

2024 Annual Report

Southwestern Minnesota Opportunity Council



Opening Statement

It is with great pride and gratitude that we share this year's Annual Report, highlighting the work and impact of our Community Action Agency. Over the past year, we have remained steadfast in our mission to empower individuals, strengthen families, and build more resilient communities. Through strategic partnerships, dedicated staff, and the trust of those we serve, we have addressed critical needs — from education, health, and employment to transportation and crisis assistance. Each program, service, and outreach effort reflects our ongoing commitment to reducing poverty and creating pathways to opportunity. This report offers a look at the progress and impact we've made, the lives we've touched, and the continued journey ahead. We thank our community, funders, and supporters for standing with us as we work to ensure that every person has the chance to thrive.

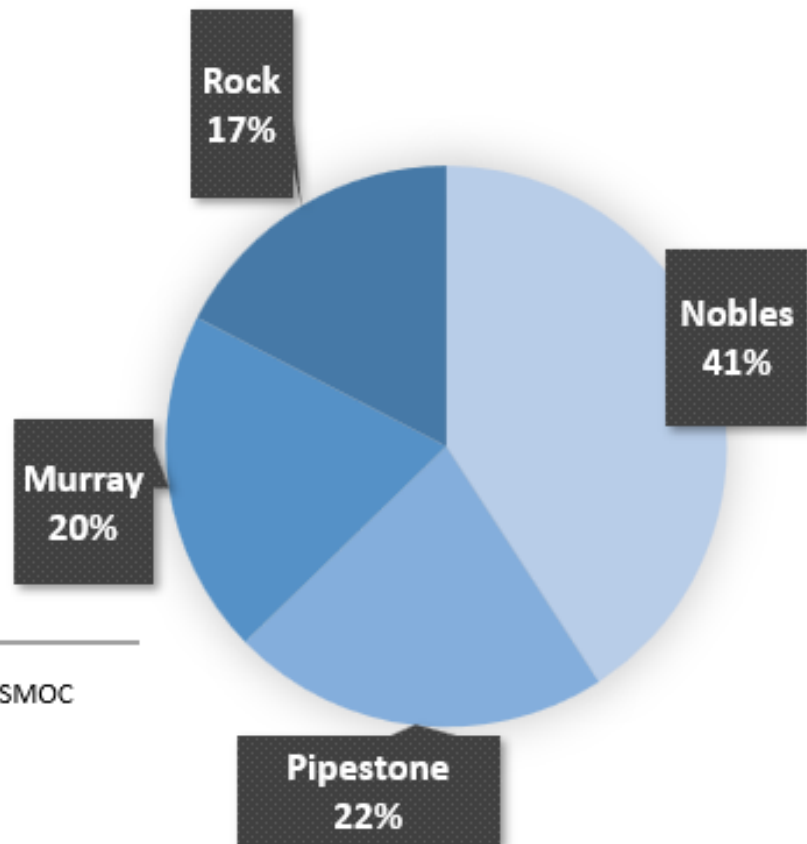
Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live.



FFY25- Energy Assistance

1,596 total **received** apps

1,408 total **approved** apps



\$767,617 total primary benefits paid from SMOC

Nobles- \$280,281
Pipestone- \$178,992
Murray- \$171,726
Rock- \$136,618

\$545 was the average primary heat benefit

CRISIS

\$132,205 total crisis amount paid

Nobles- \$44,432
Pipestone- \$22,430
Murray- \$38,548
Rock- \$26,795

EAP Surverys

115 surveys were mailed out to approved and denied households. Still waiting for responses.

EAP Audit

Audit was conducted June 2025. PPA found no Findings. Two minor errors were identified, but they were not significant enough to be classified as Findings.

Senior Community Service Employment

The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), administered by the Department of Labor, aims to assist unemployed individuals aged 55 and above with low incomes and limited job prospects. This program provides part-time training in community service assignments to help them develop skills and experience necessary for their transition to unsubsidized employment. Its goals include promoting individual economic self-sufficiency, creating valuable part-time opportunities in community service for older individuals, particularly those with poor employment prospects, and increasing the number of older persons benefiting from unsubsidized employment in both public and private sectors.

