COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT: 2022-2023

CLAY COUNTY CHILD CARE CENTER, INC. JANUARY 2023

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Introduction

At **Clay County Child Care Center, Inc.** (Clay County), our mission is *enriching the lives we touch.* We serve eligible Head Start (HS) and Early Head Start (EHS) children and families across five rural counties in north central Kansas: **Clay, Cloud, Ottawa, Republic, and Washington**. We have provided HS services for over 30 years and EHS services for nearly 25 years. We have physical locations in each of our five counties.

Address	County	Program
1021 4 th Street, Clay Center, KS,	Clay	Administrative Office
67432		Early Head Start
314 Court, Clay Center, KS, 67432	Clay	Clay County Head Start
803 Valley, Concordia, KS, 66901*	Cloud	Cloud County Head Start
1813 Frontage Road, Belleville, KS,	Republic	Republic County Head Start
66935		
612 N. Rothsay, Minneapolis, KS,	Ottawa	Ottawa County Head Start
67467		
117 W. College Street, Washington,	Washington	Washington County Head Start
KS, 66968		

Using a variety of data sources, we conduct a community assessment of our service area every five (5) years with annual updates, as required by Head Start Program Performance Standard 1302.11: Determining community strengths, needs and resources. Generally, the needs in our area of Kansas and in our communities remain static, and we do not identify significant changes in our community assessment from year to year, but we regularly monitor community data and information, including the experiences of our families and community partners, to assure we adapt and adjust our services appropriately to meet the needs of eligible HS/EHS children and families.

Funded Enrollment

We receive federal and state funding to serve 220 HS/EHS children across the service area, 120 in HS programming and 100 in EHS program options.

Funding source:	Head Start	Early Head Start
Federal	120	40
Kansas home visitation		30
Kansas child care partnership		30
TOTAL	120	100

Eligible Children and Families

Demographic data and indicators for the service area reflect minor fluctuations in recent years. For instance, population across the service area decreased slightly. Poverty has increased. Reports of child abuse and neglect have also increased, as well as the number of assigned cases and out-of-home placements. Most children in the service area are white, non-Hispanic. We serve very few non-English speakers, though the Hispanic population has increased slightly in Ottawa and Washington Counties.

Population and demographics

	Clay	Cloud	Ottawa	Republic	Washington
Square miles	645.3	715.3	720.73	717.37	894.76
Population	8,117	9,032	5,735	4,674	5,530
Race/ethnicity*					
White, non-Hispanic	92.9%	91.2%	91.9%	94.2%	91.9%
Hispanic	2.6%	3.5%	2.5%	1.5%	4.9%
Language other than	0.6%	3.2%	2.9%	1.2%	4.2%
English					

Table 1. Population and demographics by county¹

*Due to small population numbers for some demographics, we have only included white, non-Hispanic and Hispanic percentages.

Table 2. Birth to five population

	Clay	Cloud	Ottawa	Republic	Washington	
Births ²	79	104	61	59	77	
Birth to 5^3	522	652	294	264	367	
Race/ethnicity of birth mothers ^{*4}						
White, non-Hispanic	95.0%					
Hispanic	2.1%					

*Due to small population numbers for some demographics, we have only included white, non-Hispanic and Hispanic percentages.

¹ (United States Census Bureau, 2022)

² (Kansas Department of Health and Environment, 2020)

³ (United States Census Bureau, 2022)

⁴ (Kansas Department of Health and Environment, 2020)

Children experiencing homelessness

Limited data is available regarding children and families experiencing homelessness. The 2022 Point-in-Time Survey for Kansas did not capture any reported homelessness in any of the five counties (<u>https://www.kshomeless.com/uploads/1/2/9/8/129825788/2022_pit_summary.pdf</u>). The Kansas State Department of Education publishes school district reported numbers of children experiencing homelessness if the number is greater than ten. Two districts in the service area are included in the report: Clay County-USD 379 (10 students) and Twin Valley-USD 240 (12 students) (Kansas State Department of Education).

