

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

August
2026



Michigan Community Action Summer Conference

NEMCSA Team Shines at MCA Summer Conference



NEMCSA staff recently attended the Michigan Community Action Summer Conference in Kalamazoo, where team members shared their expertise by presenting sessions on Poverty Education, the BOSS Program, and Social Media & Marketing Strategies. Staff also participated in a community service project to help beautify a local park and celebrated six NEMCSA graduates of MCA's Leadership Development Institute and Emerging Leaders programs.

The conference provided valuable opportunities to learn, lead, serve, and strengthen connections with Community Action colleagues from across Michigan.

NEMCSA is proud to recognize team members who recently completed the Michigan Community Action Leadership Development Institute (LDI) and Emerging Leaders programs. Participants reported gaining valuable leadership skills, greater confidence, and a deeper understanding of Community Action's impact across Michigan.

Graduates highlighted the opportunity to connect with peers from other Community Action Agencies, learn new leadership strategies, strengthen communication skills, and better understand how their personal values align with NEMCSA's mission. The experience reinforced the importance of adaptability, effective leadership, and the vital role Community Action plays in strengthening communities.

Investing in professional development helps build the next generation of leaders and ensures NEMCSA continues to serve our communities with excellence.

Leadership Development Institute Graduates



Kind Words from The Community



“Head Start Program. Julie was very welcoming and cheerful. Gave us a tour and answered all questions. Very professional and informative.”

The Head Start team in Port Huron was proud to receive an outstanding Google review from a community member!

Progress Toward Strategic Goals

The activities highlighted in this month's report show continued progress toward NEMCSA's strategic goals. Staff participated in leadership training, professional development opportunities, and statewide conference presentations, helping us build a strong and capable workforce. Across programs such as School Success, Housing, Aging, Financial Empowerment, Weatherization, and BOSS, staff continue to help individuals and families overcome challenges and move toward greater stability and self-sufficiency. The report also reflects ongoing efforts to raise awareness of NEMCSA's mission through advocacy, outreach, and community engagement. In addition, our partnerships with schools, healthcare providers, community organizations, landlords, and public agencies continue to expand access to services and strengthen our ability to meet local needs.

VIRTUAL DEMENTIA CAREGIVER WORKSHOP SERIES

Attend this Dementia Caregiving series. It is a three-session webinar series, for those caring for a person with dementia. It assists with reducing caregiving stress by providing useful tools and information.

DEMENTIA INFORMATION FOR EVERYONE

Wednesday, August 5, 2026
from 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

This session will examine dementia basics, explore impacts to the brain, and demonstrate how to communicate more effectively with someone who has dementia.

1

ACTIVITIES FOR PERSONS WITH DEMENTIA

Wednesday, August 12, 2026
from 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

This session will discuss the stages, explore the benefits of activities, and examine ways to involve your care recipient in daily living.

2

DEMENTIA BEHAVIORS AND SELF-CARE

Wednesday, August 19, 2026
from 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

This session will examine address dementia-related behaviors, teach the benefits of self-care, and explore how to build your network of support.

3



REGISTER AT:



989.358.4667



healthyaging@nemcsa.org

Program Impact AREA AGENCY ON AGING



UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

- **July 28, 2026:** Caregiver Burnout and Fatigue Presentation at the Ogemaw Library from 6:00 pm-7:00 pm
- **August 6, 2026:** Crawford COA Medicare/Medicaid Conference from 11:00 am-12:30 pm (Lunch Provided)
- **August 12, 2026:** Parkinson's Community Forum. More information to follow.
- **August 12, 2026:** SHIP New to Medicare webinar at 10:00 am. Contact your local COA or call 989.358.4612 for more information or to register.
- **August 13, 2026:** Crawford COA Health Carnival from 11:00 am - 2:00 pm.
- **September 1, 2026:** Support Group Facilitator Training from 9:00 am - 12:00 pm via Zoom.
- **September 9, 2026:** SHIP New to Medicare webinar at 10:00 am. Contact your local COA or call 989.358.4612 for more information or to register.
- **September 10, 2026:** Elder Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation Conference at the Divine Shepherd in Standish from 9:30 am - 1:00 pm
- **September 28, 2026:** RAC Meeting at NEMCSA Main office at 1:00 p.m.

