

# **Muskegon CHIR**

**CRF-Covid-19 Relief Fund**

**October-November-December**

**2020**

**Livability Lab 2.1**

**Clinical-Community Linkages**

**Resilience Zone**

**Community Support**

**LIVABILITY LAB**

**MUSKEGON COUNTY, MICHIGAN**

# Muskegon County, Michigan: The Muskegon Community Health Innovation Region (CHIR) in the Year 2020 .....

In January of 2020, the Muskegon CHIR began in a celebratory way, having wrapped up a multi-year federal grant with the successful completion of its 100-Day Challenge on January 23, 2020. There was much to celebrate, as over the years the Muskegon CHIR had advanced efforts to support clinical-community linkages, integrated a collective impact model into county-wide efforts, established strong relationships with residents through grassroots community engagement, and brought the efforts all together with the 100-Day Challenge initiative, called Livability Lab. Livability Lab 1.0, as it came to be known, addressed barriers in community conditions to improve livability elements as prioritized by the community, through action teams comprised of cross-sector members of the community, with the ultimate vision of creating a system that ensures livability for all Muskegon County residents.

Following the federal grant completion, the State of Michigan continued support for the Muskegon CHIR through September 30 to extend the good work being done and take steps further toward sustainability. Livability Lab 2.0 was announced and the original 19 action teams formed during 1.0 coalesced into five livability element groups. Shortly after that, however, COVID-19 hit and the Muskegon CHIR turned its full attention to using its cross-sector communications networks and relationships to help address the new,

immediate needs of the community. Part of this was helping connect people to resources via the website, digital newsletters, and social media; and part of this was conducting surveys to ensure the resident voice continued to be included in the decision-making processes during the pandemic. Furthermore, the murder of George Floyd in late spring provoked a heightened awareness about systemic racism, and racial equity was brought front and center in Muskegon CHIR efforts. While equity was always a core principle of the collective impact model, a clearer declaration of racism as a public health crisis was issued by the governor and racial equity was included as an important overall lens through which to view ongoing efforts of the Muskegon CHIR. Health disparities in the BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) communities were exacerbated by the pandemic and needed to be addressed explicitly.

By mid-summer, the Livability Lab 2.0 action teams indicated they were ready to regroup, review the new data added regarding COVID-19 and structural racism, and move forward – even if much of the work needed to be done virtually. A 45-Day Challenge was launched to support and encourage teams to come together to identify common goals. Livability Lab 2.0 wrapped with a virtual gathering on September 29 to celebrate Muskegon County's resolve and the 2.0 accomplishments.

The full story of Livability Lab and the team accomplishments through September 30, 2020, along with other information and links about the Muskegon CHIR including the Clinical-Community Linkages and the

resident engagement initiatives (Resilience Zone), can be found at [LivabilityLab.com](http://LivabilityLab.com) as well as in previously published booklets and various videos created throughout the process.

## Muskegon CHIR COVID-19 Relief: October-November-December 2020

*Livability Lab 2.1 + Resilience Zone + Clinical-Community Linkages + COVID-19 Relief Grants/Community Support*

This final report booklet of the year covers the period beginning on October 1 and ending on December 30. This was a period that saw the federal government, administered through the state, step back in to support the initiatives in Muskegon County that provided COVID-19 relief efforts for those infected and affected by the pandemic. Much of the Muskegon CHIR - through Livability Lab, Resilience Zone, and Clinical-Community Linkages - had already implemented actions to address the COVID-19 related needs of the community, this would ensure the capacity to continue to do this important work through the remainder of the year. It also provided an opportunity to support other organizations in the community who were doing COVID-19 relief work impacting residents' health and well-being, particularly in

the areas of familial care, education expansion, and employment-related initiatives.

Amid the many challenges that 2020 ushered in, Muskegon County never lost sight of the vision to create a system that ensures livability for all residents. The cross-sector networks, trusted relationships, and processes learned prior to 2020 proved to hold strong and work well in the face of unexpected crises that necessitated quick pivots and innovative responses to widespread needs. With appreciation for federal and state support in recognizing the value of investing in the health and well-being of this community, the reports on the following pages of this booklet will provide some insight into the ingenuity, perseverance, and compassion of the residents who call Muskegon County home.

