between 2019 and 2020. This was the largest year-to-year decline in the number of full-time, year-round workers since 1967, the first year for which there is comparable data. The number of female full-time, year-round workers decreased by about 6.2 million, while the decrease for their male counterparts was approximately 7.5 million.

Poverty

- As defined by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and updated for inflation using the Consumer Price Index, the weighted average poverty threshold for a family of four in 2020 was \$26,496. (Refer to www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/income-poverty/historical-poverty-thresholds.html [https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/income-poverty/historical-poverty-thresholds.html] > for the complete set of dollar value thresholds that vary by family size and composition.) (OMB determined the official definition of poverty in Statistical Policy Directive 14).
- The official poverty rate in 2020 was 11.4%, up 1.0 percentage point from 2019. This is the first increase in poverty after five consecutive annual declines.
- In 2020, there were 37.2 million people in poverty, approximately 3.3 million more than in 2019.
- Between 2019 and 2020, poverty rates increased for married-couple families and families with a female householder. (In the income and poverty report, families with a female householder with no spouse present are referred to as families with a female householder. Families with a male householder with no spouse present are referred to as families with a male householder.)
- The poverty rate for married-couple families increased from 4.0% in 2019 to 4.7% in 2020.
- For families with a female householder, the poverty rate increased from 22.2% to 23.4%. The poverty rate for families with a male householder was 11.4% in 2020, not statistically different from 2019.

Race and Hispanic Origin

Race data refer to people reporting a single race only. Hispanics can be of any race.

- Between 2019 and 2020, the poverty rate increased for the non-Hispanic White and Hispanic populations.
- Among the non-Hispanic White population, 8.2% were in poverty in 2020, while the Hispanic population had a poverty rate of 17.0%. Among the major racial groups examined in this report, the Black population had the highest poverty rate (19.5%), but did not experience a significant change from 2019. The poverty rate for the Asian population (8.1%) in 2020 was not statistically different from 2019. The 2020 poverty rates for the Asian and non-Hispanic White populations were not statistically different.

Age

- Poverty rates for people under the age of 18 increased from 14.4% in 2019 to 16.1% in 2020. Poverty rates also increased for people ages 18 to 64 from 9.4% in 2019 to 10.4% in 2020. The poverty rate for people ages 65 and older was 9.0% in 2020, not statistically different from 2019.

Supplemental Poverty Measure

The SPM extends the official poverty measure by taking into account many of the government programs designed to assist low-income families and individuals that are not included in the current official poverty measure, such as the stimulus payments enacted as part of economic relief legislation related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Additionally, the SPM deducts necessary expenses for critical goods and services from income.

Deducted expenses include taxes, childcare, commuting expenses, contributions toward the cost of medical care and health insurance premiums, and child support paid to another household. The SPM permits the examination of the effects of government transfers on poverty estimates. The SPM does not replace the official poverty measure and is not used to determine eligibility for government programs.

While the official poverty measure includes only pretax money income, the SPM adds the value of in-kind benefits, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), school lunches, housing assistance, stimulus payments and refundable tax credits.

- The SPM released today shows that in 2020, the overall SPM rate was 9.1%. This was 2.6 percentage points lower than the 2019 SPM rate.
- The SPM rate for 2020 was 2.3 percentage points lower than the official poverty rate of 11.4%. This is the first time in the history of the SPM where poverty is lower using the SPM than the official poverty rate.
- The 2020 SPM rate of 9.1% was the lowest rate since estimates were initially published for 2009.
- Social Security continued to be the most important antipoverty program, moving 26.5 million individuals out of poverty.
- Unemployment insurance benefits, also expanded during 2020, prevented 5.5 million people from falling into poverty.
- Stimulus payments, enacted as part of economic relief legislation related to the COVID-19 pandemic, moved 11.7 million persons out of poverty. For example, not including stimulus payments in resources, the poverty rate for all people would have been 12.7% rather than 9.1%.
- There were 11 states plus the District of Columbia for which SPM rates were higher than official poverty rates, 30 states with lower rates, and 9 states for which the differences were not statistically significant.

Age

- SPM rates were down for all major age categories: children under age 18, adults ages 18 to 64, and adults age 65 and older between 2019 and 2020.

Health Insurance

In previous years, the Census Bureau released estimates of health insurance from two surveys. The CPS ASEC asks people about coverage during the previous calendar year. The American Community Survey (ACS) asks people to report their health insurance coverage at the time of interview. However, this year's report relies solely on data from the CPS ASEC because of impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the 2020 ACS [<https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2021/changes-2020-ac-1-year.html>] .

- In 2020, 8.6% of people, or 28.0 million, did not have health insurance at any point during the year. The percentage of people with health insurance coverage for all or part of 2020 was 91.4%.
- In 2020, private health insurance coverage continued to be more prevalent than public coverage at 66.5% and 34.8%, respectively. (Some people may have more than one coverage type during the calendar year.). Of the subtypes of health insurance, employment-based insurance was the most common subtype, covering 54.4% of the population for some or all of the calendar year.
- Between 2018 and 2020, the rate of private health insurance coverage decreased by 0.8 percentage points to 66.5%, driven by a 0.7 percentage-point decline in employment-based coverage to 54.4%.
- Between 2018 and 2020, the rate of public health insurance coverage increased by 0.4 percentage points to 34.8%. In that time, there was a 0.5 percentage-point increase in Medicare coverage. This increase was due to growth in the number of people age 65 and over. The proportion of the population 65 years and older with Medicare coverage decreased between 2018 and 2020 from 93.9% to 93.5%. However, the percentage of the U.S. population 65 years and older increased between 2018 and 2020.
- In 2020, 87.0% of full-time, year-round workers had private insurance coverage, up from 85.1% in 2018. In contrast, those who worked less than full-time, year-round were less likely to be covered by private insurance in 2020 than in 2018 (68.5% in 2018 and 66.7% in 2020).
- More children under the age of 19 in poverty were uninsured in 2020 than in 2018. Uninsured rates for children under the age of 19 in poverty rose 1.6 percentage points to 9.3%.

Regional estimates are available for income, poverty, SPM and health insurance in each respective report. There is also a table showing state-level poverty rates using the supplemental poverty measure.

The CPS ASEC is subject to sampling and nonsampling errors. All comparisons made here and in each respective report have been tested and found to be statistically significant at the 90% confidence level, unless otherwise noted.

Additional information on the source of the data and accuracy of the income, poverty and health insurance estimates is available at <<https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/techdocs/cpsmar21.pdf> [<https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/techdocs/cpsmar21.pdf>] >.

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Related Information

 [Press kit \[/newsroom/press-kits/2021/income-poverty.html\]](/newsroom/press-kits/2021/income-poverty.html)