



Quarterly Connection

Our Mission

We overcome poverty by meeting basic needs, helping people grow, and collaborating in our communities.

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NEW HEAD START FACILITY OPENING IN WYMORE

BVCA Partnership is thrilled to announce the upcoming opening of our brand-new Head Start facility in Wymore! The finishing touches are almost complete, and we cannot wait to welcome children, families, and staff to this bright, welcoming space designed for learning, growth, and community.

The new facility features two spacious classrooms, each with direct access to a fenced-in playground area—allowing children to move safely and freely between indoor learning and outdoor play. Families can rest assured knowing that the playground is secure and that the off-street parking provides a safe environment during drop-off and pick-up times.

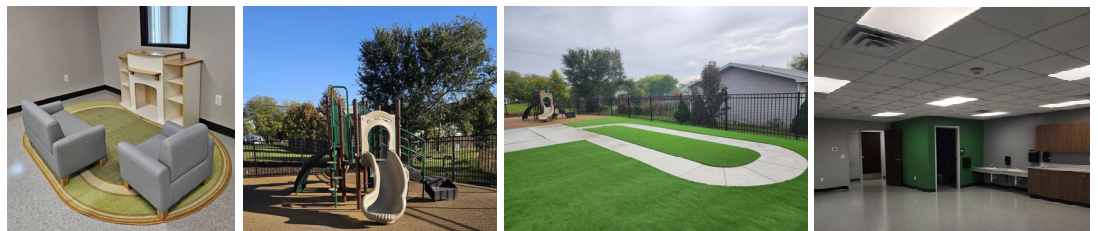
In addition to classrooms, the facility includes office space for staff and a durable conference room constructed from concrete. This room not only serves as a space for meetings and events but can also be used as a safe shelter for children and staff during dangerous weather conditions.

Head Start programs offer comprehensive benefits to children and families, focusing on school readiness, early education, and holistic support. Children receive high-quality educational experiences, nutritious meals, and health and developmental screenings, while families are supported with resources and guidance to help their children thrive.

We are excited to provide Wymore’s children with a nurturing environment where they can learn, grow, and flourish. This new facility is more than just a building—it’s a place where bright futures begin!

YOU ARE INVITED

Join us on November 14, 2025, for the grand opening of our new Head Start Center located at 416 South 17th Street in Wymore, NE. The open house will be held from 10:30am to 12:30pm, with the ribbon cutting ceremony at 11:00am. Visitors can tour the center and hear from our team about the services our program offers to children and their families.



URGENT APPEAL: HELP US REPLENISH OUR FOOD BANK SHELVES

BVCA's food banks in Butler, Fillmore, Gage, Jefferson, Polk, Saline, Seward, Thayer and York Counties are currently experiencing a critical shortage of essential food items. Demand for assistance has risen sharply, and our supplies are running dangerously low.

BVCA Family and Community Services Director, Ryan Bailey, reported that food bank levels are lower than she has seen in her 26 years with BVCA. The photos shown to the right are from the Jefferson County Food Bank, but the situation is similar throughout our service area.

In 2024, more than 4,000 people received food security services from BVCA, primarily through our food banks. Demand has been greater this year.

BVCA's food banks urgently needs donations of non-perishable food items and/or financial contributions to continue providing meals to individuals and families in need. If you are able to help, we encourage you to contact your local BVCA office.





Blue Valley
Community
Action

BVCA PARTNERSHIP | HELPING PEOPLE. CHANGING LIVES.



HELP US, HELP OTHERS

FOOD DRIVE

Please consider a donation
to those in need!

WHAT WE NEED:

Canned & non-perishable food items such as
canned fruits & vegetables, canned proteins,
canned soups & meals, pasta, pasta sauce, rice,
oatmeal, beans, cereal, etc.

During our last fiscal year, Blue Valley Community Action Partnership
distributed over 14,000 food baskets in our service area. Due to rising demand
and fewer donations, our food bank shelves are at their lowest levels in history.
We need your help to keep our shelves stocked and available for our neighbors
in need. YOU can make a difference with your donations. Help us, help others.

FOR MORE INFORMATION :

Please contact your local BVCA Center:

Butler County (402) 367-4347; Fillmore County (402) 759-3564; Gage County (402) 223-6034;
Jefferson County (402) 729-5568; Polk County (402) 747-2102; Saline County (402) 826-2376;
Seward County (402) 646-9177; Thayer County (402) 768-6704; York County (402) 362-3516

www.bvca.net | changinglives@bvca.net

FROM HEAD START STUDENT TO HEAD START ACCOUNTANT



BVCA's Head Start Fiscal Coordinator, Chelsea McCardle, sees every day the inner workings of how a multi-county Head Start operation functions. Once upon a time, her experience with Head Start was much more personal.

When Chelsea was three years old, her father died unexpectedly. The youngest of six children saw how her mother had to work constantly to support the family, and her older siblings became her care givers. During this time, Head Start served as a haven for Chelsea.

"I was enrolled in Head Start in Fairbury, in a little house on "B" Street that isn't in use anymore," she recalled. "It was just a place I could go and be a kid for a while."

Chelsea has fond memories of wholesome meals and practicing brushing her teeth in the little house on "B" Street. "I could go to school and be loved and supported in a way I wasn't necessarily getting at home, since I was on my own frequently from a young age," she said.

Her upbringing and experience with Head Start influenced her choice of career as an adult. "I think that growing up in poverty moved me to want to help people," Chelsea explained. "Not specifically with Community Action at first, but I've always done some sort of service-related work. When this job (fiscal coordinator) came open, it was a great way to combine my desire to help people with my education in accounting. I can help people behind the scenes while still doing what I enjoy, which is the accounting," she added.