# Livability Lab 2.1

## Livability Element Groups - Action Teams

### LIVABILITY ELEMENT: EDUCATION

**Action Team:** Education  
**Coach:** Brennan Gorman  
**Community Convener:**  
Read Muskegon

**C**reation of a Muskegon County Literacy Database: contracted services to design and create a publicly accessible database of birth-adult literacy supports.

The Read Muskegon Literacy Collaborative (RMLC) consists of a cross-sector group of approximately 35 community partners focused on addressing the root causes of generational illiteracy through specific community action and systemic change.

In the spring of 2020, as part of the RMLC response to the impact of COVID-19 on the education of our most vulnerable neighbors - across the age spectrum and including low-literacy adults who will struggle to find

employment in a more competitive job market - a mapping project was initiated. The focus of the project was to create a one-stop, accessible resource that could connect families, agencies, schools, businesses, and others to available literacy support services in Muskegon County.

The initial survey work was completed over a 3-month time period and included email and online surveys, follow-up phone calls, and presentations. While the data will be a living document and its collection an ongoing process, by November 2020 there was enough information collected to begin work towards making it accessible in an online format. The searchable database is designed to be user friendly by those with low-literacy skills but also valuable to professionals seeking to connect clients or students with services. The database will be housed on Read Muskegon's website and linked by members of the RMLC including the Muskegon Area Intermediate School District, libraries, West MI Works, and our criminal justice system.

### LIVABILITY ELEMENT: HEALTH

**Action Team:** Health  
**Coach:** Doug Wood  
**Community Convener:**  
Health Project

**COVID-19 Response: Senior Health Collaborative (SHC) Support.**

**T**he Senior Health Collaborative (SHC) consists of a partnership between Senior Services and Hackley Community Care in cooperation with the CHIR Livability Lab. The SHC set a goal to distribute a supply of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) disposable face masks to seniors in residence facilities in Muskegon County.

Staff serving seniors in local medical residence facilities have observed that, in many cases, they have been using masks that have been used, are soiled, and are likely unsanitary. These masks create a situation that could create a barrier to effectively treating the virus and keeping the residence COVID-free.

The SHC purchased PPE masks and packaged them (three per package) for distribution to senior residence facilities in Muskegon County. The Collaborative:

- Used existing contacts to determine the best source for the purchase of the masks.
- Contacted local senior medical residence facilities to determine the headcount of residences
  - Facilities in outlying areas of the county were included to determine needs

### LIVABILITY ELEMENT: SAFETY & SECURITY

**Action Team:** Safety & Security  
**Coach:** Carla Flanders  
**Community Convener:**  
Mediation & Restorative Services

**D**uring Livability Lab 2.0, the Team recognized a need in the community to assist businesses in changing their culture, specifically as it pertains to hiring employees with a criminal record. Recommendations going forward included:

- A summary of evidence-based research that includes scientific literature, organizational best practices, stakeholder concerns, and professional expertise.
- A training program design that provides flexibility for businesses to choose an approach that best matches their current approach and culture. Help prepare businesses to quickly adapt, especially through the COVID-19 pandemic. Essential businesses are struggling to fill essential worker roles, individuals with a criminal record have a high rate of displacement and are often "closest to the door."
- A proposal for training material design.

The Team contracted with Vertical Leadership Consulting (VLC) to develop a holistic training program to address the recommendations. According to the approach by VLC, training does not have the power to fundamentally change behaviors and culture. It is an important component in driving the recognition that change must occur and to develop the skills needed to make the change, but training is not the driver of the change itself. What organizations reward and punish are the real drivers of behavior and culture. Training is a critical catalyst for a change and when combined with a culture change approach, results are accomplished and sustained.

**VLC makes sure to look at the problem for a holistic mindset and commits to:**

- Use an evidence-based process to determine the course content.
- Integrate multi-disciplinary research (i.e. neuroscience, cognitive development, change management, leadership studies, etc.).
- Describe the challenges, change, and disruptions that businesses are facing.
- Include approaches that interrupt how an employee's brain unconsciously responds and replaces with actions/behaviors to consciously choose.
- Design a training program outline that is relevant for small to medium sizes businesses.

