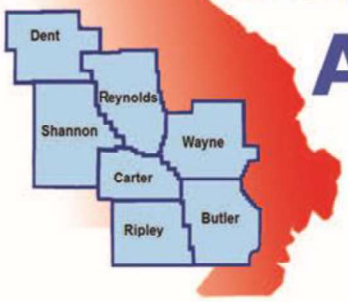
South Central Missouri Community Action Agency



2026

Community Needs Assessment

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Our History:

SCMCAA was incorporated in 1965, following the enactment of the Economic Security Act (EOA) of 1964. We follow the same state and federal guidelines established under this act.

Who We Are:

South Central Missouri Community Action Agency (SCMCAA) is a not-for-profit Community Action Agency serving the counties of: Butler, Carter, Dent, Reynolds, Ripley, Shannon and Wayne. We are an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Our Mission:

We assist the low-income residents of our seven- county service area in their efforts to become self-sufficient. This is accomplished through providing a comprehensive range of services and activities designed to improve the quality of life for low-income individuals and families while providing assistance and opportunities to eliminate the cause of their poverty situation.

The Community Action Promise:

Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live. We care about the entire community and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.

Community Needs Assessment Overview

Every three years, Community Action Agencies across the country conduct assessments of their communities to determine what changes have occurred (or not occurred) that impact communities and low-income individuals and families both positively and negatively. The results of the surveys, focus group discussions, personal interview sheets and statistical data are then used to develop a Community Needs Assessment that will be used for the next three years to create strategies and services to address the identified needs.

SCMCAA's 2026 CNA is a report of the current demographics, individual and community needs, identified causes, gaps in services, and available resource/assets of the seven counties served by SCMCAA. It provides the most recent data available regarding demographics on age, gender, early learning programs, disability, health, nutrition, employment, education and housing for residents in the seven counties served by SCMCAA. The data was gathered by SCMCAA staff. Agency staff, Board members, community partners, stakeholders, and low-income customers participated in surveys, informal interviews and community focus groups. Upon approval, the final report will be shared with our agency, community, customers and other stakeholders.

The report is designed for the entire agency. It is not an assessment for one program or funding stream, but rather a comprehensive agency community needs assessment.

SCMCAA is committed to making our community a better place to live! If you would like to learn more about our agency, please visit our website, www.scmcaa.org, or like us on Facebook!

Methodology

Various methods were used to collect the data for the assessment. Data collection methods included community focus groups, personal interview sheets, surveys, MIS system report data, and the collection of quantitative datasets.

The first method used was Community Focus Groups. Community conversations were held in July of 2026, and included members of the community, agency customers, services providers and other community stakeholders.

See Appendix A for Community Focus Group Toolkit, including conversation guides

The second data collection method used was a survey. The survey was distributed electronically to current agency customers, board members, local service providers, community members and stakeholders.
See Appendix B for Survey Questions

The third data collection method used Personal Interview Sheets, to determine the lived experience of those in our communities.
See Appendix C for Personal Interview Sheet

The fourth data collection method used was that of collecting secondary quantitative datasets. The intent of this method was to collect state and local datasets to be compared to the data collected from the community conversations, surveys and informal interviews. We collated this data to compile information for each county into a more concise, usable presentation that was used at our Community Focus Groups. SCMCAA utilized the Mo CAN / Engagement Network to generate statistical data for our report. In some instances, we also utilized an online tool of the U.S. Census Bureau, and other readily available online resources.
See Appendix D for Presentation, and how to access the full 79-page report

Activities and Results:

SCMCAA conducted multiple activities supporting the Community Needs Assessment Process. We hosted Focus Groups, conducted surveys, obtained statistical data and collected Personal Interview Sheets from clients and stakeholders from the communities served by SCMCAA. We distributed the surveys electronically, and clients could utilize our public access computer sites. In addition, we shared the "survey monkey" QR code to clients, and community members and stakeholders. We shared the survey results at our Focus Group discussions, in addition to a PowerPoint presentation of statistical information.

