

abcd  
INSIGHT

Monthly News & Updates

**ABCD's Commitment to Racial Equity**

In response to the urgency of the current climate of racial unrest due to the continued violence towards Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC), and to stand as an ally and resource to our communities, ABCD's Board of Directors and staff commit to reflecting on, confronting, and eradicating internal and external racism through leadership in education, training, advocacy, community investment, and collaboration with others involved in this work.

For nearly 60 years, ABCD has worked to attack the causes of poverty and to create paths to opportunity for all. Our origins are inextricably linked to the courage of those who fought for Civil Rights. We recognize that racial injustice has helped create and perpetuate poverty over generations. Therefore, our poverty-fighting mission requires us to center the power and voice of oppressed communities.

Today, we rededicate ourselves to challenging the embedded racism and all of the inequities that fuel destructive imbalances in every sphere of life -- within our organization and in the world beyond. We pledge to hold ourselves accountable as we work together to build real and lasting change.

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**Fuel Assistance Applications for Thousands of Eligible Households Will Open in November**

ABCD will begin taking new applications for its annual fuel assistance program beginning November 2nd.

ABCD administers the federal government's Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) which helps over 24,000 low-income, elderly and disabled residents in Boston, Brookline, Everett, Malden, Medford, Melrose, Newton, Stoneham, Winchester and Woburn with winter oil, propane and kerosene bills.



The program makes payments directly to the household's fuel vendor up to the maximum benefit level as determined by the number of residents and the total gross income within the household. Those income-eligible levels include \$39,105 for an individual, \$75,201 for a household of four and \$99,265 for a family of six.

"The need for ABCD fuel assistance has never been higher," said John J. Drew, ABCD President/CEO. "With the pandemic impacting so many people and unemployment rates at record highs, more people than ever need help with heating their homes and paying

their bills,” said Drew.

Residents who qualify for fuel assistance gain access to other energy related services including weatherization, heating system repairs, past-due bill reductions and resources to promote energy conservation and efficiency.

“Even when it’s the coldest winter and you think that you’re not going to have enough support , ABCD always comes through,” said Paulette Gray, a retired, life-long Dorchester resident and grandmother of 15. “They have really been a big help in keeping me afloat as far as heat.”

This year, fuel assistance applications will be taken through on-site appointments, telephone and mail.

## MORE INFORMATION

### Northeastern University’s Black Health Matters Contact-a-thon Raises Funds and Awareness for ABCD Health Services



Racial injustices extend beyond the ones we have seen on video in this country this year. They happen in different aspects of life and in many industries. With this in mind, in late June, a collaboration of more than 10 student groups at Northeastern University held the Black Health Matters contact-a-thon to raise funds for ABCD Health Services, Black Women’s Health Imperative, Center for Prisoner Health and Human Rights, and the Audre Lorde Project. Using their own personal networks, students invited their contacts to join the 6-hour Zoom event where students and invited guests discussed the importance of improving the

health statuses of Black and LGBTQ+ communities. While learning about the powerful work of the recipient organizations, event attendees made donations to support that work.

One of the event organizers, Ramya Kumar, spoke to her reasons for creating the contact-a-thon, “I decided to organize this collaborative initiative to bring my fellow students together to productively participate in the movements against racism. Racism is ingrained in every single institution in the U.S., especially healthcare institutions and medicine. I created the Black Health Matters fundraiser to spread awareness about the innumerable lives that are lost because of racism in healthcare, to assist organizations that are working to dismantle and fight the effects of racism in healthcare in order to reduce health disparities disproportionately affecting Black Americans.”

ABCD Health Services Deputy Director Irvienne Goldson engaged with students and supporters on Zoom, answering their questions about the work of the Health Services department and seeking health equity in our communities. Many of the students were excited by the conversation and will be volunteering with ABCD.

The contact-a-thon was a huge success raising more than \$35,000 in support of the four featured organizations.

