

NEWSLETTER

April 2026

Community Action Program, Inc. of Western Indiana

Let's Celebrate!!



HELPING PEOPLE.
CHANGING LIVES.

SINCE 1966

Quarterly Highlights

- CAPWI Celebrates 60th Anniversary
- The Impact of Head Start
- 2026 ISHN Conference: Champions in Action
- Summer Activities Ahead: Summer Park Programs



This is a special year for our agency as Community Action Program, Inc. of Western Indiana celebrates its 60th anniversary. As we mark this milestone, we are taking time to reflect on the incredible journey that has brought us here, while also looking ahead to the work still to come and the continued impact we can make together.

Below is a brief timeline highlighting key moments in our organization's history:

- 1964 – President Lyndon B. Johnson launched the “War on Poverty” with the creation of the Economic Opportunity Act (EOA), intended to “eliminate the paradox of poverty in the midst of plenty in this nation.”
- 1965 – A dedicated group of local Fountain County volunteers identified community needs and explored causes and solutions to poverty. Since the population requirement for application was a minimum of 50,000, efforts began to secure interest from neighboring counties to join the “War on Poverty.”
- February 16, 1966 – After many hours of volunteer planning and effort, the Community Action Program, Inc. of Fountain, Parke, Vermillion, and Warren Counties was established. Sixteen incorporators were listed on the Articles of Incorporation.
- 1967 – An \$18,421 federal grant was awarded to support the study and development of projects assisting individuals experiencing financial hardship locally. The agency operated a summer Head Start program, a community development grant, and a neighborhood services grant.
- 1968 – The agency began a full-year (eight-month), half-day Head Start program with seven centers across four counties, most located in church basements. With \$120,000 in funding, the program served 120 children.

Transportation was provided by volunteers using their personal vehicles, with reimbursement at six cents per mile.

- 1968 – The agency also received funding for a Neighborhood Youth Corps program serving in-school and out-of-school youth, as well as summer programming. At peak enrollment, 269 youth ages 14–21 were served. This program operated through 1973.
- 1968 and the 1970s – Additional programs included a craft program in Parke County, emergency food and medical assistance across all four counties, a senior program in Fountain County during the 1970s, and a family planning program serving Parke and Vermillion Counties, which supported over 1,000 participants through 1976 (when it was transferred to Planned Parenthood in Terre Haute). Other initiatives included a gardening self-help program in 1972 and a homebound meal delivery program in 1974.
- 1974 – The agency began administering a comprehensive Manpower Center and expanded services into Montgomery and Benton Counties.
- 1976 – Weatherization services began through a Community Services Administration grant, which provided funding for materials only, with no labor costs included.
- 1982 – Benton and Montgomery Counties joined the corporation, resulting in a major organizational reorganization.
- 1983 – The reorganization was completed, along with a name change to Community Action Program, Inc. of Western Indiana.
- 1984 – The agency became the administrator for the WIC program in Benton, Fountain, Warren, and northern Vermillion Counties, with plans to expand into Montgomery County once funding became available.
- 1985 – Head Start services expanded into Benton County.
- 1988 – The Weatherization program introduced oil retrofit and furnace pilot initiatives and began installing smoke detectors in homes.
- 1990 – The Project SAFE fuel assistance program was overhauled and transitioned into the Energy Assistance Program, with funding shifted to local Community Action Agencies.
- 1991 – The agency began administering Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers in Benton, Vermillion, and Warren Counties.
- 1992 – Head Start expanded into Boone County and opened centers in Montgomery, Benton, North Vermillion, and Boone.
- Mid-1990s – The agency began purchasing and rehabilitating homes, starting with a property on Perry Street in Attica. The rehabilitation of Highland Manor became an innovative project that gained statewide attention.
- Today – The agency continues to build on a 60-year legacy of service, adapting through many changes while remaining committed to supporting individuals and families experiencing poverty across our service area. This is a legacy to be proud of.

Many details are not included in this timeline, but the theme remains the same—the agency has grown and changed while staying focused on meeting local needs. Joan Cline served as Executive Director from 1971–2004, and her 33 years of leadership helped shape the agency we are today. We look forward to sharing more of our history. Happy Anniversary, CAPWI!

The Lasting Impact of Head Start

When people talk about programs like Head Start, they often talk about funding, grants, and statistics. Those things are so important. They make the work possible. But inside our Head Start classrooms, the true impact is often found in moments that are much smaller and much more personal.