Information Gathered and Analyzed:

SCMCAA gathered together a group of 11 people at our Shannon County Outreach Center on 8/4/26, to analyze the various sources of data. We developed a "tool" for the analysis team, and divided into groups, which then reviewed the Personal Interview Sheets, Statistical Data, Information from the Surveys, and the Focus Groups. The participants represented multiple programs of our agency, from our MIECHV Program Operations Manager to various program staff. They were tasked looking at all of the various data and determining if the qualitative data supported what was being seen in the quantitative data. They also looked for recurrent themes and impactful quotes from the participants. Our analysis team identified the following as the most common important needs (based on Personal Interview Sheets and Conversations during Focus Groups):

1. Housing
2. Food/Basic Needs
3. Transportation
4. Lack of employment opportunities
5. Lack of daycare/childcare

The top five identified assets /resources in the service area, were:

1. Area Churches
2. Community People
3. SCMCAA (including Head Start)
4. Natural Resources
5. Clinics and area service providers (Senior Center, SMTS, stores, etc.)

The top five identified barriers in the service area, were:

1. Healthcare
2. Lack of Employment
3. Poor housing
4. Transportation
5. Various (distance to services, lack of stores, Crime, etc.)

The top three identified opportunities for collaboration and recurrent comments that we heard were: were:

1. Mobile Vans for Services
2. Have more meetings
3. Share resources, come together

Several impactful comments were selected by our team. We've included some!

"SCMCAA is a blessing, but underfunded."

"SNAP wait times on the phone are crazy."

"SCMCAA is very helpful."

"There's not enough people or agencies to care for people. I don't like it; they need to help us better."

"Distance from everything."

"Having local events helps communication and hard conversations helps all agencies work together."

Poverty Data Summary

During our Data Analysis meeting on Tuesday, August 4,2026, we, reviewed the **79-page Missouri Community Action Network Report for South Central Missouri Community Action Agency (SCMCAA)**. The overall picture is that the region continues to experience **substantially higher levels of poverty and economic hardship than Missouri and the nation**, with related challenges in food security, housing, education, transportation, and family stability.

Summary of Key Findings

1. Poverty and economic hardship are the strongest overarching concerns

- **19.51% of the SCMCAA population lives in poverty**, compared with 12.0% statewide and 12.5% nationally.
- Approximately **24,997 people (26.39%) live at or below 125% of the Federal Poverty Level**, substantially higher than Missouri's 16.50%.
- **18.89% of families** are below 125% FPL, compared with 11.54% statewide.
- Poverty has improved since 2013, falling from **23.81% to 19.51%**, but the region remains considerably poorer than Missouri.

Implication: Poverty reduction and movement toward self-sufficiency should remain the central focus of SCMCAA planning.

---

2. Child poverty is particularly serious

The report shows **26.73% of children ages 0–17** living in poverty, compared with 14.7% statewide.

The situation is especially severe in:

- Shannon County – **33.3%**
- Wayne County – **32.2%**
- Reynolds County – **30.2%**
- Carter County – **30.0%**

For children ages 0–5, the regional poverty rate is **24.9%**, compared with 17.4% in Missouri. Wayne County reaches 36.2% and Carter County 33.6%.

Implication: Early childhood, childcare, family support, nutrition, and employment strategies are high-priority interventions.

---

3. Food insecurity is a major community need

Approximately **19,400 people**, or **19.96% of the population**, are estimated to experience food insecurity—well above Missouri's 15.14%.

Child food insecurity is even higher:

- **24.09% regionally**
- 27–28% in Carter, Reynolds and Wayne Counties
- 25% in Butler County

An important finding is that **39.34% of food-insecure people in the region are estimated to be ineligible for SNAP**, suggesting a substantial group experiencing food hardship that may fall outside traditional assistance programs.

Implication: Food access should not be addressed solely through SNAP enrollment. Food pantries, community food programs, school nutrition, WIC, emergency assistance, and income/self-sufficiency programs are all relevant.

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4. Employment is relatively stable, but wages remain an issue

The December 2025 unemployment rate was **4.1%**, compared with 3.3% for Missouri.

However, the report's living-wage data demonstrates that **employment does not necessarily equal economic self-sufficiency**. For example, a single adult with one child requires approximately **$31.85–$33.16 per hour** across the SCMCAA counties, while Missouri's minimum wage was $13.75.

Implication: Workforce programs should emphasize **living-wage employment, occupational training, career advancement, transportation, childcare, and removal of employment barriers**, rather than simply job placement.

