

People right here in the community need your help! There are many ways you can give: give your time, give items or give funds. AFL-CIO Community Services — and those the agency serves — appreciate everything you do.

Do good 🔛 with goods!

Like to shop? Want to use your business to collect items for our programs? We need your help!

•	New	ten	nis	shoe	s a	nd	
S	ocks	for S	Sole	s for	C	hris	t

• Diapers and wipes for Diaper Depot

• New toys and gifts for Adopt-A-Family

• Used eyeglasses for Lions Club eyeglasses program

Items can be dropped off at 1203 N. 6th St., Monday - Friday, 9 am - 4:30 pm, or call 816-364-1131.

Spend sôme time with us!

Volunteers are truly the backbone of the agency's programs. No matter your skills, talents, and amount of available time, we have the perfect opportunity.

Call 816-364-1131 or email AFLmail@helpmenow.org to get on the list or with questions.

Put the fun in funds!

Bottom line, your financial donations bring joy to others' lives by giving to the agency and its programs. The individuals, families, children, and seniors we help through your generosity makes our community a better place. Simply scan the QR code or visit helpmenow.org to donate funds online; call 816-364-1131; or stop by 1203 N. 6th to give in person.

We love getting mail!

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I would li	ke to make a reoc	curring donat	tion to A	FL-CIO Communit	y Services.
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Amount \$	Weekly	\Box Monthly $\Box Q$	Juarterly	Bi-Annually Ann	nually
	I am interested in vol	unteer opportuniti	ies with AFI	C-CIO Community Service	<i>25.</i>
	Allgif	ts are tax deductil	ble as provid	ed by law.	
	Please make all	checks payable to	AFL-CIO (Community Services	

AFL-CIO Community Services 1203 N. Sixth St. Saint Joseph, MO 64501

Return Service Requested



AFL-CIO COMMUNITY SERVICES

Diaper program filling up

Since expanding into a monthly program in September 2023, Diaper Depot enrollment has quickly increased, with 443 children enrolled in the program. While some children have aged out or moved outside of the coverage area, nearly 290 are active each month.

This rapid increase has led to some upcoming changes in the program. Coinciding with the closing of the agency's thrift store program, Diaper Depot will be moving into part of the space formerly used by the store to accommodate the 10,000 to 15,000 diapers that are delivered to the agency monthly.

Families will still be able to pick up diapers on Tuesdays 9 am - 1 pm and Wednesdays 1 - 5 pm each month; the agency is considering expanding pick up days to accommodate the growing number of weekly pick ups as well.

"We are so pleased with the program's growth," said Executive Director Nichi Seckinger. "We were aware of the need for the supplemental program, but really underestimated the quantity of children that would be enrolled."

When the agency started the expansion, staff set a goal of 200 children within the first two years. It surpassed that within the first 9 months, with 3 -5 new enrollees joining weekly.

To Enroll

certificate, medicaid card, etc.) for their first pickup.

SPRING 2025

NONPROFIT U.S. POSTAGE PAID AFL-CIO COMMUNITY SERVICES PERMIT NO. 76

HeipMe Headlines AFL-CIO COMMUNITY SERVICES

1203 N. 6th St., St. Joseph, MO 64501

www.helpmenow.org

Store's closing painful, but necessary

The first column I wrote as the ED spoke to change and how it can be good for us all. Some change, while beneficial, can also be hard. The biggest change for our agency since my last missive is the closing of our thrift store, Fab-U-Less Finds. A program staple for the agency for more than 40 years, it is hard to accept when that kind of change is needed. For the store, competition from commercial thrift stores and overhead



costs got to be too much and financial losses made the program's closing inevitable. Decisions like these are simple on paper, but horrible when the people it directly affects, like our exiting staff members and the clients served by the program, are people we know and care about. The path forward is not always an easy one, but we know it is the best move for other agency programming, and longevity of the agency as a whole. We may anxiously anticipate the unknown change can have - we fret, we anger, we mourn - yet we tend to come out the other side. In this case, the agency is losing one service to let others grow - and that's the best we can hope for in the situation.

