



COMMUNITY BRIDGES
PUENTES DE LA COMUNIDAD

COUNTY BUDGET CUTS FACT SHEET

Background

- Most supportive services for older adults, children, and families are offered through a network of health and human services-focused nonprofits like Community Bridges.
- Santa Cruz County provides grants to support these services through its CORE program (Collective of Results and Evidence-based Investments).
- In this funding round, CORE requested proposals for up to \$5.8 million in funds for projects over the next three funding cycles through June 2025.
- Historically (roughly last decade), Santa Cruz County has funded Community Bridges proposed programs at between \$1 million and \$1.4 million annually. This year Community Bridges submitted funding requests in line with past amounts totaling \$1,469,750 – only \$436, 221.72 were recommended to the Board as part of this funding cycle.
- This means without a set-aside or funding approval, Community Bridges will need to backfill more than \$2.5 million in lost funding in order to maintain all of its current service levels over the next three years.

Anticipated Immediate Impacts

- Partial closure of all four Family Resource Centers (FRCs) and reduction in services offered and staffing (La Manzana – Watsonville, Nueva Vista – Santa Cruz and mid-County, Live Oak – mid-County, Mountain Community Resources – North County)
- ***FRCs serve more than 6,600 Santa Cruz County families across four locations. That's 7% of all family households according to the 2020 census, or nearly 1 out of every 10 families seeking services at an FRC.*** Those individuals rely on the centers for weekly or bi-weekly food distributions, regular access to tutoring and afterschool homework support, summer lunch programs, government benefits enrollment such as medical, CalFRESH, Covered CA, and access to personal care and benefits programs.
- Loss of subsidized childcare slots and potential site closures across Santa Cruz County Early Education Child Care sites.
- Significant reduction in services at Elderday for seniors and disabled adults with complex medical issues impacting up to 200 clients and their families who rely on the only Adult Day Health Care provider in the county providing respite care and supportive healthcare services jeopardizing its future.

What kinds of “advocacy” do FRCs offer?

Advocates provide a unique service that is custom-tailored to each family or client and their unique needs. Family Resource Centers allow members of the community who may not be able to travel into Santa Cruz due to transportation availability, health issues, or childcare needs to get access to lifeline benefits and services right in their own community. Losing the geographic distribution of family resource centers across the County will impact mobility-challenged individuals most dramatically. Following is a list of the kinds of services that can be provided by Family Resource Center advocates.

- Child Protective Service - Child Abuse Prevention
- Disability Benefits and Resources
- Domestic Violence Support
- Employment Support/Unemployment Benefit Support
- Family Law
- Health Care Access Support
- Housing Support
- Immigration Advocacy and Support
- Legal Aid
- Personal/Family Support
- School/Education/Tutoring/Homework Club
- Digital Literacy
- ERAP (eviction prevention and support for landlords and renters impacted financially by the pandemic)
- COVID Vaccine Hotline
- Rental Relief Hotline

Family Resource Center Reductions and Closures

1. Reduction of one Master Therapist - results in a reduction of 10 clients or 80 families annually
2. Removal of Childcare for ESL classes
3. Loss of a minimum of two days at each center – services
4. Removing food distribution at LOCR, LMCR
5. Loss of 5 Advocate positions -impacting 3,000 clients annually
6. Loss of youth tutoring at Live Oak
7. Removing Attorney – Loss of eviction prevention work impacting hundreds of ongoing contacts and several ongoing eviction cases
8. Houseless navigator – MCR provides services to over 200 clients annually who rely on the facility for basic needs
9. Shower and Case Management Houseless services– MCR provides access to more than 140 clients annually who do not have alternatives

Elderday Budget Reductions

1. Endangers staffing structure and service offerings for a program just returning to solvency due to pandemic impacts.

2. Ongoing structural deficit endangers future solvency and funding opportunities for CBAS program
3. Impacts 200 families annually

Early Education Division Budget Reductions

1. Reduction of subsidized slots for early childhood education and care across Santa Cruz County.
2. Possible site closure
3. Elimination of 24 childcare slots throughout the County.
4. Loss of sliding scale program to help offset child care costs for families who don't meet the threshold for full subsidy.

Current Family Resource Center Community Impact (2021)

- Served 12,705 free summer lunch meals at 12 sites throughout Santa Cruz County in 2021 (program resumes on June 6, 2022)
- Provided 793 counseling hours across all four locations.
- Provided 14,000 bags of food at distributions to the community
- Handled 16,456 advocacy visits
- **Serve more than 6,600 individuals and families (often with multiple monthly visits and across several benefit programs) a 50% increase over pre-pandemic service levels.**
- **Drop-in advocacy appointments have increased by 39%, mental health counseling hours have increased by 43% and food distribution demand has increased by 43% over pre-pandemic levels.**

Community Bridges CORE Proposal Requests by Program:

Program	22/23 Funding Request	Current 21/22 Funding Allocation	County Recommendation
Meals on Wheels *	450,000	415,000	\$436,222 Approved
Early Education	269,750	218,000	\$0 Recommended
Elderday	150,000	145,000	\$0 Recommended
La Manzana	150,000	154,000	\$0 Recommended
MCR	100,000	68,000	\$0 Recommended
Nueva Vista	100,000	68,000	\$0 Recommended
Live Oak	100,000	60,000	\$0 Recommended
CACFP	50,000	15,000	\$0 Recommended
Lift Line	50,000	15,000	\$0 Recommended

*Meals on Wheels current allocation includes \$330,000 in awarded CORE funding and \$85,000 set-aside funding.