---

5. Educational attainment is a significant barrier

16.51% of adults 18+ have no high school diploma, compared with only 8.15% statewide.

This is particularly important because education affects:

- employment opportunities,
- wages,
- career advancement,
- family economic stability, and
- the ability to achieve self-sufficiency.

The report also shows that **71.25% of public-school students receive free or reduced-price lunch**, compared with 47.63% statewide. Ripley and Shannon Counties exceed 87%.

Implication: Adult education, GED completion, workforce credentials, career pathways, and youth educational supports should be priorities.

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6. Housing affordability and housing supply present substantial challenges

The report indicates that **17.25% of rental households spend more than 50% of household income on rent**, while 7.99% of mortgage households spend more than 50% on housing.

Housing instability is also reflected in the **541 homeless children and youth identified during the 2022–2023 school year**, up from 425 in 2018–2019.

The region also has a relatively high rate of overcrowded housing—**2.79% versus 1.74% statewide**.

Implication: Affordable housing, rental assistance, homelessness prevention, home repair, weatherization, utility assistance, and housing navigation are interconnected needs.

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7. Population decline creates an additional regional challenge

The SCMCAA service area lost **10.18% of its population between 2010 and 2020**, while Missouri grew 2.77% and the United States grew 7.13%.

The decline was particularly dramatic in:

- Ripley County: **−24.26%**
- Wayne County: **−18.84%**
- Carter County: **−16.97%**
- Shannon County: **−16.70%**

Households also declined by **7.63%** between the comparison ACS periods, compared with a 3.88% increase statewide.

Implication: Population loss can make it harder to sustain employers, schools, healthcare, transportation, childcare, retail, and other community services.

---

8. Transportation is an important barrier to access

Approximately **90.3% of workers commute by automobile**, while only 0.3% use public transportation.

This suggests that lack of reliable transportation could be a significant barrier for people who:

- do not own a vehicle,
- cannot afford repairs,
- have disabilities,
- live in rural areas, or
- need transportation to employment, healthcare, childcare, or social services.

Implication: Transportation assistance should be considered an enabling service across multiple programs rather than as an isolated need.

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9. Seniors remain economically vulnerable

The regional senior poverty rate is **15.31%**, compared with 10.41% statewide. Ripley County is particularly high at **19.45%**, followed by Shannon at 17.66% and Wayne at 17.44%.

Implication: Senior-focused services should include food security, energy assistance, housing stability, transportation, and access to healthcare.

---

10. Family and youth stability are concerns

The report identifies:

- **847 juvenile court referrals**, representing 6.64 referrals per 100 youth ages 10–19, compared with 5.44 statewide.
- **751 reported domestic violence incidents** in 2024.
- **133 substantiated child abuse/neglect incidents involving 227 children** in 2024.

These findings point to the importance of family stabilization, parenting support, youth services, domestic violence resources, and coordinated community interventions.

Priority Ranking for Community Action Planning

Priority	Need	Evidence
1	**Poverty & economic self-sufficiency**	19.51% poverty; 26.39% below 125% FPL
2	**Food insecurity**	19.96% overall; 24.09% children
3	**Child & family poverty**	26.73% of children in poverty
4	**Housing affordability/stability**	17.25% of renters severely cost burdened; 541 homeless children
5	**Employment & living wages**	4.1% unemployment, but living-wage requirements substantially exceed minimum wage
6	**Education/workforce development**	16.51% without high school diploma
7	**Transportation/access**	90.3% depend on automobiles
8	**Senior poverty**	15.31% senior poverty
9	**Family/youth stability**	Juvenile referrals, domestic violence, child abuse/neglect
10	**Population decline/rural capacity**	10.18% population loss from 2010–2020

Overall Conclusion

The report paints a picture of a **rural region with persistent structural poverty rather than simply unemployment**. The most important finding is the gap between having a job and actually being economically self-sufficient. Poverty, food insecurity, housing costs, transportation, childcare, education, and access to services reinforce one another.