JOIN US



DISCOVER FREE ONLINE LEARNING WITH GETSETUP

LOOKING TO LEARN SOMETHING NEW, STAY ACTIVE, OR CONNECT WITH OTHERS?

Through the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), Michigan residents ages 60 and older can access GetSetUp at no cost.

Enjoy thousands of live, interactive online classes led by older adults on topics including technology, health and wellness, fitness, cooking, travel, hobbies, financial wellness, and more.

All from the comfort of your home. Join today and discover new skills, make new connections, and continue learning at any age.

 www.getsetup.io/en-US/partner/michigan



Attending the 2026 US Aging Conference in San Diego July 17-22 were Jaime Carney and Laurie Sauer. Additionally, Jaime recently completed the Leadership Institute, which brings together US Aging members from across the country for an intensive three-day networking and learning experience to improve their effectiveness as aging professionals and community leaders.

Region 9 SHIP to begin Senior Medicare Patrol Grant Project

Over \$60 billion is lost each year in Medicare scams and fraud. This means that every Medicare beneficiary is a target for scammers – and Region 9 is no exception. Region 9's certified State Health Insurance Program counselors (SHIP) will kick off its Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) prevention grant program by producing localized information about scams and fraud in presentations given by counselors throughout the 12-county service area. The SMP program provides outreach and education on ways to prevent, detect, and report health care fraud, errors and abuse. The grant empowers and supports individuals who may have experienced fraud or abuse. Michigan's SMP works with Medicare beneficiaries, their family members and caregivers to address and resolve their complaints of potential abuse or fraud. If abuse or fraud is suspected, SMP makes a referral to the appropriate state and federal agencies for further investigation. SHIP counselors will make SMP contact cards available and distribute information throughout each county about how to connect with the State's Reporting Hotline: 1-844-677-6424 or email: MDHHS-SMP@Michigan.gov

To find out more about Aging Services, call: 989-358-4661.



ELDER ABUSE, NEGLECT, AND EXPLOITATION PREVENTION CONFERENCE

Older adult abuse is an intentional act or failure to act that causes or creates a risk of harm to an older adult. The abuse often occurs at the hands of a caregiver or other trusted person. Common types of abuse include physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, verbal, neglect and financial.

CONFERENCE DETAILS:

- Thursday, September 10, 2026
- 9:30 am - 1:00 pm
- Divine Shepherd, 4335 M-61, Standish
- Light snacks and beverages provided
- **Attendance reservation required**

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Dr. Kelly Bush  y, Doctor of Psychology, Master's in Counseling - Signs and effects of abuse on seniors, and giving up one's autonomy/control when moving into a facility.
- Susan Steinke, Michigan Elder Justice Initiative - POAs guardianship and conservatorship.
- Tyler Erla-DHHS/APS - Adult Protective Services procedures, when and why to call them.
- Horizon Bank - Money safety/scams and fraud.
- Resources and Information



Reg 9 AAA: Elder Abuse, Neglect,
Exploitation and Prevention
Conference 2026



Information and Reservation

989-358-4650 ottoa@nemcsa.org

MLTCOP
MICHIGAN LONG TERM CARE
OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM

Program Impact

EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES

Early Childhood Advocacy

Last month, Early Childhood Services Director, Tricia Grifka testified before the Michigan House Committee on Education & Workforce in opposition of Michigan House Bill 5803, which would exempt certain schools operating preschool classrooms from following state licensing requirements.

During her testimony, Grifka emphasized the importance of maintaining strong licensing standards and qualified staff to help ensure Michigan's youngest learners continue to receive safe, high-quality early childhood education.

The testimony brought the perspectives of Head Start providers, families, and the children they serve before the House Committee, reinforcing the importance of maintaining strong protections for young Michiganders.



Celebrating our Head Start Communities

Throughout June, many NEMCSA Head Start locations hosted end-of-year celebrations, recognizing the growth and accomplishments of our children and the dedication of our staff.