Minnesota strives to successfully implement effective training in community service organizations for all eligible SCSEP individuals. Placing older individuals in community service positions not only enhances their self-sufficiency but also provides much-needed support to organizations benefiting from increased civic engagement. Moreover, it strengthens the communities being served. SCSEP offers temporary training opportunities that contribute to the general welfare of the community, including training in school systems, hospitals, senior citizen centers, nutrition program sites, and day care systems.

FFY25 - SCSEP

County	Participants	Exits	Host Sites
Rock	2	0	2
Nobles	6	2	4
Murray	1	0	1
Pipestone	2	1	3
Cottonwood	3	1	1
Jackson	8	4	4
	22	8	15



In 2024, Child Care Aware services were provided in Cottonwood, Jackson, Lincoln, Lyon, Murray, Nobles, Pipestone, Redwood and Rock counties: Wayfinder/Child Care Startup and Retention; Parent Aware Quality Coaching; Child Care Outreach and Technical Assistance supporting 302 DHS licensed programs:

- 14 Child Care Centers
- 276 Family Child Care Providers
- 12 Community Preschool Programs

35 YEARS OF PROGRAM HISTORY

December 15, 1989, SMOC was awarded the contract from the Department of Human Services to implement Child Care Resource and Referral services in Murray, Nobles, Pipestone, and Rock counties.

June 6, 1990, a staff person (Karen DeBoer) was hired, and the service began.

June 15, 2001, SMOC won the contract from the Department of Human Services to provide CCRR services throughout all of Region 8, adding the counties of Cottonwood, Jackson, Lincoln, Lyon, and Redwood.

July 1, 2004, the Department of Human Services implemented a new CCRR service delivery system and SMOC SWCCRR became one of fourteen “baseline” CCRR programs in Minnesota – focusing services on local communities.

January 1, 2013, CCRR in Minnesota became the 5th state in the nation to change its name to Child Care Aware. Child care programs in Lyon and Nobles County were allowed to participate in the Parent Aware Quality Rating System on January 1, 2013.

January 1, 2015, the Parent Aware Quality Rating System was available to programs in all 9 counties of Region 8.

The 2021 Minnesota Legislature mandated the creation of Child Care Wayfinder, and the 2023 Legislature established Wayfinder as a permanent program within the Child Care Aware system.

Region 8 Child Care Aware staff include:

Director – Karen DeBoer

Parent Aware Quality Coaches – Darian Jarmer and Brooke Ossefoort

Child Care Startup and Retention Navigators – Alva Monterroso Hernandez and Sandie Polfliet

Head Start & Early Head Start

PROGRAM INFORMATION 2024-2025

- **Funded Enrollment**

- Head Start: 115 Children
- Early Head Start: 45 Children



- **Drops**

- Number of children that dropped during program year: 11
- Number of children replaced during program year: 11

- **Number of Children and Family Served**

- Head Start: 133 Children & Families
- Early Head Start: 60 Children & Families

- Number of Foster Children: 1
- Number of Homeless Children: 5



COMPLETED HOME VISITS AND FAMILY ADVOCACY VISITS



Home Visits

- Total 2854 Completed Home Visits for 167 families
- Center - 232 completed Home Visits for 102 families
- Home Based Head Start = 384 completed home visits for 11 families
- Home Based Early Head Start – 2238 Completed home visits for 54 families

Family Advocacy Group

- 88% of our families attended a parent group meeting at least one time during the program year.
- 30% of our families had 100% attendance for monthly meetings
- 62% of our families had 50% attendance for monthly meetings
- 90% Had monthly home visits (Pipestone classroom does not have group parent meetings – only home visits)

BUDGETARY AND FISCAL

- All funds utilized for running the Head Start program are received from public funded sources that include federal and state grants. There are no private funds used.
 - Federal Funds: \$2,011,770.00
 - State Funds: \$259,517.00
 - Pathway II Funds: \$176,618.00
 - CACFP Funds: \$119,826.00
- The budgetary expenditures exceeded the budget as there were increased costs in several areas. The staff were given a salary increase outside of a COLA in addition to other increased costs. This resulted in needing to eliminate three positions at the Head Start facility, however we did remain full enrollment.
- All funds awarded through federal and state grants were expended.
- There was a FA1 review completed in April of this year and there were no deficiencies. Only three areas were considered an “area of concern” and we are in process to bring those areas into compliance.
- The 2022 audit was completed during this program year and no major findings were reported.