Children in foster care

	Clay	Cloud	Ottawa	Republic	Washington
Reports of child abuse	228	292	126	70	82
Cases assigned	129	166	69	41	45
Out-of-home	12	18	12	3	7
placements					
Primary reason(s) for	Lack of	Neglect	Physical	Lack of	Emotional
removal	supervision	(39%)	abuse	supervision	abuse
	(67%)	Emotional	(42%)	(67%)	(71%)
		abuse	Caretaker		
		(28%)	inability to		
			cope (25%)		
			Child		
			behavior		
			(25%)		

Table 3. Child abuse and neglect, FY22, by county⁵

Services for children with disabilities

We screen each child at enrollment with the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) and the Ages and Stages Social and Emotional Questionnaire (ASQ-SE). As needed, we refer children to the appropriate service provider for Part B or Part C services, based on age and county of residence. Children with disabilities in our service area receive Part B services through three special education cooperatives:

- Clay County: Twin Lakes Educational Cooperative (TLEC).
- Cloud, Republic, and Washington Counties: Learning Cooperative of North Central Kansas (LCNCK).
- Ottawa County: Central Kansas Cooperative in Education (CKCIE).

⁵ (Kansas Department for Children and Families, 2021)

Infant and toddlers with delays or disabilities receive Part C services through the three Infant and Toddler Cooperatives in our area:

- Clay and Washington Counties: Pony Express Infant and Toddler Services.
- Cloud and Republic Counties: Occupational Center for Central Kansas (OCCK).
- Ottawa County: Salina Infant Child Development (ICD).

Additionally, Parents as Teachers programs, Families Together (family preservation initiative) programs, Kansas Children's Services League, the Autism Society, and the Deaf Children's Society provide support for families who have children with delays or disabilities.

The number of children receiving services for delays and/or disabilities has increased over the last three years. Part B providers report that the number of children with disabilities in grades one through twelve is approximately 12% (average) of the total number of children enrolled. Per the providers, percentages are higher in the younger grades for a few reasons: (1) a high number of speech-language needs for young children still seeking to master language skills, (2) children may transition out of special education services as they mature, and (3) children may discontinue special education, or formal education, as they age.

We typically serve more HS/EHS children with delays or disabilities than the reported 12% due to the age of the HS/EHS population, as they struggle with the skills needed to master language. We also serve children, from time to time, with English as a second language; their mastery of English improves with each year and by the time they go to kindergarten, they may no longer need services for language delays.

Table 4. indicates the approximate number of children receiving services through Part B and C services, as reported by the providers. Table 5. indicates HS/EHS children receiving Part B or Part C services, based on program numbers.

Part B	Part C
<20	27
<25	
<22	50
<20	
<26	18
<213	95
	<20 <25 <22 <20 <26

Table 4. Children in Part B and Part C in service area

Disability	Part B	Part C
Developmental Delay/Speech	19	0
Non-Categorical/Developmental Delay	5	15
Autism	0	0
Other (Failure to Thrive)	0	0
Visual Impairment	0	0
Orthopedic (OT)	0	0
TOTAL	26	15

Table 5. HS/EHS children in Part B or Part C services

Estimated number of eligible children

Using estimated population and childhood poverty rates, we estimate that at least 224 children in the service area and 66 pregnant women in the service area are income eligible for EHS/HS children. Our current funded enrollment is 220 children/pregnant women (120 HS/100 EHS), approximately 75% of the eligible children and prenatal women in our service area. However, we know that the expanded child tax credit in 2021 impacted household incomes for low-income families; now that those have expired, actual numbers of income-eligible for the program may be higher than poverty rates suggest.

Table 6. Estimated number of HS/EHS eligible children and prenatal mothers in service area^{6,7}

County	0 to 5	Births	Poverty	Pov	verty,	# children	#
	populatio			children		eligible	pregnant
	n						women
							eligible
Clay	522	79	7.9%		7.9%	41	6
Cloud	652	104	11.4%		10.0%	65	12
Ottawa	294	61	11.3%		14.2%	33	7
Republic	264	59	11.6%		18%	48	31
Washington	367	77	10.3%		15.6%	37	8
Total					224		66
Slots						220	
Estimated HS Eligible (by age)					95-105		
Estimated EHS Eligible (by age)						115-135	5

⁶ (United States Census Bureau, 2022)

⁷ (Kansas Department of Health and Environment, 2020)

Criteria used to define recruitment priorities

Because eligible children and families live throughout the service area, **the entire five county area is the recruitment area**, with no restrictions placed on who may apply for HS/EHS services except that they live within the five-county service area and are not served by another Head Start.