Our newest Head Start location in Port Huron celebrated a successful first Spring under NEMCSA. The commitment of both staff and families have established a strong foundation to build upon throughout the summer and into the next School-Year.

Thank you to our Early Childhood Services staff, whose dedication continues to leave a lasting impact on the lives of the children and families we serve. Enjoy your Summer!



Program Impact

SCHOOL SUCCESS

Year 2 of Ocean Guardian School Designation Completed

The PIVOT program students have successfully completed their second year as Alpena County's first NOAA Ocean Guardian School, continuing their commitment to protecting and preserving local watersheds through environmental stewardship and hands-on learning.

PIVOT is a program serving adjudicated youth that provides day treatment and academic instruction through a partnership between Alpena Public Schools and the Juvenile Division of the 26th Circuit Court. The program is managed through the Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency (NEMCSA) School Success Program and is supported by Catholic Human Services. Through opportunities like the Ocean Guardian initiative, students engage in meaningful, community-based learning experiences while developing valuable academic, personal, and civic responsibility skills.

Over the past two years, students have conducted 15 beach cleanups and monitoring events at five local shoreline locations: Negwegon State Park, Ossineke Beach, Starlite Beach, Besser Natural Area, and North Point Nature Preserve. Their efforts extended beyond litter removal, as they served as citizen scientists by carefully documenting every piece of marine debris collected and contributing that data to a national database used to track pollution trends across the country.

During the 2025-26 school year alone, students removed 162 pieces of marine debris during their fall and spring cleanup efforts. Starlite Beach accounted for the highest number of items collected, with 99 pieces removed, followed by Ossineke Beach with 30 pieces.

Congratulations to the PIVOT students for their dedication, leadership, and positive impact on our local environment. Their work demonstrates how service-learning experiences can empower students to make meaningful contributions to their communities while protecting Northeast Michigan's natural resources.

Special thanks to NOAA's Ocean Guardian Program and the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation for their support in making this important work possible.



School Success Partnership Program

2025-26 Data Dashboard

The School Success Partnership (SSP) Program continues to make a meaningful impact by providing comprehensive support to students and families throughout our communities. This year's data highlights the dedication of SSP staff and the strength of collaborative partnerships with schools, families, and community organizations. Through targeted interventions and individualized support, the program has achieved measurable gains in student attendance, academic performance, family engagement, and overall student well-being. These positive outcomes reflect the program's ongoing commitment to identifying and addressing barriers that can hinder student success. The results underscore the value of the SSP Program in helping students stay connected to school, strengthen academic achievement, and build the skills and support systems needed to thrive. By fostering strong partnerships and delivering responsive services, the School Success Partnership Program continues to empower students and families while creating pathways for long-term educational success.

Performance Objectives:

1. **Improving school attendance and reducing chronic absenteeism;**
2. **Increasing academic performance** based on grades with emphasis on math and reading;
3. **Identifying barriers** to attendance and success and connecting families with resources to reduce these barriers; and
4. **Increasing parent involvement** in child's education and school and community.

Performance Objective Results:

98%

Reduction
in
Absenteeism

86%

Overall
Academic
Improvement

77%

Improved
Reading
Skills

75%

Improved
Math
Skills

1,941

Referrals to
resources to
alleviate barriers

96%

of Parents
Increased Parental
Involvement

Students Receiving Free and/or Reduced Lunch: 90%

Common Barriers Identified:

Social-Emotional Skill Development

Students often struggle with emotional regulation, resilience, and interpersonal skills, impacting their ability to engage in learning.

Educational Skill Development

Many students face academic challenges due to foundational learning deficits, contributing to disengagement and low performance.

Support Systems

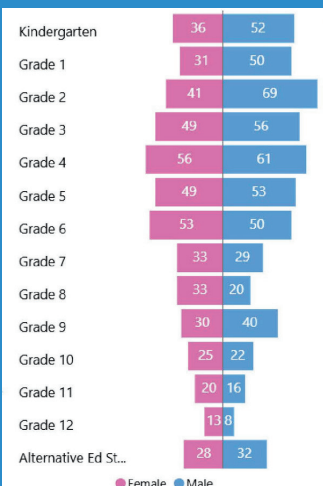
Navigation of critical support systems to foster consistent family, school, or community support hinders students' ability to thrive both academically and personally.

