

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

September
2025



NEMCSA Joins National Community Action Partnership Conference in Detroit

Last week, Detroit hosted the National Community Action Partnership Conference, welcoming more than a thousand attendees from across the country. The event provided opportunities for networking, education, and highlighting the impact of Community Action programs. Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency (NEMCSA) was represented by two board members and several staff. On Thursday, two staff members and a former participant of the BOSS program presented during a panel workshop, sharing the success of NEMCSA's BOSS program and the School Success Partnership Program. Their stories demonstrated the real-life impact of NEMCSA's work and its commitment to helping people and changing lives across Northeast Michigan.



Happy Birthday, NEMCSA!

On Thursday, August 14, we celebrated 57 years of serving our communities with friends, clients, and partners! The sunshine made it the perfect day for ice cream, giveaways, bubbles, water balloons, and lots of laughter.

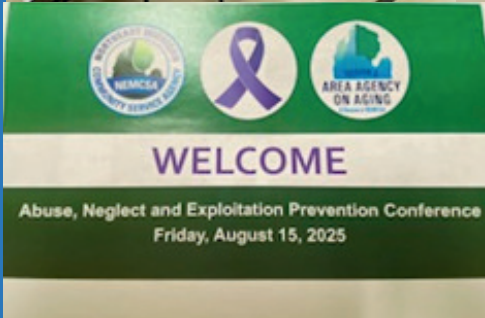
Thank you to WATZ for the live broadcast and to everyone who joined us in marking this special milestone. Here's to many more years of making a difference together!

Program Impact AREA AGENCY ON AGING

Elder Abuse Neglect and Exploitation Conference



The Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program held the annual Elder Abuse Neglect and Exploitation Conference on the 15th of August. There were thirty-seven attendees not including the five AAA staff. This year the presenters consisted of AAACU, MDHHS, State Police and Legal Services of Northeast Michigan. Each presenter shared information that was helpful not only to the participants but also to those they may share it with. The presenters interacted well with the participants and engaged them in further conversations.



Laurie Sauer met with Sen. Michelle Hoitenga during her August Office Hours in Onaway to advocate for the MI Choice Program as well as other Aging Services as deliberations related to the state budget are ongoing. Northeast Michigan is the fastest growing area of the state for older adults and Michigan is now one of the top 10 states in terms of older adult population.



Aging in Place with Mi Choice Waiver Program

Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel announced that free, fillable Power of Attorney forms are now available for download on the Elder Abuse Task Force's website! The new forms will make it easier for Michigan residents and their family members to appoint an individual to make important financial and medical decisions on their behalf. To learn more about the Elder Abuse Task Force and find the Power of Attorney forms, visit: <https://www.michigan.gov/.../elder-abuse-task-force>.



Do you or a loved one require nursing home level care, but wish to reside elsewhere or at home?

With **MI CHOICE**, you can get the care you need and live where you want.

The **MI CHOICE** program provides an extensive array of person-centered, in-home services and supports, such as:

- Nursing services,
- Home-delivered meals,
- Home modifications,
- Respite care,
- Transportation,
- AND MORE.

Logos for Area Agency on Aging and NEMCSA are at the bottom.

Aging in place is possible with the MI Choice Program. The MI Choice Program offers an array of person-centered, in-home services to Medicaid beneficiaries who are in need of nursing facility level of care. To learn more about the MI Choice Program, visit: <https://www.nemcsa.org/.../mi-choice-waiver-program.html>.

MEDICARE OPEN ENROLLMENT | OCT. 15-DEC. 7

Open Enrollment is your time to review all your options. Compare plans to find the right coverage for you. Check out the fact sheet here: [Medicare Open Enrollment Fact Sheet 2025](#)

Program Impact

EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES

Please join us for an

OPEN HOUSE

at the NEMCSA

West Branch Early Childhood Center

2182 Dam Road, West Branch



FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2025
2:00 - 5:00 pm

- Visit our new Early Head Start & Head Start Classrooms
- Fun activities for the whole family
- Refreshments provided



WELCOME BACK!



To Our Part-Year Staff!!



As another summer comes to a close and a school year begins, NEMCSA looks forward to hearing about all the great things happening in our classrooms and communities!