**VLC was contracted to create these deliverables as part of the project:**

- Summary document that includes overview of research conducted and conclusions that informed training program design.
- Culture change recommendations document (i.e. policies, leader behavior, rewards/punishments, culture change approaches, etc.)
- Training program design document that includes course description for each class that can be used when developing class materials

- Assigned Hackley Community Care as the recipient of the funds and the purchaser of the masks; may use any source determined by the collaborative.

In the first round of Livability Lab 2.0 planning, the health team created a plan to connect a Community Health Worker (CHW) to local senior residences to help them gain access to services under the new rules of COVID-19 community contact. This effort used the resources of the CHW position to effectively distribute the PPE masks and support that work.

LIVABILITY ELEMENT:  
**ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY**

**Action Team:** Economic Opportunity  
**Coach:** Brad Hastings  
**Community Convener:**  
Muskegon Heights Business Association

The Livability Lab Economic Opportunity Team is creating a strategic business plan and process strategy that consolidates multiple economic development opportunities that build upon our previous work. The effort begins with the convening and formalizing of a representative planning group who will work together as a team to advance these multiple opportunities.

Initially, the Economic Opportunity Team focused its attention on working with the Muskegon Young Black Professionals (MYBP) group to establish and fund a minority enterprise grant program. This mini-grant program will be used to expand investment in Black entrepreneurship and will target existing or new small businesses. This need for minority business investment has been underscored by the level of business failures during the COVID-19 pandemic. \$60,000 has been initially committed by a local donor, who attended Livability Lab, to initiate the grant program. As a part of this effort, the Team began a strategic planning process for MYBP to help strengthen the group's governance design and implement the necessary legal (501c3) structure that will allow them to not only expand the scope of their work but to also assimilate the small grant program.

Additional interest in the location of Muskegon Heights from manufacturing companies grew and conversations began with business owners as well as residents through the Muskegon Heights Neighborhood Association Council.

If the potential manufacturing business opportunity is successful, training will be needed because of the unique ventures that the interested entities represent. Muskegon Community College has expressed an interest in engaging with this project to address training needs. Additionally, there are plans to create a liaison with union representatives from skilled trades to engage in establishing a local apprenticeship effort focusing on individuals from Muskegon Heights. A potential (vacant) manufacturing site has been identified in Muskegon Heights, with an additional commitment by an investor for real estate acquisition support.

The Team believes that the timing was right to pull these potential partners together, execute a strategic discussion and develop a plan that can move this process forward as an aligned and visionary process. Support for this effort is applied to consultant services for writing, facilitation, and additional legal support.

LIVABILITY ELEMENT:  
**SOCIAL CONNECTION & TRUST**

**Action Team:** Social Connection & Trust  
**Coach:** Marquis Childers, Jr.  
**Community Convener:** Access Health

Muskegon Heights Neighborhood Association Council response: Raising awareness of trusted sources of information about COVID-19 via the Council website.

The Muskegon Heights Neighborhood Association Council previously addressed the need to create a trusted source of local information for residents of Muskegon Heights by creating a website (the website was created during Livability Lab 2.0 efforts, after surveys revealed lack of trust by some in the African American community toward health communications from outside organizations and media outlets). Strengthening and growing resident involvement in neighborhood associations also helps build relationships, and empowers residents to be more involved in decision-making processes that affect the health and well-being of the community. During the period of October through December 2020, the Council discussed the need to promote the new website, as there is much information and updates regarding COVID-19 to be found there; the Council needed to build greater awareness within the community of the website's existence.

Through discussions at Muskegon Heights Neighborhood Association Council meetings, the group determined what promotional materials would best serve the purpose of raising awareness and driving residents to the website. The Council decided upon banners, yard signs, door hangers, and wallet cards plus taking the step to hire independent contractors to help deliver the door hangers throughout Muskegon Heights. The COVID-19 information on the website is updated regularly and there are links to resources for those who have immediate needs or who want to be contacted directly with more information regarding the pandemic. The website also serves as a portal to ongoing surveys and questionnaires where the needs of the community can be gathered and analyzed to develop actionable data.



