



westbay community action

Helping people. Changing lives.

2025 - 2026 Annual Report

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President's Message

This past January, Westbay Community Action proudly celebrated 60 years of service: six decades of empowering individuals and families in Kent County and beyond through critical support, resources, and opportunities.

As we celebrate this milestone, we are reminded of the generations who have turned to Westbay during challenging moments in their lives. None of what we accomplish would be possible without our incredible team of more than 100 staff members. Every day, they provide a true “Hand UP” through emergency assistance, childcare, adult education, nutrition, case management, and housing support. I could not be prouder to have them as part of the Westbay family.

In 2026, Westbay served nearly 20,000 individuals across Kent County. As community needs evolve, we remain committed to providing trusted, accessible, and responsive services. Through the Kent County Transition Program, for example, we help individuals experiencing homelessness connect with resources and provide housing support to 25 individuals at the former Phoenix Hotel in West Warwick. This is another way we meet people where they are and help them move forward.

As we look to the future, new challenges and uncertainties will undoubtedly arise. But after 60 years, one thing remains certain: Westbay will be here. We will continue to adapt, advocate, collaborate, and respond to our neighbors' needs.

To our staff, Board of Directors, funders, community partners, volunteers, donors, and supporters: Westbay thanks you! Your commitment makes our work possible. Together, we will build on 60 years of service and continue Helping People, Changing Lives for generations to come.

Paul A. Salera
President/CEO



The mission of Westbay Community Action, Inc. is to empower and mobilize people through our programs, partnerships, and advocacy to gain greater self-sufficiency.

Senior Management

Paul Salera	President/CEO psalera@westbaycap.org
Heather Braga	Chief Financial Officer hbraga@westbaycap.org
Sarah Lopatka-Faria	Chief Program Officer slopatka@westbaycap.org
Jenna Tietze	Chief Administrative Officer jtietze@westbaycap.org
Joslyn Groves	Director of Social Services jgroves@westbaycap.org
Kelly McHugh	Director of Senior and Family Services kmchugh@westbaycap.org
Jessica Alexander	Director of Childcare jalexander@westbaycap.org
Katherine Shappy	Director of Transitional Services kshappy@westbaycap.org

Helping people. Changing lives.

History of Service



The 1960s were a turbulent time of change, and in 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson decided it was time to change how America fought poverty. President Johnson launched the War on Poverty, determined to shape the country into the Great Society he envisioned.

War on Poverty legislation created programs to help American citizens and their families with everything from education to keeping food on the table.

The War on Poverty also inspired many local organizations to help their communities. One such organization, founded in 1966, was Warwick Community Action, which would become Westbay Community Action.

After 60 years of service, Westbay's commitment to helping the local community has only strengthened. Westbay remains eager to adapt to the community's changing needs.

Milestones

1960s

Founded as Warwick Community Action to fight poverty and support local families.

1970s

Opened Westbay Children's Center, giving working parents safe, quality childcare.

1980s

The Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Act of 1981 secured federal funding that strengthened Community Action nationwide and sustained Westbay's programs locally.

1990s

Became Westbay Community Action, expanding services to meet the needs of all Kent County residents.

2000s

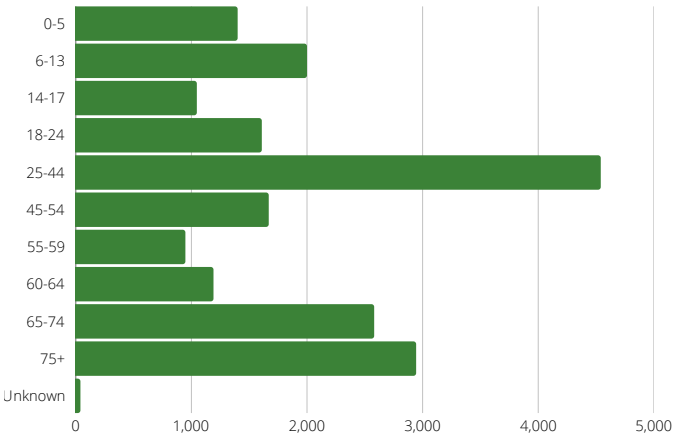
Opened the Marketplace food pantry and Westbay Farm to fight hunger, and helped families recover from the Great Flood of 2010.