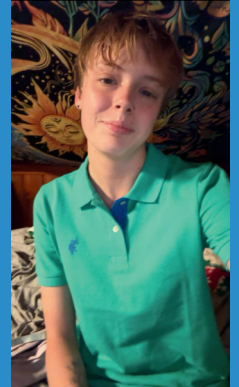
Program Impact

BRIDGES OF SELF-SUFFICIENCY



The BOSS Program continues to support transformative progress across Northeast Michigan. This past month, there were several inspiring participant achievements:

- BOSS participant received assistance with work clothes for new full-time job at a credit union (pictured to the right).
- BOSS participant signed up for GED.
- Multiple BOSS participant's starting the process to purchase a home.
- BOSS participant graduated the program!
- BOSS participant enrolled in CDL certification course.
- BOSS participant started Pharmacy Tech certification program.
- BOSS participant finished emotional resiliency course.



The BOSS Program was shared at the MCA Summer Conference during a segment within the NEMCSA Poverty Training. We are working with a research team from the University of Kansas on a Programmatic Evaluation.

This project was supported, in whole or in part, by federal award number SLFRF4951 awarded to The State of Michigan by the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES



A NEMCSA Podcast

**Eight Episodes
Now Available!**

💡 **Have ideas or want to join as a guest?**

Share your suggestions, topics, or feedback by completing the form here:

[Podcast Feedback Form](#)

July Impact:

- Total individuals assisted: 95
 - 77 community members
 - 3 internal staff
 - 14 Community Partners
 - 1 For Profit Business
- 39 referrals made
- 40 resources & information shared
- 61 contacts came in via the Community Resource Line



Community Engagement:

- Amanda & Liz Skiba from SSP presented to children at Richardson Elementary for a summer program on wants vs. needs, kindness, NEMCSA general overview & story time!
- Amanda & Allison participated in an episode of Talk of the Town – Alpena to promote the NEMCSA Birthday Bash.
- Madison attended a 211-outreach event in Gaylord, Mi.



CRC@NEMCSA.ORG



989-358-4757

Program Impact

SCHOOL SUCCESS



Leslie Atkinson



Allie DeRocher



Ken Piper



Meghan Marsh



Will Luzar



Welcome to the team, just in time to start a great school year!

On August 14th, NEMCSA celebrated 57 years with a vibrant outdoor event at the main headquarters in Alpena. Community members and partners were invited to join the festivities, where they learned about NEMCSA's diverse programs while enjoying treats, music, crafts and games.

Pictured here are representatives from the School Success Partnership Program:

- Dorothy Pintar, Community Programs Director
- Liz Skiba, SSP Area Manager
- Lisa Werth, Alpena Area SSP Supervisor

Thank you to everyone who helped make this celebration a success and to all who continue to support NEMCSA's mission in our communities!



Kristin's Legacy



Following the tragic passing of Kristin Berles, an outpouring of love and support has been shown through \$3,815 in donations made in her honor to date to NEMCSA. Kristin's legacy is one of fierce love—for her family, her friends, and her unwavering dedication to community action. Her passion, kindness, and commitment touched countless lives, and her impact will continue to inspire for years to come. While we miss her deeply, Kristin's spirit and the difference she made in the world will live in our hearts forever.

THANK YOU



Every year, the United Way serving Alpena, Alcona, Montmorency, and Presque Isle hosts the Stuff the Bus event to ensure students in our communities have the school supplies they need to succeed—both at the start of the school year and throughout it. A heartfelt thank you to Joe Garant from United Way for his continued partnership with the School Success Program. Together, we're able to reach students with the greatest need and provide them with the tools to thrive in the classroom. Your support makes a difference. Thank you for helping us set students up for success!

Program Impact

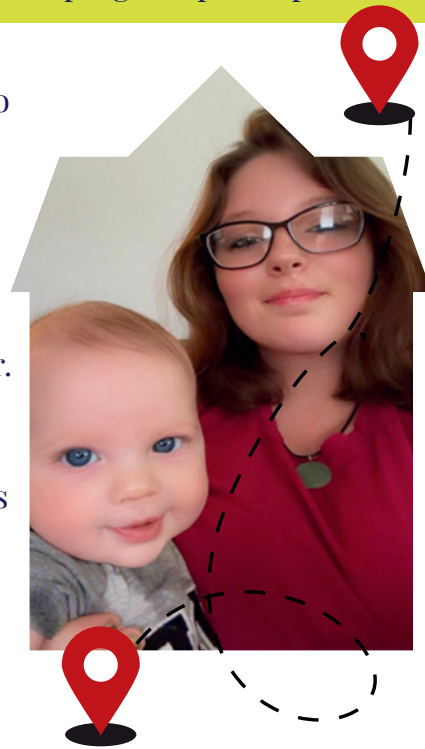
HOUSING

Housing Pathways for Young Adults

Heather Faircloth joined the team as a Youth and Young Adult Street Outreach worker. She is gradually building her case load and doing great! There are currently fifteen youth enrolled in street outreach, five enrolled in transitional housing and four enrolled in rapid rehousing. To date, the program has spent \$34,467.51 for security deposit and rent payments and \$4,092.40 for application fees, vehicle registration, driving tests, ID replacements, groceries and household items for program participants.