BVCA BREAKS GROUND IN GENEVA

August 4, 2025, was a great day for BVCA and Fillmore County, as BVCA officially broke ground on a new Head Start Center in Geneva.

Did you know that Fillmore County was one of the four original BVCA Head Start programs? It began in 1967 as summers-only. For many years, even after transitioning to a year-round program, the Head Start classroom was in the back section of BVCA's thrift store downtown.

Since 2001, Fillmore County Head Start has called a former church located at 1600 "I" Street home. Throughout that time the program has grown and expanded. In 2010, Early Head Start services were added, and Head Start became a full-day preschool in 2016. The full-day programming supports not only the students and their families, but also the rural workforce and community in general!

The church has been everything BVCA could have hoped for, and will forever hold a special place in the hearts of anyone involved with Fillmore County Head Start in the past 24 years. It is time though for a new beginning, and when the old building is demolished on Thursday it will give rise to a brand-new state of the art preschool.

The new center will feature three classrooms, office space for five people, and a large room that will host meetings and Head Start socialization events while also serving as a storm shelter. There will also be a fenced-in playground with a direct entrance from the playground to the classrooms.

Head Start prepares students and families for kindergarten by enhancing a child's cognitive, social and emotional development. The program has a demonstrated positive impact on families' health, finances, parenting practices and many other aspects. This groundbreaking represents a commitment to Fillmore County and to superior Early Childhood education, and BVCA is very pleased to be moving forward in Geneva.



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



Have you ever considered becoming a volunteer? There are many reasons why people volunteer their time and talents. Many do so because they want to make a difference in the lives of others, they are looking for a purpose in life, or they feel the desire to give back to their community. Does this sound like you or someone you know? If so, consider volunteering for BVCA! BVCA is currently seeking volunteers in our Family & Community Service (FCS) Centers and our Foster Grandparent Program.

Those interested in volunteering in our local BVCA FCS Centers can help with tasks such as: sorting donations; assisting in the thrift store with pricing, stocking, organizing, running the cash register, creating window displays; helping in furniture rooms; assisting customers; answering phones and taking messages; and assisting in the food pantry. Anyone interested in volunteering at a FCS Center may contact BVCA at (402) 729-2278 or volunteer@bvca.net. Individuals are also welcome to contact their local BVCA Office directly.

Our Foster Grandparent Program is also looking for volunteers interested in mentoring and tutoring children. Volunteers are placed in classrooms and work one-on-one with children who have special needs. Individuals must be 55 years of age or older, in relatively good health, and must love kids. Volunteers receive stipends and can volunteer up to 40 hours per week (there is an income guideline to receive the tax-free hourly government stipend and mileage reimbursement). Being a Foster Grandparent volunteer gives individuals an opportunity to stay active in their communities, meet new people, make friends and make a difference in their community. Interested individuals may contact Sonja Workman at (402) 223-6036 or pioneer-fgp@bvca.net.



BVCA INVOLVEMENT IN LOCAL GIVING DAYS

On September 11, 2025, BVCA participated in Big Give Gage, raising several hundred dollars for emergency services at the Beatrice Family and Community Services Center. This was the sixth year BVCA participated in Big Give Gage.

Additionally, BVCA is involved in the organization and planning of the first ever Jefferson County Gives, which was announced in October. Planned for March 19, 2026, Jefferson County Gives draws inspiration from similar efforts in surrounding areas, including Gage County.

JOIN OUR TEAM | BEGIN YOUR CAREER OF HELPING PEOPLE & CHANGING LIVES

BVCA has several positions available! Visit www.bvca.net and select "Careers" from the navigation menu to find out more about our career opportunities and benefits.



Blue Valley Community Action Partnership's Outreach

| | | |
|--|-------|----------------|
| Case Management | 147 | Individuals |
| Childcare Services | 24 | Individuals |
| Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) | 298 | Individuals |
| Compassionate Projects | 0 | Individuals |
| COVID-19 Vaccines | 0 | Vaccinations |
| Early Head Start Child Care Partnership | 20 | Individuals |
| Early Head Start Home Based Services | 60 | Individuals |
| Early Head Start & Head Start Childcare Food Program | 7,053 | Meals & Snacks |
| Emergency Assistance | 62 | Households |
| Financial Coaching | 34 | Individuals |
| Food Rescue/Security | 499 | Households |
| Foster Grandparent Program | 36 | Individuals |
| Friends of Blue Valley Volunteer Program | 269 | Individuals |
| Head Start | 192 | Individuals |
| Homeownership Opportunity Program | 0 | Households |
| Housing Counseling | 45 | Individuals |
| Immunization Program | 214 | Shots |
| Infant Quality Initiative Program | 11 | Individuals |
| Lease-to-Own | 42 | Households |
| Nebraska Homeless Assistance Program (Shelter) | 6 | Households |
| Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation | 1 | Households |
| Project FIRST TH/RRH (Families In Residence with Support in Transition/Rapid Re-Housing) | 6 | Households |
| Project FYRES (Focused Youth on Rehousing, Empowerment & Stability) | 8 | Households |
| Rental Apartments/Duplexes | 98 | Households |
| Rental Elderly Apartments | 28 | Households |
| SNAP Outreach (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) | 6 | Applications |
| Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) | 61 | Individuals |
| Telehealth | 0 | Individuals |
| Thrift Stores | 750 | Individuals |
| Transportation | 1040 | Rides |
| Weatherization | 7 | Households |
| WIC Peer Counseling | 48 | Individuals |
| Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) | 980 | Individuals |



WE ARE HERE TO HELP

Visit us at www.bvca.net for more information about the programs we offer and how to apply.

The Promise of Community Action

Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live. We care about the entire community and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.