Needs of Eligible Children and Families

As part of the Community Needs process, we consider the social, economic, health and nutrition, and education needs of HS/EHS eligible children and families. We review a variety of data indicators including:

- Needs as identified through other community need assessments in our service area (see listing at end of this report).
- Needs as identified by HS/EHS families (captured in a family needs survey).
- Needs as identified by other service providers (reflected in a sampling of provider comments).

After synthesizing these sources, we've identified prevalent trends across the service area:

- Families have recently experienced low levels of unemployment and consistent median household incomes across all five counties.
- Children are slightly more likely to live with married parents, but just under half of all children reside with a single parent. In Washington County, more children live with a single father than a single mother.
- Approximately one in every ten families has experienced food insecurity in the past year.
- The availability of mental health providers varies across the five counties and is scarcer than the availability for the state.
- Many children are not accessing preventive dental care during their youngest years, as evidenced by the low percentages of school-aged children with dental sealants.
- Approximately one in every four households does not have an internet subscription.
- Approximately one in every four school-aged children read below grade level.

Social and economic needs

Table 7. Economic indicators by county

	Clay	Cloud	Ottawa	Republic	Washington
Median household income ⁸	\$52,716	\$53,110	\$57,455	\$50,268	\$53,491
Unemployment, November 2022 ⁹	2.4%	2.6%	2.3%	1.7%	1.5%

⁸ (United States Census Bureau, 2022)

⁹ (Kansas Department of Labor)

Table 8. Household composition, families, by county¹⁰

	Clay	Cloud	Ottawa	Republic	Washington
Married	47.6%	58.0%	51.2%	51.2%	51.4%
Mother only	28.5%	21.8%	20.6%	25.8%	19.8%
Father only	18.3%	19.7%	16.3%	19.4%	26.0%

Health and nutrition needs

Table 9. Health and nutrition indicators^{11,12}

	Clay	Cloud	Ottawa	Republic	Washington
Food insecurity (in	10.2%	10.4%	9.6%	8.9%	8.8%
past year)					
Prenatal care, first	79.5%	84.5%	88.3%	81.4%	85.7%
trimester					
Mental health	75	185	18	88	not
provider rate (per					available
100,000)*					
Children grades 3-12	37.6%	51.1%	62.6%	not	34.3%
without dental				available	
sealants					
Average monthly	16.7	24.9	14	16.8	15.5
WIC participation					
(per 1,000)**					

*The rate in Kansas is 214/100,000.

***The rate in Kansas is 15.8/1,000.*

Education needs

Table 10. Education indicators^{13,14}

	Clay	Cloud	Ottawa	Republic	Washington
No household	24.1%	21.3%	21.2%	27.7%	29.6%
internet subscription					
High School	91.%	91.8%	94.8%	94.6%	100%
Graduation rate					
(four years)					
Reading proficiency,	73.56%	71.81%	77.21%	75.37%	76.19%
$3^{rd} - 8^{th}$ grade					

¹⁰ (United States Census Bureau, 2022)
¹¹ (Kansas Health Matters, 2019)
¹² (Kansas Department of Health and Environment, 2020)
¹³ (United States Census Bureau, 2022)
¹⁴ (The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2020)

Population with	25%	22.3%	21.2%	26.1%	22%
bachelor's degree or					
higher					

Service provider comments

Access to employment opportunities and child care options have been identified as lacking in our communities. The scenario that we hear often is that the parent(s) do not make enough to pay for child care on their own, but they make too much to qualify for the child care subsidy.

Transportation for both parents and children is a need when the household does not own a RELIABLE car or they do not have a Driver's License. Some of the towns we service do have public transportation, but that still remains difficult with using car seats and the expense of it. The remainder of the rural towns that we service have no such transportation offered.