Yard Sign

# Clinical-Community Linkages (CCL)

One of the recent activities of the Muskegon CHIR was implementing enhanced/expanded processes and procedures to improve the clinical-community linkages (CCL) system in Muskegon County and streamline the referral and follow-up processes. CCLs help to connect health care providers, community organizations, and public health agencies so they can improve patients' access to preventive and chronic care services.

Having this system in place ensures prompt responses and support for many of the initiatives and projects implemented during the final quarter of 2020. The livability elements and community conditions are interconnected and to fully address the Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) or Social Influencers of Health (SIOH), this referral system provides a link to those resources outside the focus of various projects. Because of this, groups can continue working toward their specific goals while assured that individuals receive the full spectrum of support for other areas necessary to improve livability.

## Resilience Zone

An area on the south side of the City of Muskegon Heights is the focus area for increased resident engagement efforts of the Muskegon CHIR. This area, census tract 14.02, is called the Resilience Zone. Over the past few years, residents have participated in surveys, focus groups, committees, action teams, and more in their involvement with the Muskegon CHIR. In 2019, the South Heights Photovoice Initiative was completed, which contributed knowledge of lived experiences and root cause analysis at grassroots level. This provided a catalyst for conversation leading into the Livability Lab, where an action team was formed to build upon the growing neighborhood associations in the city. The action team developed a Muskegon Heights Neighborhood Association Council (MHNAC) and a Resident Charter, which is an agreement between organizations and residents on participation in decision-making processes. The Council created a website as a trusted local source of information for residents, including COVID-19 updates, and to continue to build and strengthen neighborhood associations.

During the final quarter of 2020, the Resilience Zone participants focused their attention on building capacity to gather and analyze data collected from their community. While residents had previously completed questionnaires about the impact of COVID-19, the group wanted

to build off that and take the data collection a step further. With the executive directive by Governor Whitmer acknowledging racism as a public health crisis and the executive order establishing a Black Leadership Advisory Council to help gather information and inform decision-making and policy, residents in Muskegon Heights stepped forward. Residents understand that data tells a story, and the best way to ensure that the story centers in truth is for it to be told by the people with first-person lived experiences. The more the data is mediated and analyzed away from the community, the more chance for it to move away from the core truths.

*Part of the charge of the executive order is that the governor's Black Leadership Advisory Council shall act in an advisory capacity to the governor and shall do the following:*

- (1) Develop, review, and recommend to the governor policies and actions designed to eradicate and prevent discrimination and racial inequity in this state, including in the areas of health care, housing, education, employment, economic opportunity, public accommodations, and procurement.
- (2) Identify state laws, or gaps in state law, that create or perpetuate inequities, with the goal of promoting economic growth and wealth equity for the Black community.
- (3) Collaborate with the governor's office and the Black community to promote legislation and regulation that ensures equitable treatment of all Michiganders, and seeks to remedy structural inequities in this state.
- (4) Serve as a resource for community groups on issues, programs, sources of funding, and compliance requirements within state government to benefit and advance the interests of the Black community.
- (5) Promote the cultural arts within the Black community through coordinated efforts, advocacy, and collaboration with state government.
- (6) Provide other information or advice or take other actions as requested by the governor.

In response to the above list, MHNAC developed and implemented a resident survey to elicit experiences where health and well-being, including the impact of COVID-19, intersects with race and ethnicity. Both quantitative and qualitative data was collected, compiled, and combined with additional information from initiatives within the community. This was published in a report created by the residents and for the residents, with a copy being sent to the Black Leadership Advisory Council and the Governor's Office. The intent is for Muskegon Heights residents to take an active role in the ongoing conversation about their health and well-being, including the analysis of data and the discussions that address racism as a public health crisis.