## ABCD In the News

[ABCD Helping Residents Through Pandemic, Demanding New Relief Bill](#)

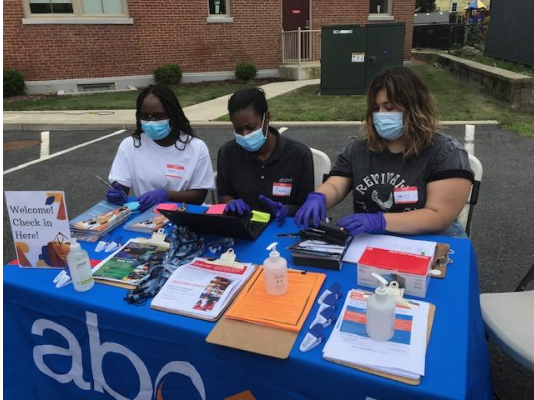
[People struggling to afford food, local organizations overhaul operations to meet need](#)

[ABCD Head: More Help Needed from Washington](#)

[ABCD: Hungry children can’t wait months for relief bill](#)

## Spotlight

### ABCD in Partnership with Hillsong Church Boston, Helped Prepare Families for Back to School with Backpacks Giveaway Event



ABCD partnered with the Hillsong Church of Boston for a walk-through back to school event outside the Roxbury/North Dorchester Neighborhood Opportunity Center on August 27th. More than 300 local families received food boxes and backpacks filled with school supplies.

Socially distanced residents weaved through a sea of colorful balloons and tables filled with back-to-school items including headphones and masks now made necessary due to COVID-19 as schools struggle to transition from online to in-person instruction.

"I'm excited about this new partnership with ABCD Boston," said Josh Kimes, Campus Pastor at Hillsong Church of Boston.

Volunteers wearing masks and blue gloves shuttled between packing materials inside the center to distributing them outside in the center's parking lot. The Saturday morning event brought a steady stream of families who lined up for its 8 a.m., Saturday morning start.

The joint effort also distributed 4,000 pounds of food to the 300 families who attended the event. ABCD has managed an unprecedented increase in food insecurity since COVID-19 devastated the economy. Beginning in mid-March, 10,000 families have come to its food pantries compared with 4,000 seeking help over the course of most full years.



"No matter the circumstances ABCD is here, as always, serving our neighbors in need," said John J. Drew, President/CEO of ABCD. "The coronavirus has drawn many local organizations together in a wonderful and caring way to serve the needs of those less fortunate amongst us. I thank all the volunteers who are making this happen" said Drew.

## ABCD Videos





**ABCD Mystic Valley Opportunity Center is Providing Essential Supplies**



**ABCD & Whittier Street Health Team Up to Provide COVID-19 Testing**



**ABCD Roxbury/North Dorchester NOC is Providing Food to Those In Need**



**ABCD East Boston APAC Assembles Gift Bags for Seniors During COVID-19**

## More Information

### Complete the 2020 Census Today

You have until **Monday, October 5th** to complete the 2020 Census. The 2020 Census is a way to directly increase community power. It will impact our daily lives for the next 10 years. Many of our communities are at risk of an undercount. We need a complete and accurate count because all of our communities deserve to be seen, heard, and invested in.

**2020 CENSUS**

The census determines how billions in federal dollars are distributed to communities throughout the nation.

It take only 10 minutes to complete!

**2 WAYS TO COMPLETE:**

VISIT: [MY2020CENSUS.GOV](https://my2020census.gov)  
OR  
CALL TOLL-FREE AT: 1-844-330-2020

Visit [my2020census.gov](https://my2020census.gov) to complete the 2020 Census today.

## Don't Forget to Register to Vote



Election Day is Tuesday, November 3rd. The **deadline to register to vote** for the upcoming election is **Saturday, October 24th**

Cast your vote – safely. Voting is a right – for many of us, a hard-won right. When you make your voice heard, you help democracy thrive.

Visit the [Massachusetts Secretary of State's Elections Division](#) webpage to find your polling place and information about registering, early voting, voting by mail, and more.

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### Give Today.

The ABCD COVID-19 Relief Fund supports individuals and families with urgent needs for food, baby formula, diapers and wipes, cleaning supplies, rental assistance, transportation and more. We hope you will consider making a donation today so that ABCD can continue and expand this essential work.

[DONATE](#)

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