Effective parenting classes. This area of the state of Kansas traditionally has the highest reported rates of child abuse and neglect. No one is sure whether that means this area is just more faithful to report, or if the incidence of child abuse and neglect is really higher in this area. Regardless, high rates indicate a serious problem, and effective parenting is a serious need. Head Start has tried to meet that need through several approaches: Survival Skills for Women classes, Second Step (in the classrooms), Conscious Discipline, Love and Logic, and Effective Fathering classes. Each of those programs is good and meets some needs: none are able to capture the interest of all parents. The classes offered are dependent upon parent interest each year. To tag on to this topic is the lack of mental health service providers that are consistent and accept a sliding fee scale, as many of our adult parents do not have health insurance that will cover the cost of the sessions. Along with Mental Health issue is drug misuse. There are no treatment facilities that are close to our areas let alone one's that would allow a child to stay with a parent while seeking treatment.

It was identified that the general public does not have a clear picture of all the services that Head Start and Early Head Start provide. It was shown that there is a high level of need in that areas of: **literacy training, financial assistance for education, training on child development, parenting skills, healthy eating habits, and learning English as a second language**. All of these topics are covered by our teachers, Family Services Workers, and Home Visitors.

There is a lack of involvement, generally, by the medical communities in public education and preventative medicine for low-income folks. However, the agency has received support through the Kansas Head Start Association for the Institute for Health Care Advancement—an initiative in which we provide training to parents on at-home care for sick children (via "What to Do When Your Child Gets Sick") and when it is appropriate to use the emergency room.

Dental Services are scarce ... we often transport children across county lines to find a dental provider who will accept a medical card.

There is a **lack of understanding of special education's role** and the rights of parents of children with special needs. Head Start has invited Families Together, a special education advocacy group, to present workshops on this topic on occasion.

Typical Schedules of Parents with Eligible Children

Employed parents of HS/EHS eligible children in the service area are likely to work near to home for approximately 40 hours a week in jobs that may or may not have traditional work day schedules (such as retail, health care, and manufacturing).

	Clay	Cloud	Ottawa	Republic	Washington
Average travel time to work (in minutes)	21.6	15.2	24.6	21.8	20.0
Most common employment	Ed. Cluster* Agriculture Man.**	Ed. Cluster* Retail Man.**	Ed. Cluster* Man.**Agri culture	Ed. Cluster* Agriculture Man.**	Ed. Cluster* Agriculture Man.**
Mean hours worked weekly	39.4	40.0	41.0	40.5	41.3

Table 11. Employment and transportation in service area¹⁵

* Education/ Health/Social Services **Manufacturing

manajacianng

Programs Serving Eligible Children and Families

Child care and preschool options exist in each county, as well as some home visiting options.

- Licensed child care: Licensed child care centers and home-based providers (family child care) must meet state requirements set forth by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment. Portions of Clay, Cloud, and Ottawa Counties are considered childcare deserts¹⁶, indicating that less childcare is available than may be needed by families.
- Four-year-old, at-risk preschool: As shown in Table 12., most districts across the service area offer preschool, but two do not offer this service. Availability of preschool services potentially impacts Head Start enrollment in some areas.
- Special education: Some of the cooperatives in our service area serve HS/EHS children on IEPs (Induvial Education Plans) and IFSPs (Individual Family Service Plans) in the "least restrictive environment" of a HS classroom or, for EHS, in the home. Others continue to use a developmental classroom approach, where peer children learn side-by-side with the children who have IEPs. HS/EHS families benefit from both approaches, but the time taken to travel to sites by therapists often hampers the time available for direct services.

¹⁵ (United States Census Bureau, 2022)

¹⁶ (Center for American Progress, 2020)

• Home Visiting: Parents as Teachers (PAT) services are available in Republic, Cloud, Clay, and Ottawa counties.

	Clay	Cloud	Ottawa	Republic	Washington
Average time cost	\$133.18/wk	\$129.94/wk	\$142.22/wk	\$131.25/wk	\$124.67/wk
for infant care,					
child care center ¹⁷					
Licensed centers	1	3	n/a	n/a	n/a
Licensed	26	27	21	18	17
family/group					
homes					
Districts that offer	USD 379	USD 333	USD 240	USD 109	USD 108
at-risk preschool	(Clay	(Concordia)	(Twin	(Republic	(Washingto
	County)		Valley	County)	n County)
				USD 426	USD 223
				(Pike Valley	(Barnes)
					USD 224
					(Clifton-
					Clyde)
Districts that do not		USD 334	USD 239		
offer at-risk		(Southern	(North		
preschool		Cloud)	Ottawa		
			County)		

Table 12. Early childhood programming in service area

Accessing specialists who can provide guidance and support to our program and staff continues to be a struggle for our program. When we enroll a child with an identified delay or disability, we try to locate a specialist to train staff on that disability, especially if the condition is life threatening. However, such specialists are often far away and expensive, and we sometimes must settle for internet information or try other channels (books, phone calls) to secure needed information and training. We also rely on the expertise of parents of the child to provide us with the training they received.