# Covid-19 Relief Grant Projects

## **Project Title:** **Muskegon Rescue Mission** **COVID compliance project**

**Implementing Organization:**  
Muskegon Rescue Mission

**Existing COVID-19 Scope of work:**  
Behavioral health needs (anxiety, depression, social isolation, substance use, etc.); loss of employment; childcare shortages; transportation loss; food insecurity; human services safety net capacity/connectivity

**Social Determinant/Influencer of Health or other COVID-19 impact focus of this grant:**

Familial and support care; food and shelter for those who have been displaced or are experiencing economic decline due to the pandemic.

**Who is most affected:**

This can impact people from all walks of life. Most were already on the brink of homelessness and food insecurity, and were seeking help before the pandemic. The increase in jobless rates exacerbates the situation and increases the numbers of people in need.

**How will the project address a community condition created by the pandemic?**

The pandemic has increased the number of business closings and unemployment. More resources are required to meet the additional needs. The Muskegon Rescue Mission operates to serve those in need of food and shelter. Additional programs are available for those who need help with employment, child care, and guidance counseling.

**What steps will be taken to mitigate the spread of coronavirus in the way your project is implemented?**

Great care is taken to disinfect high traffic areas where the public is allowed. Thermal scans are taken at the door of residential settings and social distancing with masks is

required at every facility. Quarantine facilities are also employed at both shelters.

**How is your organization embedded in the community and what partnerships already exist? Do you directly engage residents in decision-making?**

The Muskegon Rescue Mission has been operating for 114 years. Longtime relationships are already in place with Muskegon Health and Human Services, Community EnCompass, Health West, and Love and Grace counseling service to name just a few.

**What impact will this project have on the community?**

Due to new safety guidelines, the Mission is required to double up on the meal schedules to accommodate social distancing between guests. It is also required to bus guests to temporary facilities when the new occupancy limits are exceeded. Sustaining the same or greater number of guests under these conditions suggests that the project's impact is successful in helping the community.

## **Project Title:** **Muskegon Heights Hope Center**

**Project Location:** Mahali

**Implementing Organization:**  
Read Muskegon

**Existing COVID-19 Scope of work:**  
Public education disruption

**Social Determinant/Influencer of Health or other COVID-19 impact focus of this grant:**

The primary determinants are education/literacy, social support networks, and healthy child development.

**Who is most affected:**

This program focuses on children in transient living situations as they are more likely to be truant from school (even virtual school), multiple grade levels behind in reading, and at high risk of dropping out.

**How will the project address a community condition created by the pandemic?**

Muskegon Heights students have been virtual since the beginning of the year with no current timeline to return to in-person learning. Households are provided internet reimbursement and students get Chromebooks. Families in transient living situations cannot utilize the reimbursement and their children go without regular internet access and suitable places to focus on learning. This project offers a place for families to have access to these important tools for education.

**What steps will be taken to mitigate the spread of coronavirus in the way your project is implemented?**

Health screenings are done prior to entrance and masks are required at all times except when eating. The number of participants is limited and personal stations are set up to maintain distance. Each family unit is provided with their own supplies including food. The facility is sanitized throughout the day and thoroughly every night.

**How is your organization embedded in the community and what partnerships already exist? Do you directly engage residents in decision-making?**

Read Muskegon and Mahali are both located in the heart of downtown Muskegon Heights and have a history of serving the local community. The Hope Center project was started in partnership with Muskegon Heights Public School Academy System, United Way, Coalition for Community Development, and the Community Foundation.

**What impact will this project have on the community?**

During COVID restrictions, the Hope Center capacity is 5-6 families per week. In the first week, they served 9 students. As COVID restrictions are eased, it will open to more families. The administration at Muskegon Heights Public School Academy System refers families for participation in the Hope Center.

## **Project Title:** **Telemental Health & You**

**Implementing Organization:**  
Servicios de Esperanza, LLC (dba Services of Hope)

**Existing COVID-19 Scope of work:**  
Medical care access (pandemic related, chronic disease, telehealth, coverages, etc.); behavioral health needs (anxiety, depression, social isolation, substance use, etc.).

**Social Determinant/Influencer of Health or other COVID-19 impact focus of this grant:**

Medical care access by promoting the use of telehealth to those that are experiencing anxiety/depression and unable to make it to appointments.