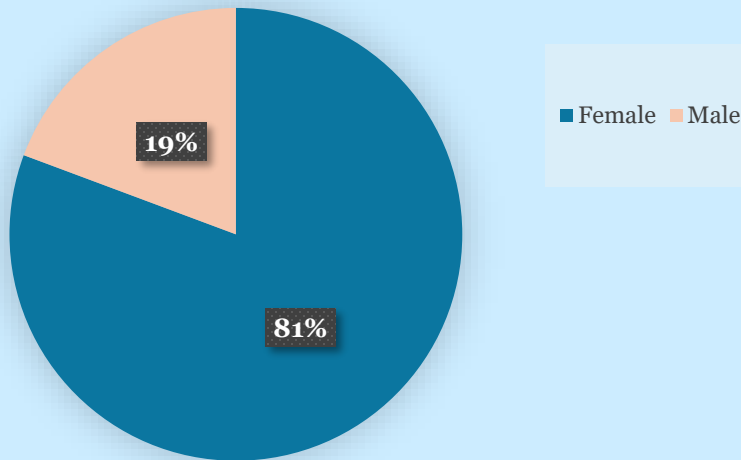
Family Planning

Family Planning was very busy in 2024. Thanks to our funding, we were able to provide services to people who often would be unable to obtain reproductive health care without our services. Our staff consisted of 4 Nurse Practitioners, 2 part-time SMOC employees and 2 contracted through Avera Health-Worthington and CCM-Montevideo. We are grateful for these partnerships as we were able to provide services during 66 clinic dates.

The data below reflects the work completed in 2024.

*Note data provided is approximate as we transitioned medical record systems during 2024

699 Clients Served

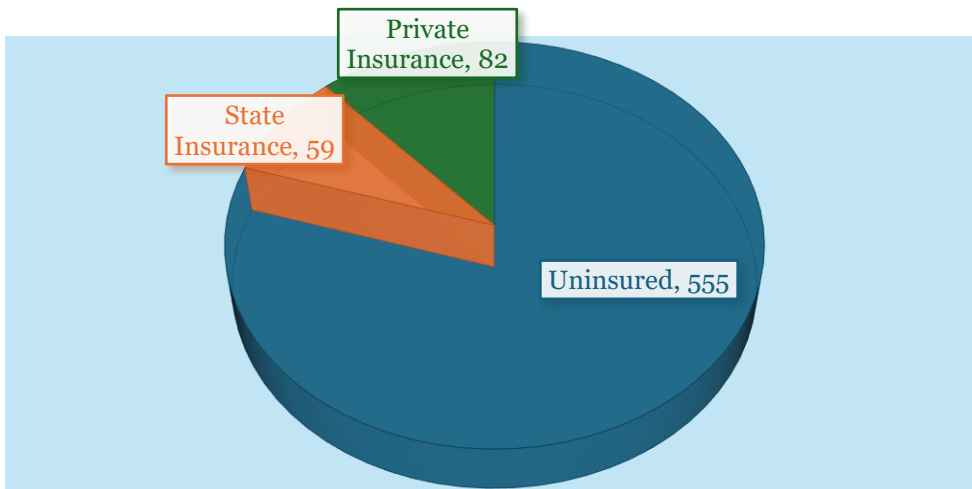


274 Cervical Exams
274 Breast Exams

32 Referrals for further testing (Abnormal Screenings)

71 Referrals for Annual Mammogram Screenings (age 40+)

INSURANCE TYPE



Pairieland Transit System (Funded by MNDOT Grant)

Nobles County Heartland Express Worthington Dial-A- Ride Worthington City Bus

- Twenty routes were provided in Nobles County with two Nobles County Heartland Express buses.
 - Each of the fourteen communities in Nobles County was served five times per week.
 - The Worthington City Bus Route provided a route service in the City of Worthington with one dedicated bus.
 - 567 rides were provided to residents of Worthington on the Worthington City Bus.
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- 3,431 rides were provided to residents of Nobles County with the Nobles County Heartland Express route buses.
 - 18,468 rides were provided within the City of Worthington-by-Worthington Dial-A-Ride buses.
 - 8,434 hours of public transportation services were provided.
 - 93,206 miles were driven by Pairieland Transit System.



Area 8 Early Learning Scholarships



Early Learning Scholarships are available in the nine counties of Region 8: Cottonwood, Jackson, Lincoln, Lyon, Murray, Nobles, Pipestone, Redwood and Rock.

