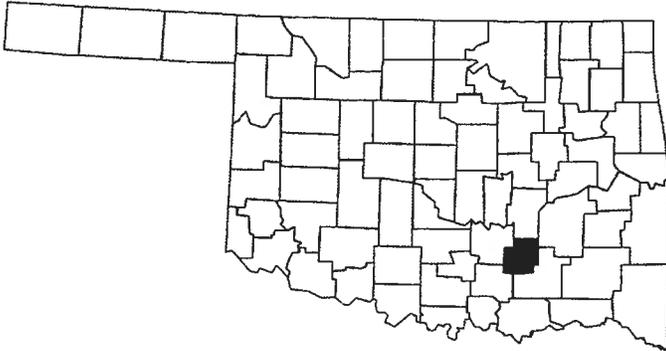


COAL COUNTY COALITION

Established in 2001



Coal County is a small rural community located in Southeast Oklahoma with high unemployment, high poverty, and a large senior population on fixed income. Although a variety of services were available for these groups and the community at large, no coordination of these services were in place. Through the Partnership for Change, an organizational meeting was held to identify what services were being offered in the community. The group identified not only current services offered but also needs in the community that are not being met. It was agreed that organizing this group into a coalition could assure better services for those in need and provide a working partnership to serve the community. Since its inception, the coalition (Named COALition after Coal County) has had a great impact on the services being provided by making efficient use of available resources. The value of Coalition being in place was never more clear than when the primary employer in Coal County (Wrangler Jeans) closed its doors after 30 years and the community was in turmoil. Because the Coalition was already established and a work in progress, it was able to coordinate services to those 300 displaced workers and insure their immediate needs.

Activities

- Partnership for Change project collaborative implemented.
- Public transportation system provided for nutritional purposes in the community.
- Hosted County-wide Resource Rally.
- Conducted Community Needs Assessment.
- Applied for Safe and Drug Free Schools Grant.
- Identified need for indigent drug program.

Outcomes

- Identified key personnel on the local, state and federal level.
- Conducted an open forum for introductions and identification of barriers.

- Established current services available.
- Developed the community COALition partnership to serve as a sub-committee to the Partnership for Change.
- Identified nutrition services that are not being met.
- Developed a general plan so the coalition could best function on the local level.
- Core groups formed to meet specific needs of the community.
- Core groups comprised of local partners.
- Advocacy from coalition contributed to restoring funding for the senior nutrition sites in Coal County.
- Meals on Wheels have been sustained by the faith-based organizations.

Future Plans

- Expand the partnership.
- Expand core groups to meet all community needs.
- Establish networking between service providers to meet identified needs.
- Identify and obtain funds to be used for this project.
- Establish funds to sustain Senior Nutrition Site.
- Develop a Diabetes Support Group.
- Develop resources to assist medical professionals to provide prescription drugs for the low and fixed income (under-insured and uninsured).

Participants

- USDA
- New Hope Medical Center
- Oklahoma State Department of Agriculture
- Regional Food Bank
- Oklahoma State Department of Health Turning Point and WIC staff
- Big Five Community Action Agency
- Oklahoma State University Cooperative Extension Service
- Choctaw Nation
- Coal County Commissioners
- Oklahoma State Department of Human Services
- Dayspring Church
- Oklahoma State Department of Education
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- INCA Community Action Agency
- Coal County Health Department
- Coal County Department of Human Services
- Head Start
- Senior Nutrition Center
- Coal County Public School Systems
- Coal County Fire Department