**Who is most affected:**

Currently unemployed and those in poverty in Muskegon County. We are 2nd in the state with our unemployment rate at 10.2 and this creates anxiety and depression in people, while at the same time they are often uninsured.

**How will the project address a community condition created by the pandemic?**

The COVID-19 pandemic has left several unemployed or living in poverty. For these individuals, we are offering up to three telemental health sessions for free for help with anxiety or depression.

**What steps will be taken to mitigate the spread of coronavirus in the way your project is implemented?**

We have closed our office to visitors to mitigate the spread of coronavirus while having our staff work from home to stay available. By offering telemental health we are still there for our clients, offering the necessary help and listening ear without being face-to-face.

**How is your organization embedded in the community and what partnerships already exist? Do you directly engage residents in decision-making?**

Our advisory board is made up of community members and they are often included in our decision-making by offering advice, having board meetings, and giving opinions.

## What impact will this project have on the community?

Anyone that is unemployed, living in poverty, or was recently unemployed and are back to work but without insurance yet is eligible. We will be promoting this grant and the funding available on our social media outlets as well as throughout our community via other agencies. We will measure our impact by tracking all new clients that we see in the month of December through telemental health for anxiety and depression. Funding we receive will be utilized toward payroll of our clinical staff and promotion of the grant to reach as many as possible. We will also translate our materials into Spanish.

## Project Title: MAP: COVID-19 Emergency Relief

### Implementing Organization:

Mission for Area People (MAP)

### Existing COVID-19 Scope of work:

Medical care access (pandemic related, chronic disease, telehealth, coverages, etc.); housing insecurity (includes utility shutoffs); transportation loss; food insecurity; lodging (motel), personal care (soaps, cleaning supplies, bedding, blankets, pillows, etc).

### Social Determinant/Influencer of Health or other COVID-19 impact focus of this grant:

Family support and care.

### Who is most affected:

Our transient and homeless population are most at-risk and would be priority for this project. They are low-income or no-income. Many of the at-risk individuals are from minority populations of Muskegon County, a demographic disproportionately affected by the Coronavirus.

### How will the project address a community condition created by the pandemic?

Mission for Area People (MAP) has remained open throughout the pandemic and continues to serve clients safely through call-in service and curbside pickup. The COVID Emergency Relief project focuses on:

(1) Delivery of personal care, cleaning supplies, and food for those quarantined or COVID-19 positive.

(2) Lodging assistance due to quarantining.

(3) Rental assistance due to lack of employment or reduced hours from COVID-19. We would not require an eviction notice to assist.

(4) Utility assistance, we would not limit the assistance to a one-month bill, but rather pay the entire bill if possible to avoid eviction.

(5) Medical equipment/prescriptions/copays/travel - purchases such as high blood pressure monitors or temperature thermometers, copays for visits, or travel to medical appointments.

### What steps will be taken to mitigate the spread of coronavirus in the way your project is implemented?

All clients will be screened by phone and any documents would be sent by email/scan. All items of care will be packed by a staff person with safety gear on - gloves, mask, face shield. Drop off delivery will be at the doorway.

### How is your organization embedded in the community and what partnerships already exist? Do you directly engage residents in decision-making?

MAP has been in existence for 53 years in taking care of our neighbors in need. We have a long-standing relationship with United Way of the Lakeshore and the Community Foundation for Muskegon County. We currently receive Emergency Food and Shelter Federal dollars and COVID Cares support and have been running this program since March 2020. We encourage and support healthier food choices, better budgeting decisions, connecting with other resources, and becoming self-sufficient.

### What impact will this project have on the community?

Approximately 40 individuals will be helped with this specific project grant, from help with rent/lodging/utilities/medical support to providing personal items such as soaps/bedding/food/delivery services. Clients call-in or are referred to us through 2-1-1, United Way, or other agencies. The desired outcomes of

the project grant are to meet the emergency need of the individual and to avoid spreading COVID-19 to others by allowing clients to quarantine safely at a motel or at home. Follow-up phone calls check on the client's well-being.