2020s

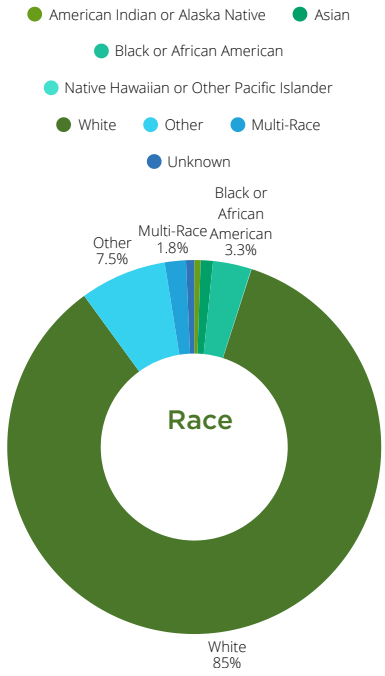
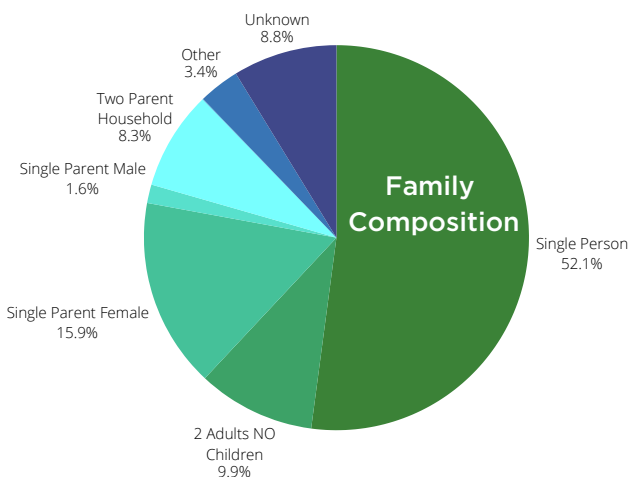
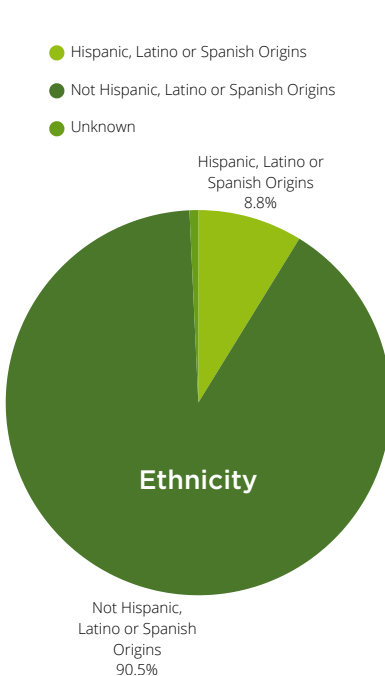
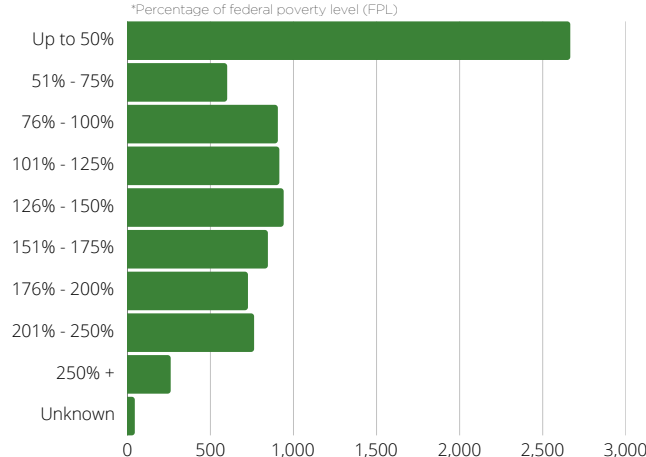
Expanded with innovative models, including LIHEAP expansion, transitional services, and Conflict-Free Case Management (CFCM), to reach those most in need.

The People We Help

Age



Level of Household Income



Total Households Served: 8,670 - Total Persons Served: 19,970

Financials

Support & Revenue

Grants and Contracts - Federal	\$9,485,068
Grants and Contracts - Non-Federal	\$5,216,152
Program and other income	\$3,101,092
In-Kind food donations	\$1,670,417
Total:	\$19,472,730

Expenses

Salaries and Benefits	\$7,172,911
Professional Fees and Consulting	\$644,345
Program Supplies/Direct Assistance	\$7,437,945
Occupancy Costs	\$1,307,175
Other Operating Costs	\$1,072,897
Conferences and Trainings	\$75,288
In-Kind Food Expenses	\$1,670,615
Total:	\$19,381,176

2024-2025 Funding Sources

Federal - CSBG	\$347,397
Federal - Non-CSBG	\$9,137,671
State	\$2,138,751
Local	\$12,263
Private	\$3,065,138
Program and Other Income	\$3,101,092
In-Kind Food Donations	\$1,670,417
Total:	\$19,472,729



For every \$1 of federal CSBG funds, Westbay leveraged an additional \$55.05 to help improve people's lives.

