

WINTER NEWSLETTER

Writing a Better Future



Julia Winter
Director of Development

We're so happy to say that 2022 marked the smoothest Project Holiday distribution to date! For the first time in its 35 year history, Project Holiday 2022 did not require any prior registration to receive groceries to cook a homemade holiday meal. Local families were able to pick out Project Holiday meals, including a turkey and all the necessary ingredients to make traditional holiday side dishes, without registering beforehand.

Many of our neighbors do not have reliable transportation or access to the internet, and removing this barrier allowed them to receive a meal without the added burden of registration. Barriers were lowered, waits were shorter, and over 1,100 families received a free holiday meal, with the help of 79 Project Holiday volunteers.

We've said it before but I'll say it again - It has been a year of incredible growth at CommUnity Crisis Services. We are so honored to be trusted by

our neighbors, both as an organization worthy of your time, talent, and treasure and as the first call for our neighbors experiencing crisis. Already this year, your support has enabled us to serve more than 4,000 individuals through the Food Bank, Mobile Pantry, and Food Delivery.

Thank you for your continued support of our neighbors, our organization, and the fight against food insecurity in Johnson County. We're so happy you're following along with our story and helping us write a better future for our community.



Project Holiday grocery choices displayed in the Food Bank

The Year Ahead

JANUARY

Warm Hearts, Warm Homes: Utility bill costs are rising and we need your help to provide our neighbors with support to pay their utility bills and avoid a shutoff.

FEBRUARY

Spread the Love: We collect jars of peanut (or other nut) butters and jelly. These are pantry staples that go quickly at the Food Bank.

APRIL

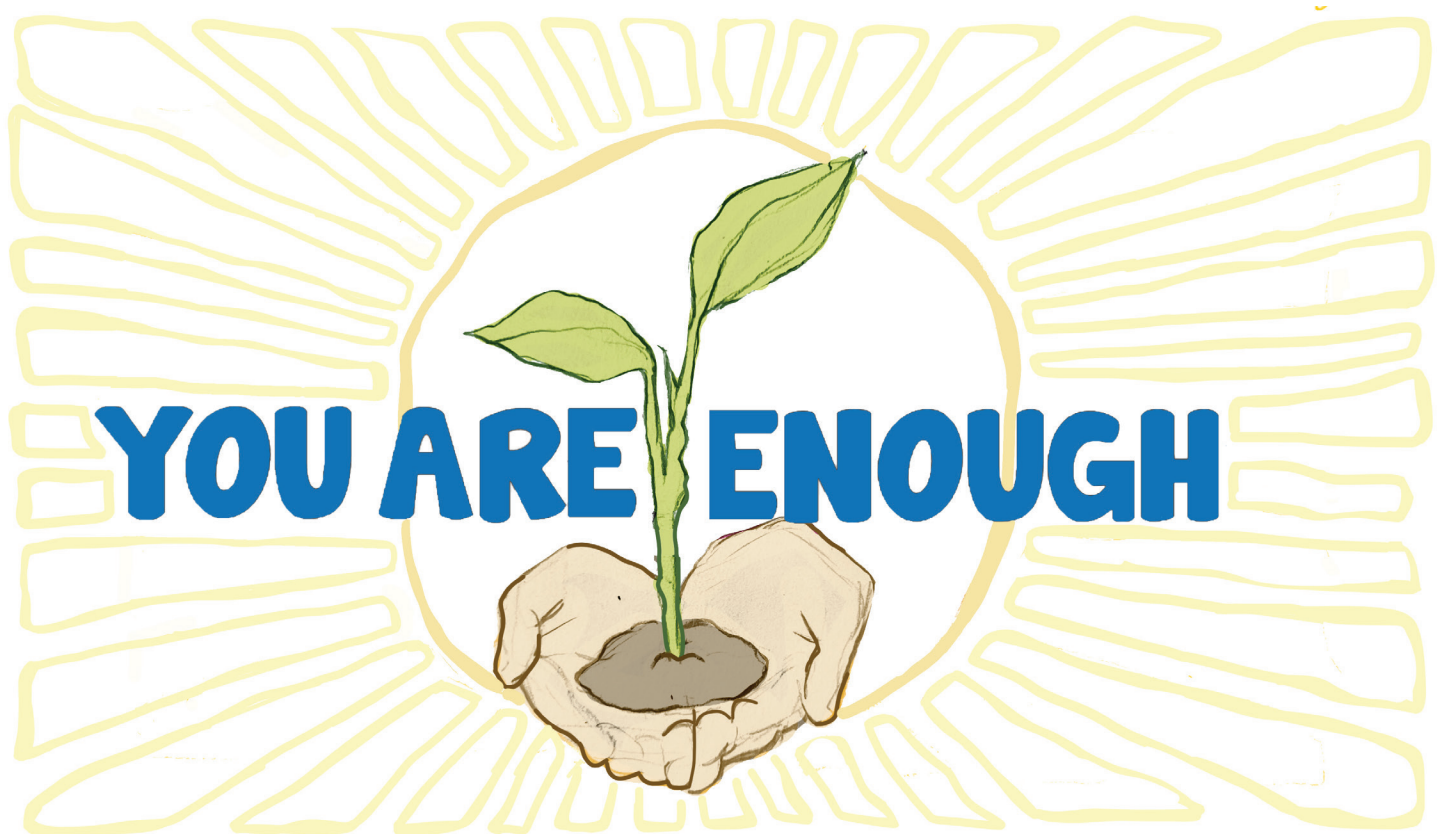
CommUnity Baby Shower: We received diaper requests from 200 families each week! The CommUnity Baby Shower helps us ensure local babies have diapers all year long.