“Moving on isn’t always a bad thing!” says Supportive Housing Specialist, Krista. Permanent Supportive Housing is designed to address the barriers that continue to lead to an individual or families’ chronic homelessness. There is no timeframe in which a participant would be expected to move on from the program; however, when that time comes, it is exciting and a very proud moment for the family. Kathy and Baby Andrew are proud to share that they are moving on from PSH. At the end of their year lease, they will be relocating to Kalamazoo to be closer to their family. The family will be moving on from a Stability Voucher to a Housing Choice Voucher. With monthly home visits and weekly check-ins, Permanent Supportive Housing was able to help this family achieve stability by addressing financial and food insecurities through referrals to community partners. PSH also provided resources to ensure that the family’s physical and mental health were being addressed. This process was made possible through collaboration with many community partners which include Tip of the Mitt Housing, Pine Grove Housing, MDHHS, Crawford County Baby to Toddler Closet, River House, Lukeman Group, and McGregor Builders. The team wishes Kathy and Andrew the very best on their journey!



Staff have been busy working in the community, with recent encampment calls and homeless reports. Their efforts were met with a surprise donation from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints in Oscoda. Members rallied together to get much needed items for households exiting homelessness to meet basic needs.



Shelter Diversion Program

The program successfully prevented shelter entry in August for 80% of enrolled participants. Ten participants/families were enrolled into Shelter Diversion and eight of them were successfully diverted. These diversions were achieved through a combination of crisis intervention, resource navigation, and housing problem-solving. Only two individuals are still in the process of completing documentation requests for this program. Staff will continue follow-up support for those who have been diverted to ensure long-term stability and analyze any barriers faced by those we are unable to divert to improve strategies.

To find out more about Homeless & Prevention Services, call: 989-358-4678.

Program Impact

FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT

Housing Counseling

In August, six participants completed Homebuyer Education and Pre-Purchase Counseling. Five of those participants have already been pre-approved for a mortgage and will be purchasing a home within the next three months. The other participant is actively working with our Financial Sustainability Coordinator to reduce their debts so that they're able to reduce their debt-to-income ratio and increase their credit score. In August, Ashley successfully passed the HUD Housing Counseling Exam and became a HUD Certified Housing Counselor. This is a huge success and has allowed her to step in for the program's former Financial Coach and allowed the agency to continue providing services within our communities.

To find out more about the Financial Empowerment Programs, Call: 989-358-4627.



Family Self-Sufficiency Program

The Family Self-Sufficiency program currently has twenty participants. The program hopes to see the client count grow when MSHDA re-opens the HCV waiting list and begins to lease up new clients that are eligible for the program. Ashley, Financial Sustainability Coordinator, is actively working with MSHDA representatives to increase the program's case load to be able to better assist families in our communities to reach self-sufficiency.

WATER PROGRAM

In August, The Water Affordability Program successfully provided the following assistance:

\$8,891

WATER BILLS PAID

\$3,054

PLUMBING BILLS PAID

14

HOMES ASSISTED TOTAL



To find out more about the Water Program, Call: 989-358-4675.

Program Impact

WEATHERIZATION

The Weatherization Program intake team recently went through a file monitoring where they received 100% report. The team has worked tirelessly to add clients to the program's waitlist and approved applications for the inspectors. Right now, the program has a record breaking of 75 approved applications waiting on inspection and 187 clients waiting on weatherization services. Great job intake team!



RSVP VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

The AmeriCorps RSVP Senior Volunteer program continues to add new volunteers in the counties of Crawford and Roscommon. The program has a new addition to the MidMichigan Community Health Services volunteer station in Houghton Lake where they are opening a new food pantry for the community in September. This pantry will be open five days a week to anyone in need. Several volunteers will be serving there organizing, stocking, and weighing goods, greeting and assisting clients with food support and more. New volunteers are serving at elementary schools, non-emergency transportation, home delivered meals, historical museum and additional opportunities.