Social Services



Westbay strengthens the community by meeting essential needs and providing supports that promote stability, safety, and dignity. From nourishing families and keeping homes warm to fostering connection and opportunity, these services offer a foundation on which individuals of all ages can thrive.

Joslyn Groves

Director of Social Services

- 2,314 people engaged in supportive services to build self-sufficiency and receive basic needs assistance
- 5,103 people received emergency or supplemental food
- 1,282 older adults participated in home delivered or congregate meal programs
- 403 households had their taxes completed, receiving over \$950,000 in returns.
- 289 households had their homes weatherized
- 4,101 households avoided crisis with energy assistance
- 284 households participated in our Adopt-a-Family program
- 761 households participated in our holiday programs
- Over 20,000 pounds of produce were harvested at Westbay Farm

A Moment of Impact:

A missed school bus meant a missed breakfast for one child. When the parent asked if the Westbay Marketplace had cereal, the answer was yes - thanks to donations from a recent cereal drive. Later that morning, the parent sent a photo and a thank-you message. One donated box had become breakfast for a hungry child, and one less worry for a parent.

Social Services

In Their Own Words:

During a difficult time, one local family turned to Westbay for help with food. The support came when it was needed most, easing an immediate burden and providing reassurance that there would be enough to eat.

“What you gave was not just food—it was relief, comfort, and hope. It lifted a weight off my shoulders and brought peace to my heart knowing my family would be taken care of.”

The assistance was especially meaningful during the Christmas season. “My family and I will carry this kindness with us, and it is something we will never forget.”

A Story of Impact:

For years, one local homeowner had lived with drafts, extreme summer heat, an aging heating system and electrical concerns that made maintaining a safe, comfortable home increasingly difficult.

Through Westbay’s Weatherization Assistance Program, the home received insulation, weatherstripping, ventilation, heating and electrical improvements. The difference was noticeable almost immediately—the home held its temperature better, drafts were reduced, and the summer heat became much more manageable.

In a handwritten letter to Westbay, the homeowner expressed appreciation not only for the improvements, but for the care taken throughout the process. Having knowledgeable professionals explain the work, answer questions and treat the home with respect made a lasting impression.

For this homeowner, weatherization meant more than energy savings. It meant greater comfort, safety and peace of mind in the place they call home.

Excerpt from a client letter:

“I was facing electric termination due to exorbitant prices, and RI Energy was not offering a reasonable payment plan. I work from home, so if I lost my electricity, it would have really been ‘the end of the road’ for me with finances and basic needs. But Westbay worked quickly and efficiently to get me approved for LIHEAP so I could arrange a reasonable payment plan. The weight of this burden is off my shoulders. I am incredibly grateful.”

Transitional Services



Transitional Services supports individuals as they navigate some of life's most difficult transitions. By connecting participants to housing, recovery supports, employment resources, adult education, and other essential services, the program helps people overcome barriers, strengthen resilience, and create pathways to greater stability and independence.

Katie Shappy

Director of Transitional Services

- 31 individuals served through the Kent County Transitional Program (24 current clients)
- 107 referrals received from community partners
- 3 successful discharges to permanent housing
- 63 Housing applications submitted
- 98 Street Medicine encounters
- 220 adults served in Adult Education
- 22 adults entered employment
- 12 adults earned their GED through Adult Education

In Their Own Words:

“Since completing my GED in November, I completed the pre-electrician training program at Residential Construction Workforce Partnership in December, and I have just completed my welding training with General Dynamics Electric Boat. I am now employed full-time. Pursuing my GED has helped me qualify for my position, but also make sure I complete the training that I started.”

Transitional Services

A Reason to Keep Moving Forward

When one client first connected with Westbay in January 2026, they were experiencing homelessness during a cold winter and facing an uncertain future.

“I was alone, scared, and completely hopeless. I had no help, no one to turn to, and had no idea what I was going to do.”

After spending several days outside in the cold and snow, the client entered a temporary shelter at West Warwick High School and met staff from Westbay.

“She offered me more than just a warm bed, somewhere I can temporarily call home. She offered me hope.”

That encounter became a turning point. Through Westbay’s Transitional Program, the client has received help navigating housing, exploring school options, completing applications, and accessing food, clothing, and other resources.

“They from day one made the scared me feel like I don’t have to be afraid anymore and that they had my back.”

More importantly, having consistent, nonjudgmental support has helped restore the confidence to imagine a different future.

“I actually feel like for the first time in a long time that I can make a better life. I can get myself permanent housing... And I can live a normal life free of addiction and homelessness and I don’t have to wave my white flag and give up.”

“This transitional program saved my life... the workers at this program saved me from giving up... and today I have the confidence and the knowledge to keep moving forward and never looking back.”