For SCMCAA, this supports a **whole-family, whole-community approach** rather than treating individual needs independently. The strongest strategic priorities would be:

1. **Increase household income and employment stability**
2. **Reduce food insecurity**
3. **Strengthen housing stability**
4. **Improve educational and workforce outcomes**
5. **Remove transportation and childcare barriers**
6. **Support children and families experiencing poverty**
7. **Address senior economic insecurity**
8. **Strengthen coordination among community service providers**

Survey Findings

The 2026 Comprehensive Community Needs Survey was conducted to identify the most significant challenges facing individuals and families throughout the agency's seven-county service area. The survey gathered community perceptions regarding housing, financial stability, transportation, food security, healthcare, employment, education, youth and senior needs, emergency conditions, and awareness of agency services.

The survey results demonstrate that **economic stability and the ability to meet basic household needs are central concerns across the service area**. Housing costs, transportation expenses, food prices, utility costs, healthcare affordability, and financial-management challenges frequently appear as interconnected barriers to household stability and self-sufficiency.

Key Findings

Housing affordability is one of the most significant needs identified by respondents. The cost of rent was identified by **41.07%** of respondents, while **23.21%** reported that affordable housing is unavailable. Housing concerns were reinforced by the finding that **64.81% of respondents identified rental assistance as a needed community program**, the highest percentage for any program listed.

Financial stability represents a significant underlying community need. Difficulty with money management was identified by **77.27%** of respondents. In addition, **55.45%** reported a lack of knowledge about setting a budget, and **51.82%** identified saving money as a concern. These findings indicate that financial hardship is related not only to income, but also to financial-management and resource-navigation challenges.

Transportation is a substantial barrier to self-sufficiency. The cost of buying a vehicle or making a down payment was identified by **74.34%**, while **70.80%** identified the cost of maintaining a vehicle. Lack of public transportation was identified by **38.05%**. These findings indicate that transportation affects residents' ability to access employment, healthcare, education, food and other essential services.

Substance abuse was the leading emergency/community concern. It was identified by **63.72%** of respondents. Other significant emergency concerns included lack of income for utilities or fuel (**49.56%**), lack of emergency shelter (**43.36%**) and lack of food (**38.94%**).

Food affordability continues to be a significant concern. More than half of respondents (**55.26%**) identified the high cost of groceries as a nutrition concern. Respondents also identified the need for food assistance (**42.59%**) and basic-needs assistance (**48.15%**).

Healthcare and dental access are important community concerns. Affordable or available health insurance was identified by **50.89%** of respondents. Other significant concerns included dentists not accepting insurance (**45.54%**), lack of health insurance (**43.75%**) and chronic disease (**41.96%**).

Families and youth face significant stability challenges. The leading youth concern was unstable family environments, identified by **68.14%** of respondents. Affordable or adequate childcare was identified by **42.48%**, while bullying was identified by **38.94%** and proper nutrition by **34.51%**.

Senior residents face challenges related to independence and access to care. Lack of family support was identified by **51.75%** of respondents, followed by prescription medication costs (**44.74%**), affordable medical/dental care (**41.23%**), and nursing-home costs (**40.35%**).

Employment barriers extend beyond job skills. The most frequently identified employment barrier was lack of job openings (**24.11%**), followed by lack of childcare (**17.86%**), lack of job skills/training (**15.18%**) and health or disability issues (**15.18%**). This suggests that employment strategies should address multiple barriers rather than focus exclusively on job training.

Priority Community Needs

Based on the survey findings, the primary priorities identified for consideration in agency planning are:

1. **Housing stability and affordable housing**
2. **Financial stability and economic self-sufficiency**
3. **Transportation access and affordability**
4. **Substance abuse prevention, treatment and recovery resources**
5. **Food security and basic-needs assistance**
6. **Affordable healthcare and dental access**
7. **Utility and energy stability**
8. **Family and youth stability**
9. **Senior independence and support**
10. **Employment, education and workforce development**

Overall Finding

The survey indicates that the community's needs are **interconnected rather than isolated**. A household struggling with transportation may also have difficulty maintaining employment. High housing costs can reduce the resources available for food, utilities and healthcare. Childcare and health barriers can limit employment opportunities, while financial-management challenges can make it more difficult for families to recover from emergencies.

Consequently, the survey supports a **whole-family stability and self-sufficiency approach**. Immediate assistance with housing, food, utilities, transportation and other basic needs remains important, but long-term strategies should also address the underlying barriers that prevent individuals and families from achieving financial stability.

