



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**EMERGENCY FAMILY ASSISTANCE ASSOCIATION (EFAA) CELEBRATES ITS
100TH ANNIVERSARY SERVING BOULDER COUNTY FAMILIES IN NEED**

Founded in the spirit of neighbors helping neighbors, Boulder County residents have created, supported and relied upon this critical local safety net organization since 1918

April 24, 2018, BOULDER, CO – Emergency Family Assistance Association (EFAA), Boulder County’s oldest and most respected community safety net, is celebrating its 100th anniversary serving local families struggling to make ends meet. Originally founded in 1918 as the Social Service Child Welfare Association of Boulder by a group of concerned neighbors and faith organizations, EFAA has been responding to the changing needs of the community for ten decades.

“Not only are we thrilled to celebrate a century of service, we are also working hard to look ahead to the next 100 years and what our community will need in the future,” says Julie Van Domelen, EFAA’s executive director. “Some things are the same as they were 100 years ago, like a family’s basic needs for food and housing. Other things are unique to our present time, like skyrocketing housing prices paired with stagnant low-wage income – a combination that can leave working families homeless.”

EFAA was founded at a time when an influenza pandemic was raging, WWI had decimated a generation and, in Boulder, a boom-bust mining cycle left many destitute. Yet, there was nowhere for local families to turn for help when the cupboards and coal bins were bare. So neighbors, the local faith community and the Colorado Association of Women’s Clubs came together to create an organization to help

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widowed mothers and children, and people “unable to help themselves” with things like food, coal and basic household goods. More on EFAA’s history can be found [here](#).

“We are nobody if we do just for ourselves, but rather what we do for others,” said Helen Fisher, the woman who ran the organization for its first 15 years. Throughout EFAA’s history, tens of thousands of donors and volunteers have fueled the organization to empower local families to thrive and build a brighter future for their children.

Today, EFAA is Boulder’s official Family Resource Center, focusing on building family resilience over the long term. EFAA continue to provide its core safety net services like food and rent or utility bill assistance, housing for homeless families, and resource referrals that are intended to address immediate needs for stability. EFAA is increasingly investing in programs to help families to thrive over the longer-term and end the cycle of poverty. This includes programs like [JUMP](#) (Job Uptake for Motivated Parents), a job training program done in partnership with Workforce Boulder County aimed at improving earning potential for low-income parents, and Bringing School Home, a partnership with Boulder Housing Partners that provides permanently affordable housing paired with educational support for families with young children. EFAA has expanded its investment in children directly and in the ability of parents to support their children and better work toward family resilience.

Since the late 1970’s, EFAA has responded to the growing crisis of family homelessness by increasing its housing stock of temporary housing to stabilize homeless families with children, and expanding its rental assistance to prevent homelessness in the first place. Including the recently built [16th Street Transitional Housing](#) in North Boulder, EFAA now owns or manages 57 single-family apartments across Boulder County.

“Losing housing is the most devastating event that can happen to a family,” says Van Domelen. “The typical family we serve makes about \$15,000 per year and spends 72 percent of that on housing. It only takes a small impact, like reduced work hours or interruption of child support payments, to upset the balance and put that family out on the street.”

ABOUT EMERGENCY FAMILY ASSISTANCE ASSOCIATION

For 100 years EFAA has been dedicated to empowering families to thrive. Since 1918, EFAA has been Boulder County’s community safety net for families, seniors and people with disabilities to meet their basic needs. As Boulder’s official Family Resource Center, EFAA operates 57 emergency and transitional shelter units, provides food, rent assistance, utilities assistance, and supports clients’ efforts toward financial stability and self-sufficiency through long-term and short-term casework, education and advocacy. For more information please visit www.efaa.org or connect with EFAA Boulder on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Visit efaa.org for more information.

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