During the period of January 1, 2024 – June 30, 2024, \$816,308 in Early Learning Scholarships were awarded to 94 children attending child care centers, family child care, and preschool programs in Region 8. Each child was awarded a maximum up to \$15,000 per year.

On July 1, 2024, a central processing system was implemented. After a Competitive Grant Process, the Greater Twin Cities United Way was selected for the statewide Central Payment Administrator for the Early Learning Scholarship program.

82 children aged out 09/01/2024 (became age eligible for kindergarten.)

During the period of July 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024, \$1,765,818 in Early Learning Scholarships were awarded to 137 children attending child care centers, family child care, and preschool programs in Region 8. Each child was awarded a maximum of up to \$26,644 per year based on the highest eligible tuition in Minnesota. 34% of the amount awarded was spent. Actual tuition amounts allowed for children awarded in our 9 counties is \$15,000 for a child attending a 4-star Parent Aware rated child care center and \$12,000 for a child attending a 4-star Parent Aware rated family child care program.

Area 8 Early Learning
Scholarship staff
include:
Director – Karen DeBoer
Support Staff – Carrie
Ling and MuGay Tin

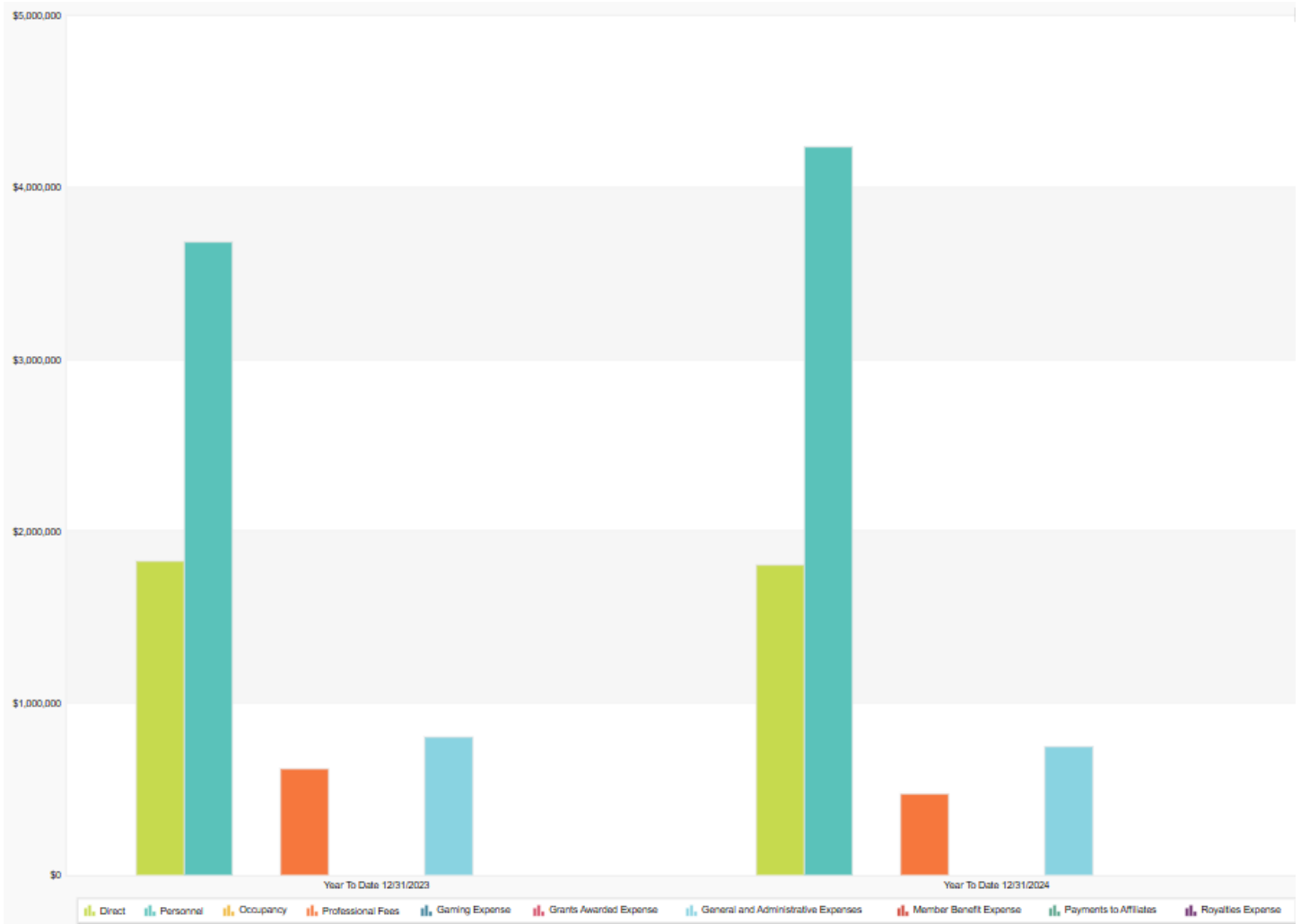
Statement of Financial Position



Southwestern Minnesota Opportunity Council Statement of Financial Position

As of December 31, 2024

	Year To Date 12/31/2024 Current Year	Year Ending 12/31/2023 Prior Year
Assets		
Current Assets		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	2,813,978.40	1,936,490.30
Accounts Receivable, Net		
Accounts Receivable	(959.00)	0.00
Total Accounts Receivable, Net	(959.00)	0.00
Grants Receivable	96,769.09	506,140.87
Other Current Assets	81.97	1,073.39
Total Current Assets	2,909,870.46	2,443,704.56
Long-term Assets		
Property & Equipment	3,279,101.72	2,843,211.00
Total Long-term Assets	3,279,101.72	2,843,211.00
Total Assets	6,188,972.18	5,286,915.56
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Liabilities		
Short-term Liabilities	676,351.41	434,085.33
Total Liabilities	676,351.41	434,085.33
Net Assets		
Net Assets		
Unrestricted Net Assets	4,786,497.73	4,907,982.27
Restricted Net Assets	63,917.08	63,917.08
Total Net Assets	4,850,414.81	4,971,899.35
Change In Net Assets		
Operating Revenue		
Grant Revenues	5,070,883.53	4,963,661.04