This door may be closing, but it is definitely opening windows in other areas of the agency. Staff is working to roll the thrift store vouchers over to our Emergency Assistance program by working with area thrift stores (more to come this summer). The Diaper

Nichi's Notes Nichi Seckinger, Executive Director

Depot quickly outgrew its space and will move into part of the former store space. We will also be providing space to two area non-profit partners for tax season, meetings and trainings.

We want our store staff to know just how valued they were and how much they will be missed. We also want our donors, customers, and clients to know how much they have meant to us over the years; their support has been immeasurable. I can only imagine what we can do together these the next 40 years.



AFL-CIO Community Services is repping once again for the Soles for Christ shoe distribution, which offers shoes to children from PreK (4+ years) to 12th grade, living in Andrew, Buchanan, DeKalb and Clinton counties in Missouri, as

well as Doniphan County, Kansas.

The two-day event will be Monday, Aug. 11 and Tuesday, Aug. 12 from 9 am - 7 pm both days. It will be held again this year at the St. Joseph Scottish Rite building, 515 N. 6th St.

Shoes will be distributed on a first-come, first-serve basis. Children must be present to receive shoes. A full list of program requirements can be found on the agency website at helpmenow.org and on the Soles for Christ program's Facebook page.

Donors can contribute to this program by giving new tennis shoes, monetary donations or by volunteering during the distribution days. NEW tennis shoes can be donated at the agency, 1203 N. 6th St., until Friday, August 1. Hours for drop off are 8 am - 5 pm, Monday through Friday. Monetary donations are also welcome, and all donations are tax deductible.

Volunteers for the program help size and fit children with their shoes, keep stock organized or help with family registration.

If interested in volunteering or to make a donation by phone, please contact our office at 816.364.1131. Donations may also be made by mail or online at helpmenow.org.

Depot grows Program will move to

Our 2024

Impacts

at 2025 goals.

Diaper

ormer thrift store space

Dates to remember

Mark your calendars now for important 2025 dates.

and all adult sizes

special needs

Program Basics

Through the program, parents in Buchanan, Andrew, DeKalb, Clinton counties in Missouri and Doniphan County in Kansas, are able to receive two-thirds of their diaper needs for the month free of charge; wipes, ointment or powder are also available per child, with each pickup. A potty training kit is available, upon assessment, for children who are ready to transition out of diapers.

Eligible parents wishing to sign up for the program can visit the Diaper Depot section on helpmenow.org or scan the QR code to fill out their profile form on the HappyBottoms portal

page. Enrollment in the program is free, but required There are no income restrictions for the program. Parents need to bring identification for themselves (driver's license or other ID) and for the child (birth



UPCOMING events

.IVE UNITED

SPRING 2025

AFL-CIO

AFL-CIO Community Services and United Way Partnership

/ = volunteers need August 11 & 12 V

Soles For Christ distribution Shoes will be given out on a first-come, first-served basis, to children PreK through 12th grade. Monday and Tuesday, 9 am - 7 pm, at the Scottish Rite, 515 N. 6th.

November 1 Adopt-A-Family Begins Applications will be available at the agency, 1203 N. 6th Street or for download on elpmenow.org.

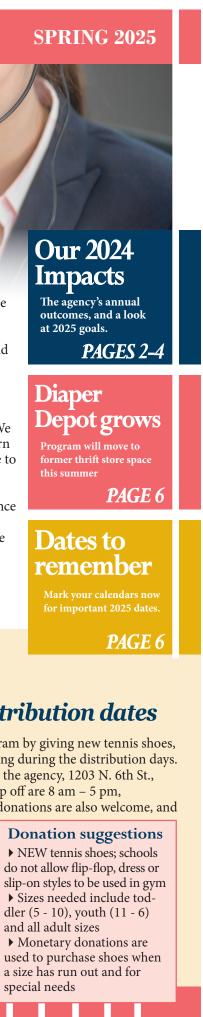
Ve need YOUR skills

• Help kids try on shoes • Escort parents in the gift room

• Take a shift at special events • Use your Spanish lessons

• Be a kind face

Whatever your strengths, there is a future volunteer opportunity for you vith our programs. Join our voluntee list at AFLmail@helpmenow.org





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Callers are provided resources for basic needs including food, shelter, healthcare, mental health, employment, education and seasonal assistance (tax preparation, school supplies, heating/cooling centers).