Recommended Overall Direction

The survey findings support a strategic focus on strengthening household stability and self-sufficiency by addressing immediate basic needs while reducing the housing, transportation, financial, healthcare, employment and family barriers that prevent individuals and families from achieving long-term stability.

The survey also indicates generally favorable perceptions of agency services, while the number of respondents selecting "Don't know" for some programs suggests an opportunity to strengthen **community outreach, program awareness and communication**.

Overall, the 2026 survey provides strong community input supporting a CSBG strategic framework centered on **stabilization, financial empowerment, barrier reduction, resource connection and long-term self-sufficiency**.

2026 Customer/Constituent Feedback Survey Analysis

The survey results are **very positive overall**. Customers reported high levels of satisfaction with staff courtesy, accessibility, communication, and whether their needs were met.

The strongest findings are:

- **Nearly all respondents felt welcomed** when entering the agency.
- **Nearly all were satisfied with telephone service.**
- **100% reported that the location was easy to find.**
- **Nearly all described the facility as pleasant and professional.**
- **Nearly all felt they were treated with respect and courtesy.**
- **Nearly all felt they were given options regarding their situation.**
- **Nearly all reported that their needs were met.**
- **Nearly all felt staff took enough time to answer questions.**
- **About 90% said agency hours met their needs.**
- The overall customer-service rating was overwhelmingly **Excellent or Satisfactory**.
- About **91% reported receiving information about other agency services.**

These results indicate that the agency is doing particularly well in **customer service and the client experience**.

Final Thoughts

We asked our analysis team to look at all of the data that was presented to them, and select ideas for ***community-level strategy/interventions***. Here are some of the most popular suggestions:

Get information to communities in a timely manner
Job Fairs
Homeless shelters
Community Opportunities
Meetings and Interagency Meetings and Training
Updated Resource Guide
Additional Food Banks
Mobil Health and Service Units
Grant Funded Housing
Partnerships with other agencies.

Based on the material reviewed, we also asked our analysis team to suggest some ideas for ***agency-level strategies/intervention***s. Here are some ideas:

Partner with local transportation
Peer Education
Job Training Hubs
Partner with communities for shelters
Partner with drug / substance abuse groups
Write more grants
Do more outreach
Host more family centered events

Based on the material reviewed, we asked our analysis team for suggestions for ***family-level strategies/interventions***. Here are some ideas:

Additional Education/Job Training
Rent/Ownership
Increase Involvement and Family Engagement
Attend Events (Health Fairs, Job Fairs)
Apply for Low-Income Housing Programs

2026 Community Needs Assessment Focus Group Toolkit

South Central Missouri Community Action Agency

The purpose of our Focus Group activity will allow us to gather input from multiple community members about the issues and concerns facing families and individuals related to poverty, health, learning and other critical areas. We will compile the information, and analyze it and include it in our Community Needs Assessment for 2026. Please familiarize yourself with this document – prior to the Focus Group.

There are six tools:

1. Facilitation Agenda
2. Talking Points
3. Participant Sign in Sheet
4. List of Invited Participants
5. Focus Group Documentation Tables
6. Focus Group Cover Sheet

How to use the tools:

- ✓ Complete a separate summary for each focus group (one per county).
- ✓ Transfer any handwritten notes from flip charts, etc. into a Word Document for Ginger.
- ✓ Be sure to keep a copy of all documents for your county records – label: (CCNA 2026).
- ✓ Provide all document from your meeting to Ginger, ASAP.

Suggested Process (Modify as needed, based on the group and or specific location and supplies available.)

1. Confirm your location and details!
2. Invite participants. We would like a group of 6 – 8 participants, so you'll need to probably invite more. We are seeking ***"maximum feasible participation from our clients"***, as well as a few community members, and representatives from other organizations – especially: Low-income community members, community-based organizations, faith-based

organizations, private sector, public sector, educational institutions, etc. Keep a list of invited participants.