It's a child learning their teacher's name instead of shouting "hey you" across the room. It's a child sitting at a table with their classmates, sharing a healthy meal family style, learning not just how to eat together but how to talk, laugh, and listen to one another. It's the pride on a child's face when they recognize letters, count to ten, or tell a story about their day.

But some of the most meaningful changes happen beyond the classroom.

It's a parent realizing how important it is to show up for a school event because they see their child scanning the room, hoping to catch their eye. And the next time, there they are. It's a parent who once felt unsure about stepping into a school building, now walking through the door, sitting beside their child, and joining the moment. It's a family celebrating milestones that may not always be visible to others: a first apartment, a new full-time job, a step toward stability and independence.

These moments may seem small from the outside, but we know they are anything but small. They are signs of confidence growing, relationships strengthening, and families building brighter futures together.

We are proud to walk alongside these children and families during such an important time in their lives. Every day, we are reminded that when we support young learners and their parents, we are investing in something much bigger than a program. We are investing in our community. And sometimes the biggest changes begin with the smallest moments.

If you or someone you know is wondering how to take that first small step, we're here to help! Head Start accepts applications year-round. More information about the program, eligibility, and enrollment can be found on our website at capwi.org. If you know of a family who could benefit from Head Start services, there is also a referral form available on the website to help connect them with support quickly and easily.

For questions or assistance with enrollment, please contact us today at 765-793-4881.



2026 ISHN Conference: Champions in Action

The Indiana School Health Network (ISHN) is preparing for its 2026 conference, "Champions in Action: Empowering Healthier Hoosier Kids." This annual event brings together school health professionals and youth-serving adults for three days of learning, collaboration, and practical skill-building, all while offering free continuing education credits. Centered on the idea that strong, caring relationships are the foundation of youth well-being and long-term success, this year's conference will focus on real-world strategies to help adults guide young people toward becoming confident champions of their own health and future.



Join 600+ school, community, and public health professionals at this can't-miss, no-cost event! From inspiring keynote speakers to engaging breakout sessions and 50+ exhibitors, there's something for everyone.



2026 ISHN Conference



Champions in Action: Empowering Healthier Hoosier Kids

June 15-17, 2026
Embassy Suites Plainfield

NO COST TO ATTEND

Consistent, caring relationships are the foundation of youth well-being, learning, and long-term success. Learn practical tactics and inspiring strategies to guide and support kids on their journey to becoming confident champions of their health and future.

Register to Attend



Support ISHN's **Give Back Initiative** benefiting the Indy Hygiene Hub—bring donation items to the conference or shop the Amazon list to contribute.

indy hygiene hub

Shop Here



Conference Highlights

-  Preconference Training Opportunities
-  Free Continuing Education
-  Diverse Exhibitor Lineup
-  Immunizations Available On-Site
-  Broad Networking Access



Indiana School Health Network

Supported by Covering Kids & Families of Indiana

www.ckfindiana.org/school-professionals

Summer Activities Ahead: Park Programs



The Summer Park Program is designed to provide a safe, engaging, and fun environment where children can play, socialize, and learn. Participants will have opportunities to create art, take part in sports, enjoy outdoor games, and explore the amenities of our city parks. Youth who have completed Kindergarten through those who have just completed 6th grade are invited to participate.

This year's Covington Park Program will begin earlier to align with the 65th Annual 4th of July Celebration at the park, running from May 27 through June 24, Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM. The Veedersburg Park Program will follow shortly after, running from June 29 through July 24, also Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM.

Applications for both programs will be available beginning May 4th at Covington Elementary School, Southeast Fountain Elementary School, the Covington and Veedersburg City Buildings, and the CAPWI office in Covington.

Community support plays a vital role in keeping these programs thriving. Donations may be made through our website or by mailing a check to the CAPWI office in Covington. Please indicate whether your contribution is designated for the Covington or Veedersburg Park Program.

For more information, please contact Elaina Dillon at 765-793-4881.



Our Mission: CAP of Western Indiana empowers individuals and families toward self-sufficiency by addressing challenges through comprehensive services, support, and education.

Our Vision: CAP of Western Indiana believes in the value, dignity, and worth of all people, with the goal of helping people help themselves.

All services are provided without regard to race, age, color, religion, sex, disability, national origin, ancestry, familial status, or status as a veteran.