* Callers reach a trained, caring Call Specialist who assesses the needs of each person and searches a database with more than 14,000 services to connect callers with the help they need.

♦ In 2024, the agency had 25,161 contacts, made 9,393 referrals, and advocated on behalf of 2.491 clients.

Anyone can now search the agency's database through Help Me Online by visiting www.helpmenow.org.

It's free. It's confidential. It's available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

25,161

Of the 924 families that applied during the 2024 program, 300 households had \$0 income.

The majority, 67 percent (623 families), are at 100 percent or below poverty guidelines; 28 percent (267 families) are up to 35 percent above poverty guidelines; and 2 percent (26 families) are 36 percent or more above poverty guidelines.

♦ In 2024, 736 different adopters provided assistance to the families. This included, 242 individuals, families, businesses, and organizations. There were 494 undesignated monetary donations made to the program to help cover the cost of food baskets, gift cards and vouchers for families.



* Last year, the Diaper Depot had 851 completed pickups of diapers and related hygiene items for 280 children enrolled in the program.

A few years ago, the agency added adult incontinence supplies to the inventory. Many older adults on a fixed income struggle with this issue. The agency provided 147 units of adult incontinence supplies, at a total value of \$549.





97,375 individuals have been served by Adopt-A-Family since 1983.



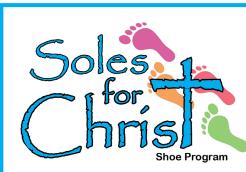
/in funding provided assistance for individuals

* Program provides space heaters to those in need during the cold weather months and fans and air conditioners during the summer.

♦ Items are donated by Evergy, the United Way, local businesses, and others.

♦ In 2024, 52 heaters and 117 fans were given to 185 households, which included 275 individuals.









* The four most common funding needs of 2024 were: gasoline/ automotive/transportation, electric bills, sewer bills, and rent / housing.



There are no boundaries, no eligibility guidelines and no fees for this service.

* The agency uses emergency funds for the people that "fall through the cracks" like car payments, insurance, and repairs, phone bills, medical needs and other necessities required to exist. The agency tries to fill those gaps.

Program provides children supplemental diapers and wipes, ointment or powder every month.

Children in PreK (age 4+) through 12th grade, living in Buchanan, Andrew, DeKalb and Clinton counties in Missouri and Doniphan County in Kansas, are eligible to receive a free pair of new tennis shoes and socks.

* Every qualified child who comes to the distribution receives shoes. Shoes are purchased if the correct size is not readily available.

The first year, 210 pairs of school shoes were distributed.



✤ In 2024, the program utilized 110 volunteers performing 623.5 hours of service.



♦ In 2024, 36 individuals applied for glasses, with 23 receiving a pair.

Throughout the program's history, nearly 2,786 people have applied for a pair of glasses critical for work, injury avoidance and optic health.

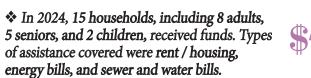
* This program is a group effort: Family Guidance provides funding for eye exams; local optometrists provide the exams and fit clients for glasses; the three local Lions Clubs fund it as a group; and Community Services administers the program.





* The Strike Out Cancer Fund assists area cancer patients with medication, transportation, loging, bills and other expenses related to hardship during cancer treatments.

The fund helps with patients battling any type of cancer.







GOAL: Increase number of counties served through Soles for Christ and Diaper Depot programs within the next 3 years.

VALUE: Approximately 200 children at \$25 per child

FUNDS NEEDED: \$5,000

GOAL: Acquire the funding needed to continue voucher program forward through the capture of additional Emergency Assistance funds.

VALUE: Approximately \$10 per person, based on vearly average of 2,750 individuals served through former voucher program.

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FUNDS NEEDED: \$27,500



GOAL: Serve at least 500 children with at least 50 percent of monthly diaper and hygiene supplies.

> VALUE: Approximately \$25 per child per month

FUNDS NEEDED: \$12,500

GOAL: Raise capital funds to complete much-needed repairs and updates to the exterior of the 25 year old, agency-owned building, including some windows, siding and doors.

VALUE: Approximately \$75,000.

FUNDS NEEDED: \$75,000

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