3. Remind participants a day or two before your meeting!
4. Print out PP slides for the county that you are hosting, for each participant or show as a presentation on a whiteboard with projector. Some prefer to have "paper" copies to write on.
5. Ask a co-worker to serve as your "scribe" or co-facilitator.
6. Print out PP slides for each county for yourself – put in a binder for ease of reference, in case participants ask how their county compares to others in our area.
7. If permitted by your location, we can provide water and light snack. You will need to obtain a requisition number.
8. Room Set Up. Before the group arrives, have some markers, and tape up six flip chart pages (if you have them). You'll probably need more as the group responds to prompts and you write their responses. Label the sheets, as follows:
    a. Employment/Education
    b. Income
    c. Housing
    d. Health / Nutrition
    e. Civic Engagement
    f. Other Concerns
9. Welcome. After the group is seated, send the sign in sheet around the room and ask participants to sign in and provide contact information and which community sector that they represent. We ask for this information so that we can evaluate how well we did in reaching a broad spectrum of community members.
10. Introduce yourself as the sign in sheet is making its way around the room.
11. Begin presenting information from PowerPoint presentation for your county – follow the Facilitation Agenda.

Facilitation Agenda

1.) Introduction – 10 minutes

- Provide a brief introduction to the Community Needs Assessment.
- Explain that you will ask the group to spend a few minutes showing them data that we've collected, and spend time identifying their concerns for their community in a particular area (health, education, etc.) After that, you'll will ask them to identify any resources that are currently available in their community to address the problems identified. And finally, you will ask them to identify any barriers for accessing the services. Emphasize that their input is vital in helping us to identify and prioritize needs, create solutions and plan for services.
- Explain that we are not trying to evaluate or judge any on person's opinions or experiences, but rather to capture the thinking of as many people as possible.
- Ask if there are any questions before you begin. Answer questions and begin with the presentation of key findings (Power Point) data.

2.) Identification of Problems/Concerns – 20 minutes total

Ask the following four questions and document answers to each of the topics listed previously and document answers on your flip chart pages.

- What are the most significant problems related to each of the topic? (Do this for each of the 6 topics) – 10 minutes
- What are the most significant problems related to each of the topics? (Do this for each of the 6 topics) – 10 minutes

*Questions are intentionally broad and open ended so that people can respond in whatever way they need to. Facilitators can offer some issues/concerns to get the group going as long as they don't intentionally lead the discussion in a particular direction.

3.) Community Resources and Barriers – 10 minutes

Have the participants look at the list of problems, issues and concerns, then ask:

- What recourses are available in their community to address these issues? (List each resource on the left side of the flip chart)
- What are the barriers (if any) to accessing these resources? (List barriers next to the resource they apply to.)

4.) Solutions – 10 minutes

Have participants look at the list of problems, issues, resources and barriers, and then ask:

- What actions, programs, strategies do they think would make the biggest difference in their community? List them!

5.) Conclusion. Thank folks for their time. Let them know we expect to have the data compiled, analyzed and a draft report ready in early September. They can check back with you to participate in future activities, and/or receive a copy of the summarize flip charts, and to know how to access the final report for our agency.

Talking Points

- Our organization conducts Needs Assessments every 3 years.
- The Community Needs Assessment looks at a wide range of issues, which can be grouped into six categories:
  - **Employment/Education**
  - **Income**
  - **Housing**
  - **Health/Nutrition**
  - **Civic Engagement**
  - **Other Concerns**
- In addition to information collected through Focus Groups, assessment data is compiled from surveys, and data collection from various sources (such as the US Census, Dept. of Labor, etc.)
- Explain how the information will be used.
- Our agency encourages community members to participate in Focus Groups, Parent Groups, Policy Council, Volunteers for Poverty Simulations, etc.
- Share brochures!
- A focus group is ***not***:
  - A debate
  - Group therapy
  - A conflict resolution session
  - A problem-solving session
  - An opportunity to collaborate
  - A promotional opportunity
  - An educational session
- Remember:
  - Keep personal views **OUT** of the facilitation
  - Avoid unnecessary conversation and stay on topic
  - Be ready to appropriately manage challenging group dynamics.
  - Give everyone the opportunity to contribute to the discussion.
  - Listen attentively with sensitivity and empathy
  - If you don't have access to large paper, just take good notes! You'll need to be able to transcribe them into our Documentation Tables.

- If you don't have access to an overhead projector, just make copies of the Power Point presentation for your county, so each person gets a copy.
- ONE person (CSBG Staff Member) should be the moderator and spokesperson for our agency.