¹⁷ All child care data in this table, (Child Care Aware of Kansas)

Resources Available to Meet the Needs of Eligible Children and Families

Each county in the service area is governed by its respective Board of County Commissioners. Ten School Districts operate in the five counties:

- Clay County: USD 379 (Clay County)
- Cloud County: USD 33 (Concordia), USD 224 (Southern Cloud)
- Ottawa County: USD 239 (North Ottawa County), USD 240 (Twin Valley)
- Republic County: USD 426 (Pike Valley), USD 109 (Republic County)
- Washington County: USD 223 (Barnes), USD 224 (Clifton-Clyde), USD 108 (Washington County)

Numerous service agencies exist in each community, and they are often willing to provide specialized resources, such as free glasses (First Sight-Lions Club) or paying for a small project (Rotary Club). See a full list of partners by county on pages 16 and 17.

Resources are scarcer in rural areas than in larger communities, but they are not altogether lacking. Availability varies across the service area, with some gaps existing in all five counties for key services.

- Services for families experiencing homelessness: There are not any emergency or transitional shelters in any of our five counties for people experiencing homelessness. Homelessness in our area includes people staying with friends or moving back in with family after they already have been out on their own.
- Resource Councils: Each county has an operating Resource Council. Cloud County's Resource Council is especially active in meeting children's needs. Head Start and Early Head Start staff are members of these council boards and attend regular meetings.
- Health care providers: Each of the County Health Departments are excellent, though understaffed and overworked. Some individual doctors and dentists will work with us to address health needs and concerns, but the number of those who will accept Medicaid is declining, as is the overall number of dentists in the service area.
- Family Preservation: We maintain a close working relationship with the Kansas Department for Children and Families. Often, DCF encourages or assigns Head Start and Early Head Start to work with Family Preservation. In those instances, we work with the case worker involved.
- Substance abuse prevention and treatment: Alcoholic and Narcotics Anonymous and Al Anon chapters exist in our service area. However, we have observed an increased need for drug and alcohol counseling in our service areas and this type of intense counseling is typically found in the larger towns and cities rather than our rural communities.

- Children's Trust Funds: Children's Trust Funds exist in Clay County and in Cloud County, each with a specific focus area, but their resources are available to HS and EHS families under certain circumstances. Availability of these resources in all counties would be beneficial.
- As reflected in Table 13. below, fewer families apply for and receive public assistance, such as child care and TANF, than are likely eligible.

	Clay	Cloud	Ottawa	Republic	Washington
Child care	33	56	21	12	14
subsidy					
TANF	19	35	11	8	6
SNAP	412	679	310	234	182

Table 13. Public assistance, by county¹⁸

¹⁸ (Kansas Department for Children and Families, 2022)

Community Strengths

Community partners

A strength across the service area is the network of providers and community organization who support HS/EHS families. Clay County sustains positive working relationships and partnerships with numerous service providers and organizations across the five-county service area who provide resources and opportunities to HS/EHS eligible families. Partners who work with us collaboratively to assist HS/EHS eligible children and families include health providers, local education agencies, local social service providers, and local businesses and non-profits. Across all five counties, we partner with the Kansas Department for Children and Families, K-State Research and Extension, county health departments, Part B and Part C providers, and local resource councils. A full listing of partners by county is included on the following pages.

