



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 tennis shoes and socks** for Soles for Christ
- **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 some 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!**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

*I want to make a gift:*

*In Memory:* \_\_\_\_\_

*In Honor of:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Please send notification of my gift to:* \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Cash      Credit Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp Date \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Check      Name of Card Holder \_\_\_\_\_

Check # \_\_\_\_\_ Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ Discover ☐ Debit

*I would like to make a reoccurring donation to AFL-CIO Community Services. Please charge my credit card:*

Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Weekly ☐ Monthly ☐ Quarterly ☐ Bi-Annually ☐ Annually

☐ I am interested in volunteer opportunities with AFL-CIO Community Services.

*All gifts are tax deductible as provided 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**

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**AFL-CIO COMMUNITY SERVICES**

**SPRING 2025**

# Diaper program filling up

**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.

**To Enroll**

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

**UPCOMING events**

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

**We need YOUR skills!**

- Help kids try on shoes
- Shop for seniors' gifts
- Escort parents in the gift room
- Assist with diapers
- Take a shift at special events
- Flex your muscles
- Use your Spanish lessons
- Be a kind face

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

**Diaper Depot**

**HelpMeHeadlines**

**AFL-CIO COMMUNITY SERVICES**

1203 N. 6th St., St. Joseph, MO 64501      www.helpmenow.org

**SPRING 2025**

## 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 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.

**Our 2024 Impacts**

The agency's annual outcomes, and a look at 2025 goals.

**PAGES 2-4**

**Diaper Depot grows**

Program will move to former thrift store space this summer

**PAGE 6**

**Dates to remember**

Mark your calendars now for important 2025 dates.

**PAGE 6**

## It's a shoe-in!

**Soles for Christ program sets 2025 distribution dates**

AFL-CIO Community Services is prepping 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.

**Donation suggestions**

- ▶ NEW tennis shoes; schools do not allow flip-flop, dress or slip-on styles to be used in gym
- ▶ Sizes needed include toddler (5 - 10), youth (11 - 6) and all adult sizes
- ▶ Monetary donations are used to purchase shoes when a size has run out and for special needs



# 2024 Annual Outcomes



- ❖ 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](http://www.helpmenow.org).

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

**25,161**  
unduplicated contacts

❖ 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.



**3,007**  
individuals adopted

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

1,080  
adults  
1,695  
children  
232  
seniors



**\$5,475**  
in funding provided  
assistance for  
**470**  
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.



❖ 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.

**\$17,496** in diapers and hygiene items

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

**56,440**  
diapers provided



❖ 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.

**1,105**  
students given shoes

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

**\$33,150**  
value



**\$7,174**  
in funding provided  
assistance for  
**142**  
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.

**Emergency Assistance Fund**

❖ 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.



**\$1,010**  
value of glasses

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

❖ The fund helps with patients battling any type of cancer.

❖ In 2024, 15 households, including 8 adults, 5 seniors, and 2 children, received funds. Types of assistance covered were rent / housing, energy bills, and sewer and water bills.



**\$7,872**

In 2024,  
210 volunteers donated  
**2,112**  
hours toward agency  
programs

**\$65,472**  
value



**1** 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 yearly average of 2,750 individuals served through former voucher program.

FUNDS NEEDED: \$27,500

**3** 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

# 2025 Attainable Goals