SIGN IN SHEET

SOUTH CENTRAL MISSOURI COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY

2026 COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT – FOCUS GROUP

Location: _____ Date: _____ County: _____

NAME	ADDRESS	TELEPHONE #	EMAIL	ORGANIZATION

2026 Community Needs Assessment Focus Group

South Central Missouri Community Action Agency

List of Invited Participants

Date: _____ County:_____

NAME	ADDRESS	TELEPHONE #	EMAIL	ORGANIZATION	Confirmed/Date

Focus Group Results Documentation (make copies for each topic)

Problem/Concern: _____ (List each problem identified on a separate line.)

Focus Group Results Documentation (Make copies for each topic.)

Problem/Concern:_____

Community Resources Available to Address Problem/Issues **(List resources currently available in the community.)**	Barriers for Accessing Available Resources **(List barriers next to the appropriate resources.)**

Focus Group Results Documentation

Problem/Concern:_____

Solutions

(List each possible solution on a separate line and check the concern area the solution would address.)	Employment Education	Income	Housing	Health/Nutrition	Civic Engagement	Other

2026 Community Needs assessment Focus Group Cover Sheet

(copy this page on colored paper)

Meeting Date	
Location	
County	
Facilitator (s)	

Meeting Attendance

(Total Attendance should be sum of all participants.)

Total Attendance	Service Providers	Other Stakeholders	Private	Public	Consumers/Clients

Attach to Cover Sheet (in this order):

_____ List of Invited Participants

_____ Sign In Sheet

_____Problem/Concern Document Table (you should have six, one for each topic)

_____Resource/Barrier Document Table (you should have six, one for each topic)

_____Solutions Document Table (you will have one, that includes info for all six topics)

Send packet containing the above to Ginger ASAP!

GH 6/22/26



2026 Community Needs Assessment

Personal Interview Sheet

Date:_____

Name:_____

Address:_____

Phone Number:_____

Email:_____

Thank you for taking time to participate in our Community Needs Assessment process! Please tell us which sector you represent in the community. (Circle One) Elected Official, Neighborhood Member, Client, Clergy, Business Owner, Head Start Parent,
Other:_____)

What do you see as the three most important needs in your community?

_____

_____

What do you see as assets in your community?

_____

_____

What do you see as barriers in your community?

_____

_____

What do you see as opportunities for collaboration to meet the needs in your community?_____

_____

Please provide further information regarding the state of your community. Please elaborate on what you feel is needed, or what you feel are "gaps" in services or linkages to services in your community.

_____

_____

_____

If you feel comfortable doing so, please share your experiences with using SNAP, SCMCAA programs, accessing services, or living with a low income. We appreciate your willingness to share this information with us!

_____

_____

_____

South Central Missouri Community Action Agency

Community Needs Assessment Analysis Report

Tuesday, August 4, 2026

County: _____

Group Members:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Personal Interview Sheets

1.) What did respondents identify as the three most common important needs?
   a. _____
   b. _____
   c. _____
2.) What were the top five identified assets in the community?
   a. _____
   b. _____
   c. _____
   d. _____
   e. _____
3.) List three to five identified barriers in the community.
   a. _____
   b. _____
   c. _____
   d. _____
   e. _____
4.) List three to five identified opportunities for collaboration in the community.
   a. _____
   b. _____
   c. _____
   d. _____
   e. _____
5.) List three to five recurrent comments regarding the state of the community (if any).

a. _____
b. _____
c. _____
d. _____
e. _____

6.) Pick two impactful statements from the group of Personal Interview Sheets.

a. _____
_____
_____
_____
_____

b. _____
_____
_____
_____
_____

County Focus Group /Statistical Data

1) Does the information from the Focus Group / Statistical Data match what respondents had to say on the majority of the Personal Interview Sheets? Yes or No (circle one)
2) If no, what is different or conflicting?_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
3) What part of the statistical data was most "concerning" to the group?_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
4) Were identified problems/concerns listed for each of the six issues (employment/education, income, etc.)? Yes or No (circle one)
5) Were Community Resources listed for each of the six issues? Yes or No (circle one)
6) Were possible solutions identified for each of the six issues? Yes or No (circle one)
7) What do you feel was missing from the Focus Group information?
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
8) If something WAS missing or incomplete, please explain._____

_____
_____
_____
_____

9) Please provide any comments regarding the information from the Focus Group, or the Statistical Information that your group reviewed.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Survey Activity