Top Three Reasons for Referral to the Program:

Academic

Behavior

Attendance



School Success Partnership Program Mission Statement:

The School Success Program is dedicated to ensuring that every student has the opportunity to reach their full potential. We provide personalized support, mentorship, and a nurturing environment designed to foster academic success and personal growth. Our commitment is to remove barriers to learning, promote good attendance, and actively involve families in their child's education journey and life goals, ensuring a holistic approach to each student's development, happy, healthy and ready to learn.

1,056

Students
served
Formally



5,097

Students
served
Informally



Program Impact HOUSING

Homeless Prevention

During the month, ten new households were enrolled in the Rapid Re-Housing program, one household successfully leased a unit through the Housing Choice Voucher Program, and seven households were able to self-resolve their housing crisis. To date, a total of \$408,376 has been expended through Rapid Re-Housing for security deposits and rental assistance. At this time, all prevention funding has been fully utilized. Participants have continued to receive camping permits through the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Conservation Officers. Recently, Street Outreach staff member Chad visited the DNR Regional Headquarters in Roscommon, where staff expressed appreciation for our partnership in supporting individuals experiencing homelessness in our service area. DNR representatives acknowledged the positive impact of our street outreach efforts, particularly in educating participants on the proper and legal use of camping permits. They also reported that maintenance staff have experienced more positive interactions and improved attitudes during encounters with program participants.



Shelter Diversion Program

During May and June, the Shelter Diversion Program served 20 households, helping them avoid or quickly resolve housing crises. Of those served, 18 households successfully secured or maintained housing, while two households were not successfully diverted and were referred to the Rapid Re-Housing Program for additional support. A total of \$12,675.43 in diversion assistance was expended during this period. One notable success story involved a household that had been temporarily staying with others but was unexpectedly required to leave due to difficulties within the living arrangement. The household was also coping with ongoing medical challenges and had identified an affordable apartment that met their needs, including accommodation for their emotional support animal. Although the unit was located outside of our agency's typical service area, the flexibility of the Shelter Diversion Program allowed us to assist with relocation costs and help the household secure stable housing. With housing stability achieved, the household has been able to focus on improving their health and well-being without the added stress of homelessness or housing insecurity. They have since reported improved health and a better overall quality of life. In June, staff hosted a Community Partner and Landlord Engagement Event that provided an overview of our housing and landlord support programs, along with a Shelter Diversion training. The training focused on strengthening community partnerships, increasing awareness of available resources, and equipping participants with strategies to help households resolve housing crises and avoid entering shelter whenever possible. Six participants attended the event, representing local community organizations and landlord partners. The session encouraged collaboration and highlighted the important role community stakeholders play in housing stability efforts.

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

Program Impact

HOUSING PATHWAYS FOR YOUNG ADULTS

NEMCSA's program currently operates seven Transitional Housing units, with one unit presently available. Through the Rapid Re-Housing program, staff have successfully housed four households this month. Additionally, seventeen youth households are actively pursuing housing stability through the Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) program or Housing Choice Vouchers. To date, program expenditures include \$77,998 for Transitional Housing rental assistance, \$215,881 for Rapid Re-Housing assistance, and \$27,572 for household support services, including transportation, essential household items, and groceries.

FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT

Program staff were able to provide a financial empowerment class for the BOSS program participants at the Gaylord library after hours and had six families attend along with their children. Staff have also been able to get more involved with Hope Shores Alliance and will be going there monthly to assist with budgeting and credit repair for women that are living or working with them. The budget binder provided during counseling sessions has been well received, and multiple agencies have requested additional information about it. There has been a lot of interest in the budget binder that is provided at each counseling session and have had multiple agencies reach out interested in this binder. Participants have also shown great interest in utilizing this binder to better organize themselves along with creating savings goals, paying off debt and keeping track of expenses!

In the Family Self-Sufficiency Program this month, two individuals successfully graduated and one participant was added to the program. The program is continuously looking to recruit new participants and plans to offer some in-person training sessions to help attract additional participants.