## Project Title: Boys & Girls Club: COVID-19 Response

### Implementing Organization:

Boys & Girls Club of the Muskegon Lakeshore

### Existing COVID-19 Scope of work:

Behavioral health needs (anxiety, depression, social isolation, substance use, etc.); childcare shortages; public education disruption; food insecurity; human services safety net capacity/connectivity; public safety.

### Social Determinant/Influencer of Health or other COVID-19 impact focus of this grant:

Education and lack of affordable childcare for Muskegon County families during the pandemic; lack of youth emotional support, food access, and virtual learning assistance.

### Who is most affected:

Over 90% of BGCML youth are low-income and 74% identify as Black/African American. The at-risk youth are most affected by this problem as face-to-face learning, emotional support, and mentorship are not available to them. Parents are oftentimes forced to choose between a paycheck, childcare, or their child's educational success.

### How will the project address a community condition created by the pandemic?

Youth attending BGCML's extended program hours from 7:30AM-5:30PM are provided with a safe place, receive world-class programming, mentorship, and meals on top of having access to a Learning Lab and providing support for virtual schooling. Since July, families have been on a growing waitlist.

## What steps will be taken to mitigate the spread of coronavirus in the way your project is implemented?

Since reopening in-person Clubs, we have had zero COVID-19 cases at the Club by following a cohort based operating model where youth and staff receive health screenings prior to entering the Club, then are separated into small group sizes, remain in the same groups, wear masks, and practice social distancing.

## How is your organization embedded in the community and what partnerships already exist? Do you directly engage residents in decision-making?

Since 2015, BGCML has served thousands of at-risk youth throughout Muskegon County with Club sites based in the community. Relationships with our members and families have impacted BGCML's success. We partner with school districts, community agencies, and neighborhood leaders - listening to community needs and evolving our programs to address them.

## What impact will this project have on the community?

BGCML aims to serve over 50 families by the end of 2020. BGCML tracks daily member demographics and program attendance. The direct impact of Club programming, including emotional safety, educational attainment, and opportunities for future success are also tracked utilizing Boys & Girls Clubs of America's National Youth Outcome Initiative survey, which provides yearly in-depth localized data for youth and families served.

**Project Title:**  
**Bethany Virtual Learning Lab,  
YEP Room, Catch Camp**

**Implementing Organization:**  
Bethany Church

**Existing COVID-19 Scope of work:**  
Behavioral health needs (anxiety, depression, social isolation, substance use, etc.); childcare shortages; public education disruption; food insecurity; human services safety net capacity/connectivity; public safety.

**Social Determinant/Influencer of Health or other COVID-19 impact focus of this grant:**

To fill the gaps in educational, physical, and emotional support for school-aged children; to help close the technology gap for underserved virtual learners.

**Who is most affected:**  
School age children and their families in the core city Muskegon area (McLaughlin, Angel & Nelson Neighborhoods).

**How will the project address a community condition created by the pandemic?**

- (1)** The BVLL will help alleviate the burden placed on underserved families to educate and care for their children.
- (2)** YEP Room will aid in supporting local teens with technology (laptops) and a physical space of safety.
- (3)** CATCH Camp will provide emotional educational support to elementary students.

**What steps will be taken to mitigate the spread of coronavirus in the way your project is implemented?**

We abide by all CDC recommendations and state and local mandates.

**How is your organization embedded in the community and what partnerships already exist? Do you directly engage residents in decision-making?**

The BVLL, YEP Program & CATCH Camp are making a difference in core city Muskegon already. With long term partnership between

Bethany Church and Community EnCompass, as well as symbiotic partnerships between the organizations themselves, we can create lasting, holistic neighborhood impact for underserved families in Muskegon.

**What impact will this project have on the community?**

BVLL- will include approximately 15 students and impact will be measured by the improvement/stability of the children in their virtual learning environment (grades, attendance etc.) YEP-will include approximately 30 individuals, with priority going to neighborhood teens who need additional support and impact measured by positive involvement and success at home and in school of the teens. CATCH- will serve approximately 40 children, with priority going to neighborhood families with elementary and middle school-aged children, with impact measured by how many neighborhood kids have a fun, encouraging and intellectually inspiring summer experience.