MAY

Mental Health Awareness Month: Our team works to raise awareness for mental health and promote available community services.

Fan Club: Each \$20 donation provides a box fan for a local household, keeping utility costs and temperatures down through the hot summer months.

The Hunger Banquet: Attend an engaging simulation of food insecurity in our area. The meal guests receive will represent a real income level in Johnson County and the groceries available within that budget.



We're working with local artist, Ali Hval, on something special coming this spring! If you've been a supporter of CommUnity for a while now, chances are you have heard or seen us say "You Are Enough." We feel this uplifting phrase is at the core of all of the programs we offer. So, thank you for your ongoing support of our mission, and remember that today, tomorrow, and everyday you are enough.

A Little Help Goes a Long Way

“Receiving the help was a complete God send. The staff members were so sincere, encouraging and judgment-free.” said one of CommUnity’s Financial Support clients last month. Financial Support helped “Stacy” get caught up on rent and offered budget coaching to help her remain financially independent.



**Receiving the help was
a complete God send.**

Just a single rent assist can make all the difference in disrupting the cycle of crisis for our neighbors. After getting just one month behind on rent, late fees can add up, making it difficult to get back on track. A small boost from our friendly Financial Support team and generous donors can propel families that are just scraping by towards financial independence.

When we asked Stacy about her experience receiving budget coaching, she said “I was able to get honest answers on ways I could create a budget that fits my income status and stretch my savings by using consistent methods to save money.” Johnson County is one of the most expensive places to live in Iowa, and it can

take careful monthly budgeting to keep your head above water. Our Financial Support team helped Stacy with skills to negotiate a living wage, create a budget, and stay within that budget.

To those considering reaching out to Financial Support for help, Stacy says “When using the services, please keep in mind that your efforts on your end are a must in order to sustain your financial situation above and beyond.” Our team strives to provide clients with the tools to succeed long after their initial assistance from Financial Support. From rent assistance to work boots for a new job to providing a temporary mailing address to put on applications - we’re here to help each individual in a way that suits their unique situation.

Thank you for helping us give our neighbors that little extra boost that makes it possible to not only survive, but thrive.






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Crisis Line: 988
Mobile Crisis: 1-855-581-8111
Food Bank: 319-351-0128
Business Line: 319-351-2726

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