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

WATER PROGRAM

In the month of June, the Water Affordability Program successfully provided the following assistance through both the water and plumbing programs:

Water Affordability

36

INDIVIDUALS
ASSISTED

15

HOUSEHOLDS
ASSISTED

\$4,597

TOTAL PAID
OUT

36

INDIVIDUALS
ASSISTED

17

HOUSEHOLDS
ASSISTED

\$30,489

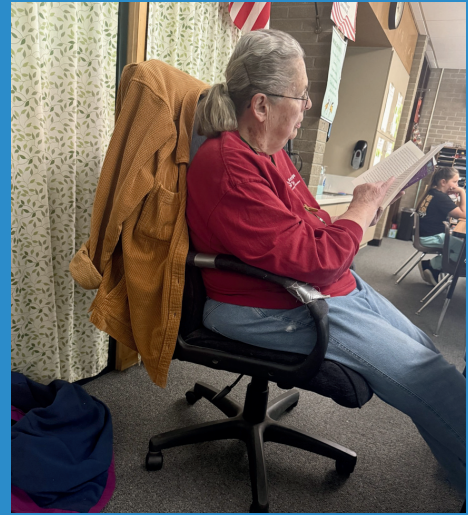
TOTAL PAID
OUT

Plumbing

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

Program Impact

FGP/SCP VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS



Meet Foster Grandma Barb Selesky, a 10-year veteran of the AmeriCorps Seniors Foster Grandparent program. Grandma Barb is a wonderful advocate for AmeriCorps Seniors programs, serving on NEMCSA's FGP/SCP Advisory Group, assisting with the recruitment of volunteers for both Foster Grandparents and Senior Companions, and always lending a hand when needed. Grandma Barb and her cohort of friends were the first to volunteer at Grayling Elementary School and have been a highly influential force since the 2016 – 2017 school year.

Grandma Barb has been a great asset to Mrs. VanNuck's fourth grade classroom since being first assigned there in 2016. Per Mrs. VanNuck, Grandma Barb is an important part of her class assisting students both academically and socially. She is helpful, respectful, and dependable.

Foster Grandparents serving in the higher elementary grades such as fourth grade is rare among the program's Grandparents with most serving in kindergarten through second grade, but you'll have a very hard time getting Grandma Barb to serve elsewhere. She has a great time learning about the children and best of all having the opportunity to make young friends. She just loves witnessing the great changes and growth she sees in her students and finds her service to be very rewarding.

WEATHERIZATION

As the Department of Energy program year came to an end on June 30th, program staff were able to successfully complete 52 homes. With 109 income eligible clients waiting on inspection, 239 potential clients waiting on applications, 79 homes currently receiving weatherization assistance and with two new inspectors in training, staff are very optimistic that they will be able to close even more homes in the communities in the following program year.

NEMCSA's Weatherization team will be traveling to Phoenix, Arizona in August to attend the Energy Out West Conference. Staff will experience hands-on technical training, weatherization education, innovation updates, and administrative policies led by national experts.



WEATHERIZATION@NEMCSA.ORG



989-358-4700



**Weatherization
Works**

Program Impact

BRIDGES OF SELF-SUFFICIENCY

BOSS Program Success Stories



Graduation Day: The Lilly family who graduated BOSS this month!



Community Support: Staff held a BOSS group session led by NEMCSA's Financial Stability Coordinator, Ashley with six families! Including six adults and nine children.

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

Community Engagement:

- Ongoing weekly collaboration with IRESA Adult Education, including regular meetings and shared support for BOSS families.
- Participation in the monthly HSCC meetings and ongoing communications.
- Madison attended Crawford & Oscoda County Project Connects in June.
- Amanada, Madison, and several NEMCSA Housing Staff attended a non-profit roundtable event led by Consumers Enegery.
- Amanda attended AmeriCorps Seniors Foster Grandparent/Senior Companion advisory meeting and volunteer recognition day.
- Amanda attended the annual Veterans Benefit Fair in Iosco County.



Be sure to check out the latest episodes from the Empower & Strengthen Podcast and NEMCSA's Conversations on the Couch Video Series!



CRC@NEMCSA.ORG



989-358-4757