*Lincoln Elementary School (Matt Weller, principal) *Board of Education, USD 379 *Garfield School, USD 379 (Book Buddies) *USD 379 Transportation *Clay Center Family Physicians *Clay County Public Library *Clay County Health Department *Pawnee Mental Health

*USD 333

*Cloud County Children's Center/Resource and Referral *Pawnee Mental Health *Helping Hands *Dr. Greg Hattan DDS *Sunset Nursing Home *SER *Farm Bureau *Smokey Hill Public Television *Parents AS Teachers

*Minneapolis Elementary School *Cliff and Pat Johns *Love, Inc. *Ottawa County Lions Club *USD #240

*Pike-Valley Elementary at Courtland *East Elementary-Belleville BOE *Mr. Damman, in Belleville *Fischer Family Dentistry *Belleville Public Library *Ministerial Alliance—Belleville (Republic County Food Bank)

*Washington County Developmental Center *USD 223 *USD 108 *Boy Scouts *Linn Elementary *Centennial Nursing Home

Partners in Clay County

*Clay County EMS *Dr. Owen Poulson DDS *Patterson's Pharmacy *Bud's Tire *CCC for resource and referral *Cloud County Community College *Public Television *Parents As Teachers *Clay Center Fire Department *Clay County EMS

Partners in Cloud County

*Concordia Fire Dept. *Concordia Police Dept (DARE Program) *Manna House *Rod's Thriftway *Heart Choices *Neighbor to Neighbor *Central National Bank *Print 5 *Picture This *Cloud County Community College

Partners in Ottawa County

*USD # 239 *Comcare *Minneapolis Public Library *Ottawa County Fire Department *Central Kansas Mental Health

Partners in Republic County

*Republic County Developmental Center *Pawnee Mental Health, in Belleville. *Chamber of Commerce *Astra Bank *Reliable Auto *Courtland Depot Market *Nabity's Farm

Partners in Washington County

*Harvesters *Meals on Wheels *Edith's Food Pantry *Parents as Teachers *Washington County Library *Washington County Sheriff's Department *Prairie Winds Chiropractic *USD 223 *USD 334 *Kathy Hunt *Ray's Apple Market *Clay Center Locker Plant *Keith Freiling and Debbie Romins-KSPTA *Grow Clay County

*CTE *Frank Carlson Library *DVACK *St. Francis Ministries *Walmart *F and A Food Sales *Bright Beginnings *Golden Rule *First Christian Church

*Mobile Food Pantry *Courser Lapo Clinical Services

*Belleville Police Department *USD 109 *Dr. Holt *Dr. Goertzen *Melton Motors *Republic County Hospital *Courser Lapo Clinical Services

*Washington County Fire Department *Washington County Ambulance Service *Pawnee Mental Health *First National Bank

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	Clay	Cloud	Ottawa	Republic	Washington
Size/Square Miles	645.3	715.34	720.73	717.37	894.76
Population	8142	9060	5902	4686	5525
% Poverty	15.1%	17.8%	13.2%	17.9%	12.7%
Child abuse cases	228	292	126	70	82
Assigned	129	166	69	41	45
Out of home placement	19	37	10	2	10
Eligible prenatal					
mothers	13	20	7	8	8
Median Income	\$56,186.00	\$44,143.00	\$51,971.00	\$48,022.00	\$48,889.00
Unemployment	3.20%	3.20%	2.70%	2.60%	2.60%
Racial/Ethnicity					
White-Non-Hispanic	93.40%	92.50%	94.00%	94.70%	93.30%
Hispanic	2.70%	3.40%	2.70%	2.40%	4.00%
African American	1.00%	1.10%	1.20%	0.80%	0.60%
American Indian	0.60%	0.70%	0.70%	0.30%	0.50%
Asain/Pacific Islander	0.10%	1.20%	0.40%	0.60%	0.90%
Two or More Races	2.00%	2.00%	1.50%	1.70%	1.20%
Eligible Children	90	127	48	51	53

Other Community Assessments of Service Area

Republic: https://www.rphospital.org/docs/CHNA2022_RepublicCoKS_RCH_FINAL.pdf

Clay: <u>https://www.ccmcks.org/communityhealthassessment/2022CommunityHealthNeedsAssess</u> <u>ment.pdf</u>

Cloud: <u>https://cchc.com/about/community-health-needs.php</u>

Ottawa: http://www.ottawacountyhealthcenter.com/CHNA_Final_2019.pdf

	Clay	Cloud	Ottawa	Republic	Washington
Household Type					
Married-two parents	654	718	543	346	433
Mother only	66	162	73	56	46
Father only	117	65	21	5	22
Cohabitating	27	130	22	37	25

					108,223,
At Risk Programs	379	333	240	109, 426	224
No At Risk Programs		334	239		