**Project Title:**  
**United Technology Support for  
Childcare Providers**

**Implementing Organization:**  
United Way of the Lakeshore

**Existing COVID-19 Scope of work:**  
Childcare shortages; public education disruption; support for small businesses - childcare.

**Social Determinant/Influencer of Health or other COVID-19 impact focus of this grant:**

During the pandemic, this will directly impact access to education and social support networks for childcare providers with virtual learners in their care. It will also increase their access to virtual education programs. It will help them cope and be able to provide the best quality care possible by reducing isolation and increase access to concrete support in times of need.

**Who is most affected:**  
7010 children in Muskegon County live in households earning less than 200% of FPL. More than half of these children live in households earning less than 125% of FPL; 31% all families in Muskegon County with children under 5 years old live in households with earnings at or below FPL; 61% of Muskegon County children receive free or reduced lunches and more than 1000 children under 5 in Muskegon County receive a childcare subsidy; Many childcare providers serving these families and other Asset Limited Income Constrained Employed (ALICE) families are struggling to support online learners in K-6 as well. Recently 25 providers responded to a survey and reported that they lack technology, support and/or internet access; access to internet for education and concrete support is critical for these providers to make sure the children in their care have access to education and that the providers can continue operating.

**How will the project address a community condition created by the pandemic?**

Support groups, preschool and K-12 education, play and learn groups, nutrition classes, literacy tutoring, and more have all moved to virtual platforms to reduce the spread of COVID. Childcare providers are trying to adapt for their virtual learners. While 25 providers responded to a survey and reported that they lack technology devices, support and/or internet access, we also know that there are others receiving childcare subsidy for children in their care who did not respond. We would use this grant to purchase Chromebooks or other appropriate devices, consultant time to help with set up and coaching of recipients, and hotspots as needed for 20-30 providers in Muskegon County, prioritizing the caregivers whose children in their care are receiving childcare subsidy, SNAP, or free or reduced lunch.

**What steps will be taken to mitigate the spread of coronavirus in the way your project is implemented?**

The project itself allows for brief, physically-distanced transfer of supplies giving providers a chance to make a human connection. They are provided the tools they need so they and the children in their care can have meaningful and extended virtual interactions with teachers, classmates, home visitors, social workers, parent support classes, and more. After delivering and setting up the devices and/or internet, technology support will be provided remotely.

**How is your organization embedded in the community and what partnerships already exist? Do you directly engage residents in decision-making?**

The United Way of the Lakeshore is engaged with childcare providers through monthly Childcare Connections meetings, co-led by the United Way Childcare Development Coordinator and the Great Start to Quality Resource Center; and partners with the MAISD Great Start Collaborative to engage parents and childcare providers that serve on the Childcare Action Team, Great Start Collaborative, School Readiness Advisory Committee, Thrive Ready for Kindergarten workgroup, and Head Start and GSRP Parent Advisory boards.

**How is your organization embedded in the community and what partnerships already exist? Do you directly engage residents in decision-making?**

We estimate being able to support 20-40 caregivers with technology devices, support, and/or internet access. The number served depends on the unique needs of those who apply and the cost of the support we will contract. We will survey the providers to find out how the device, support, and/or internet access has increased their ability to support remote learners in their care, to access additional provider support in the community, and to engage the children in other virtual educational opportunities such as Great Start Zoom Play and Learn Groups, music classes provided by the library, and more.

# **LIVABILITY LAB**

**MUSKEGON COUNTY, MICHIGAN**

**Muskegon CHIR  
CRF - Covid-19 Relief Fund  
October - November - December  
2020**

**Livability Lab 2.1  
Clinical-Community Linkages  
Resilience Zone  
Community Support**

Special recognition to the Muskegon CHIR Steering Council, the Backbone Organization, the Livability Lab Design Team, the Livability Lab Coaches and Community Conveners, the Livability Lab Action Team Members, the Clinical-Community Linkages network, the Resilience Zone partners, and all the individuals, organizations, businesses, and others who are, even through major crises, committed to creating a system that ensures livability for all Muskegon County residents.

Sincere appreciation goes to the State of Michigan and the United States Department of Health and Human Services for the COVID-19 Relief support during this time.