Program Revenue	2,555,481.36	1,716,128.28
Revenue - Other	299,995.93	129,005.13
Total Operating Revenue	7,926,360.82	6,808,794.45
Expenditures		
Direct	1,804,908.67	1,826,941.32
Personnel	4,237,650.64	3,681,167.02
Professional Fees	474,708.80	616,170.06
General and Administrative Expenses	746,886.75	803,585.17
Total Expenditures	7,264,154.86	6,927,863.57
Change In Net Assets	662,205.96	(119,069.12)
Total Net Assets	5,512,620.77	4,852,830.23
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	6,188,972.18	5,286,915.56



Reporting Periods/Accounting Groups		Year To Date 12/31/2023	Year To Date 12/31/2024
Direct		\$1,828,941.32	\$1,804,908.87
Personnel		\$3,681,187.02	\$4,237,850.64
Occupancy		\$0.00	\$0.00
Professional Fees		\$616,170.06	\$474,708.80
Gaming Expense		\$0.00	\$0.00
Grants Awarded Expense		\$0.00	\$0.00
General and Administrative Expenses		\$803,585.17	\$746,886.75
Member Benefit Expense		\$0.00	\$0.00
Payments to Affiliates		\$0.00	\$0.00
Royalties Expense		\$0.00	\$0.00

Expenditure Composition



Revenue Composition

Closing Statement

From Darci Goedtke, Executive Director



As we reflect on the past year, we are reminded that meaningful progress is achieved through collaboration, compassion, and unwavering dedication. Our mission to fight poverty and empower individuals and families has been carried forward by the collective efforts of many—but none more so than our incredible staff.

To our dedicated team: **thank you!** Your tireless work, resilience, and commitment to serving others are the foundation of everything we accomplish. Your compassion and professionalism make a lasting difference in the lives of those we serve.

This report celebrates the impact of our programs and partnerships, but it is also a testament to the strength of our staff and the communities we serve. It not only highlights the measurable outcomes of our work but also underscores the collective strength of our communities.

As we look to the future, we remain committed to building equity, expanding opportunity, and creating lasting change—together. We remain committed to adapting, innovating, and advocating for equitable solutions to the challenges our communities face. Together, we will continue to create pathways to opportunity and ensure that every voice is heard, and every person has the resources they need to thrive.

Thank you for standing beside us, before us, and with us.