Family & Senior Services



Case management and family support programs connect people with the resources and guidance they need to navigate life's challenges. From assisting older adults and individuals with disabilities to strengthening families and supporting new mothers and young children through WIC, these services provide care, stability, and opportunity for healthier, more secure futures.

Kelly McHugh

Director of Senior & Family Services



3,136 people received case management services



582 people were served through the Adult Protective Services program



858 individuals received Conflict Free Case Management



186 people received case management through the At-Home Cost Share Program



Over 1,300 women and children received nutritional counseling

A Path Toward Self Sufficiency:

A client recently came to Westbay with a goal: to start a mobile mechanic business and build a more secure future through self-employment.

To help move that goal forward, Westbay connected the client with specialized business development resources. Through that connection, the client has refined the business concept, developed tools for managing finances, and pursued grant opportunities for needed equipment.

Next steps include reaching potential customers and continuing to build the business into a sustainable source of income.

By helping clients identify their goals, navigate resources, and make meaningful connections, Westbay provides support that extends beyond a single program or service. For this client, that means turning an entrepreneurial goal into a realistic path toward greater self-sufficiency.

Westbay Children's Center

Westbay's Children's Center offers high-quality early education for children from six weeks old through age five, providing a safe and nurturing environment where every child can learn and grow.

Guided by the RI Early Learning and Development Standards, classrooms blend teacher- and child-directed activities that support progress across all areas of development.

The Center participates in the state's BrightStars Quality Improvement and Rating System and partners with programs such as EOHHS Kids Connect, Warwick Public Schools, and CACFP to ensure each child receives individualized, developmentally and culturally appropriate care.

Together, these efforts prepare young learners for kindergarten and beyond while supporting healthy families and strong futures.



Jessica Alexander
Director of Childcare
Westbay Children's Center

A Moment of Impact:

Sometimes the most meaningful feedback comes when you least expect it. During an unrelated conversation, a local parent heard the name "Westbay" and immediately began sharing what the Children's Center had meant to her family.

Her child, now in first grade, previously attended the Center. The parent shared how well Westbay prepared her child for that next step and how much confidence it gave her to go to work each day knowing her child was in good hands.

Even after her family's time at the Children's Center had ended, hearing the name Westbay was enough to bring that appreciation right back.





A Home They Can Count On

Bringing comfort, safety and peace of mind back home.

For one local resident, home had become increasingly difficult—and at times unsafe. Essential household systems and appliances had stopped working, including the heating system, refrigerator, and stove. Most significantly, the home had been without reliable hot water for eight months.

Through Westbay's assistance programs, those circumstances began to change.

Westbay helped coordinate critical repairs and replacements throughout the home, restoring reliable heat and hot water, improving electrical safety, and replacing essential appliances. The improvements addressed immediate safety concerns, but their impact went much further.

Having reliable heat, safe electrical service, working appliances, and consistent access to hot water restored something that can easily be taken for granted: the ability to feel comfortable and secure at home.

In a letter to Westbay, the resident expressed deep appreciation for the compassion, professionalism, and support received throughout the process—and for the lasting difference it made.

"Thank you from the bottom of my heart, and I can finally sleep at night."



A Blessing to Our Family

More than childcare - support for the whole family.

As a grandmother and caregiver, I have faced more than I ever could have imagined. When I became the primary caregiver for my grandchildren, I had a lot on my plate, and many days I wondered how I would manage it all.

That is where Westbay stepped in and became so much more than a daycare for our family.

They have supported my grandchildren with love, patience, understanding, and compassion. They take the time to understand each child's individual needs and work alongside me to make sure they are safe, happy, learning, and growing. Knowing that my grandchildren are in an environment where they are genuinely cared for gives me a sense of comfort that is difficult to put into words.

What makes Westbay so special is that they understand that caring for children also means supporting the families who love them. As a grandparent caring for multiple young children, I have needed encouragement, understanding, flexibility, and someone willing to work with me when life became overwhelming. Westbay has provided that support in countless ways.

They have never made me feel like I was simply dropping my grandchildren off at daycare. They have made me feel like we are part of a family and that we are not alone in this journey.

Westbay has given my grandchildren a safe, nurturing place to learn and grow, while also giving me the peace of mind and support I have needed to keep going. Most importantly, they have shown our family that we have people in our corner who truly care.

"I will always be grateful for the role Westbay has played in our family's lives. They have truly been a blessing to us."

- A Westbay Children's Center grandparent



Whether you need a hand... or have one to lend,
we're here.

How to Find Us

Program Services

487 Jefferson Blvd.
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Westbay Children's Center

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Administration Office

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Westbay Farm

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West Warwick LIHEAP Office

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