

## The value of community

There's a lot happening at Self Help! From continuing infrastructure work to a successful transition of 211 services in Santa Fe County, to the triumphant return of the annual Salvation Army bell-ringing fundraiser, Self Help staff and volunteers kept busy all year.

We are continually and deeply moved by the immense outpouring of generosity from our community, which has allowed us to double our support in many cases. This was especially vital because many of the people Self Help serves fall through the cracks of state and federal aid and struggle to access help. Even as more of our clients return to work, frequent illness is still causing more missed work than before. Our programs continue to prove vital, and we couldn't do it without you! Thank you!



A client's son poses with his new infant oxygen monitor, which allowed the client to work from home while looking after him.

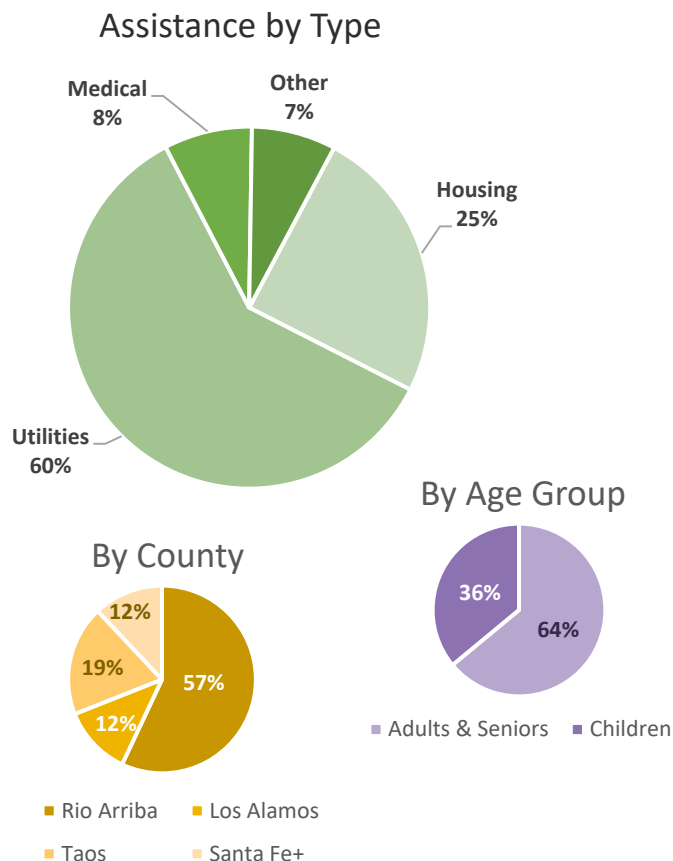
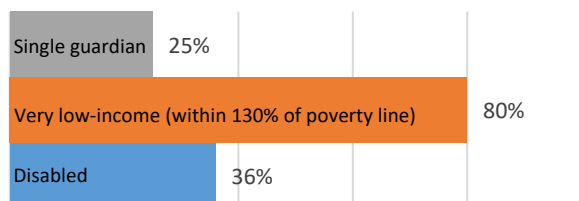
**\$119,214** distributed for basic needs  
**434** families receiving basic needs aid  
**954** household members served

**1102** resource consultations  
**2,500+** referrals given  
**6,741** web visitors

**\$5,551** given in seed grant awards  
**5** households given a hand via seed awards

### Most common demographics

By percent of callers in category



## Gaps we fill

Self Help is designed to supplement traditional public aid programs. People we serve often fall through the cracks of such programs due to issues like:

- **Citizenship status.** Despite paying taxes, non-citizens are usually not eligible for public assistance.
- **Limited documentation.** Many of our clients live in multigenerational households, take care of children they don't have formal custody for, or are paid under the table—it's hard for them to provide the formal verification documents many agencies require.
- **Limited executive resources.** Poverty is stressful and exhausting, and many clients are too busy surviving each day to spend many hours accessing services (hours on hold, attending interviews during the workday, filling out long forms, or meeting technological requirements such as internet access, printers, or scanners).
- **Timing.** Due to shame or being overwhelmed, many people don't ask for help until it's too late for most aid—when they're on the verge of eviction or utility disconnection and need help immediately.



## Self Help Scrapbook: smiling under our masks!



Morrie Pongratz spread some cheer this Black Friday, because bell-ringing is back! Self Help uses the proceeds of this annual fundraiser to pay for basic needs assistance for Los Alamos County residents.



Workers replace a broken well pump for a Self Help client, a single dad from Taos; we got a special grant to pay for the repair. He joined in the work to reduce labor costs and took this photo of his crewmates.



Self Help has an intern for the 2021-2022 school year! Sean Collins is completing his bachelor's degree in social work at ENMU and helping us with clients, outreach, and much more. Welcome, Sean!



**Volunteer Appreciation:** Our dedicated remote volunteers have completed over 1,100 intakes during the pandemic, freeing up staff time for in-depth client projects. They finally got to meet in person over a delicious dinner at our volunteer appreciation event this summer.

## 2021 Testimonials

*"It's people like you people that give me a chance to pick myself up. Thank you all from the bottom of my heart.*

-From a grandmother temporarily taking care of her daughter and granddaughter. We prevented their electricity from being disconnected while the family got back on their feet.

*"Thank you for being so thorough and seeing this through to completion rather than just doing the bare minimum. You clearly are doing it from a position of concern and care and I can feel that."*

-From a single dad who lost work during the pandemic. We paid his rent and provided referrals to make sure he and his kids could stay in their home.

*"I love my job and it's people like you that make it so worth it."*

-From a caseworker at a partner organization; we got her client's water reconnected within hours of her call.

*"Thank You to Self Help and the Salvation Army for helping us during a rough patch. It can be very challenging to make ends meet all the time as a single mother. My daughter and I are very very grateful to be able to have that help to rely upon during a hard season in life. A tremendous [godsend] when we needed it the most!"*

-From a single mom who was unexpectedly laid off. We paid for groceries, utilities, and school supplies until her paycheck at her new job came in.