What did respondents identify as the three most common important needs?

a. _____
b. _____
c. _____

2.) What were the top five identified assets in the community?

a. _____
b. _____
c. _____
d. _____
e. _____

3.) List three to five identified barriers in the community.

a. _____
b. _____
c. _____
d. _____
e. _____

4.) List three to five identified opportunities for collaboration in the community.

a. _____
b. _____
c. _____
d. _____
e. _____

5.) List three to five recurrent comments regarding the state of the community (if any).

a. _____
b. _____
c. _____
d. _____
e. _____

6.) Pick two impactful statements from the Surveys (if any):

a. _____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

7.) Review the portion of the survey that covers Client Satisfaction. What stands out to your group about this section?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Final Thoughts

Please list three community-level strategy/intervention ideas:

1.) _____
2.) _____
3.) _____

Please list three agency-level strategy/intervention ideas:

1.) _____
2.) _____
3.) _____

Please list three family-level strategy ideas/intervention ideas:

1.) _____
2.) _____
3.) _____

Please provide any additional comments for consideration for inclusion in the Executive Summary:

2026 Community Needs Assessment Process

March – May

Survey Process (via Survey Monkey link) to low income individuals and Key Sectors

- All agency clients that come into your office
- All agency clients that attend Parent Meetings, Socializations
- All Head Start Parents
- All EHS Parents
- All MIECHV Parents
- All Skill Up Clients
- All City Halls (at least one to two representatives) from each city office in the county
- As many partnering organizations in each county as possible
- Board Members (Central Office will conduct these surveys)
- Local Business Representatives
- Social Service Providers
- Community-based Organizations
- Private Sector Representatives
- Public Sector Representatives
- Educational Institutions
- Local Health Providers, Dentists, etc.
- Health Departments for each county
- Faith Based Partners
- All Agency Staff

Personal Interviews (via paper forms)

- Same groups as above (mixture by county)

July, 2026

All Focus Groups to be held by August 1st , and information turned in to Central Office by August 1, 2026

- Each County
- Invite a variety of participants, but each Focus Group should have:
    - University Extension and Outreach
    - School Administrators/Teachers
    - Vendors (utility companies, etc.)
    - Social Service Representatives
    - Local Government Representatives
    - Employers
    - Health Providers
    - Economic Developers
    - Clients of the Agency
    - Board Members
    - Staff
    - Volunteers
- Topics (examples)
    - What needs of the low-income population are/are not being met? Why?
    - Are there any efforts currently underway to address these needs?

- Are these efforts working?
  - If not, why not?
- What first steps should community and faith-based organizations take to address these needs?
- What resources are available in this community?
- Develop a “community plan”.

August 4, 2026 **Data Analysis and Prioritization Meeting Held**

September 1, 2026 **Complete Report**

October 31, 2026 **Publish the Report**

2026 Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment Survey Questions

1. What county do you live in?
2. What is your age?
3. What is your household type?
4. What is the Survey or Event Location?
5. What portion of the population do you best represent?
6. What is your employment status?
7. Which of the following categories best describes your housing status?
8. Are you interested in job training or obtaining a certificate?
9. What do you consider the top barrier to employment in your community?
10. What do you consider to be the top education issue in your community?
11. What do you consider to be the top housing issue in your community?
12. What do you feel is the most important nutrition issue that impacts your community?
13. What do you consider to be the top 3 emergency situations that impact your community?
14. What do you consider the top 3 financial issues in your community?
15. What do you consider to be the top 3 health related issues in your community?
16. What do you consider to be the top 3 issues for youth in your community?
17. What do you consider to be the top 3 issues for senior citizens in your community?
18. Please help us evaluate how we are doing in the following areas? Early Head Start
19. Please help us evaluate how we are doing in the following areas? Head Start
20. Please help us evaluate how we are doing in the following areas? Home Based Option (MIECHV)
21. Please help us evaluate how we are doing in the following areas? Our Facilities
22. Please help us evaluate how we are doing in the following areas? Utility Assistance
23. Please help us evaluate how we are doing in the following areas? Community Services
24. Please help us evaluate how we are doing in the following areas? Weatherization
25. Please help us evaluate how we are doing in the following areas? Skill Up (employment/education)
26. What type of program are needed?