CAP Tulsa’s promise: We believe every child and every family deserves the same opportunity for success.

CAP Tulsa activities and initiatives in response to the COVID-19 crisis

Emergency Assistance Program
CAP Tulsa’s whole family approach to serving young children in partnership with their parents and caregivers creates strong relationships with families across Tulsa. These connections allow the agency to quickly respond to families’ changing needs and circumstances. Since the onset of the COVID-19 crisis, CAP Tulsa has strived to remain in weekly contact with all enrolled families via phone, text, and/or email in order to provide information about resources available through the agency and community partners. Hundreds of families have expressed urgent needs that have been exacerbated by the pandemic, and in response, CAP Tulsa has been providing mailed gift cards and other forms of financial assistance. Families’ top needs have been groceries, cleaning supplies, diapers, and infant formula, along with growing requests for direct payments to landlords and utility companies to prevent eviction and service disconnection. On average, participating families have received nearly $400 in emergency supports, but can receive up to $1,500 during a school year for documented, eligible emergency needs.

Family & Behavioral Health Supports
All parents and caregivers of children enrolled in CAP Tulsa’s Early Childhood Program are provided with a degreed Family Support Specialist able to speak their home language. These Specialists, contracted through Family & Children’s Services, have been calling families each week throughout the COVID-19 crisis to assess needs, make referrals, and follow up on the most high-risk situations. During the pandemic, Family Support Specialists have made thousands of outreach calls with an average contact rate of over 50%. Of these phone connections, nearly one-third result in a referral to a community resource, and Specialists may also then deliver meals, diapers, hygiene kits, and learning-at-home activity packs for young children. Through this partnership, CAP Tulsa also provides Behavioral Health Support staff to address the mental health needs of families through telehealth therapy sessions. An increasing number of parents and caregivers have reported feeling overwhelmed during the pandemic and Behavioral Health Support staff are adept at using counseling and crisis intervention techniques to assist adults and children through traumatic events.

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GEORGE KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION
2020-21 School Year: Distance & In-Person Learning

With the health and safety of children, their families, and CAP Tulsa staff as the top priority, the agency opted for a mix of distance and in-person learning for the 2020-21 school year. Just over 1,000 families (far less than full capacity) were enrolled for the 2020-21 school year and placed into alternating groups with half of the children attending school in-person on Mondays and Tuesdays, and the other half attending on Thursdays and Fridays. All children receive services via distance learning on Wednesdays, and on the two days they are not scheduled to attend in-person. A series of protocols are in place for children, families, and staff based on guidance from health officials, including daily health checks, mask usage, hygiene, social distancing, sanitizing, quarantine procedures, and contact tracing. As necessary, distance learning will be utilized if a classroom or entire school needs to close due to COVID-19 exposures. Based on feedback from families, this hybrid model provides some child care support for working parents and caregivers, while also minimizing health risks and odds of unplanned disruptions during the school year.

Virtual Home Visits

Throughout the COVID-19 crisis, CAP Tulsa’s Parent Educators have shifted from conducting in-person to virtual home visits. During these visits, Parent Educators talk with parents over video and/or phone about how to build their confidence as their child’s primary teacher, and the skills necessary to nurture young children’s development and manage typical behaviors. Conversations during virtual visits are also used to help mothers and fathers connect to resources throughout the community, set goals for the future, and persevere through these stressful times.

Resource Hub

In response to the COVID-19 crisis, CAP Tulsa created and has maintained a website (captulsa.org/resources) with resources for families with young children that is available in English, Spanish and Zomi. Community resources listed cover supplies for infants, child care providers, age-appropriate learning activities, child abuse prevention, counseling and recovery programs, crisis intervention, emotional support hotlines, food distribution locations, affordable housing and eviction prevention services, legal aid, transportation, financial navigation, public benefits including WIC, SNAP and unemployment insurance, dental, vision, and medical care, low-cost internet access, and COVID-19 testing locations.