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Caroline County Department of Social Services

In Service to Others

2015 Annual Report



Child Welfare Services
Adult Services
Administration

John R. Hargreaves
District Court &
Multi-Services Center
207 South 3rd Street
Denton, MD 21629

Child Support Enforcement
Caroline County Career Center
Energy Assistance
Family Investment Administration

The Carter Building
300 Market Street
Denton, MD 21629



Accredited

Council on Accreditation
For Children and Family Services

Director's Message



It is with great pleasure that I present to you the Caroline County Department of Social Services fiscal year 2015 Annual Report. The outcomes documented in this report reflect the commitment and dedication of our staff in providing quality services to the citizens of Caroline County. All of our efforts would not be possible without the support of our community partners, who we collaborate with on a daily basis to meet the needs of our most vulnerable citizens. Some of the accomplishments in 2015:

Golden Fork Awards - The Family Investment Administration (FIA) at Caroline County Department of Social Services (CCDSS) received its 11th DHR Golden Fork award for performance in the Food Supplement Program. The award is based upon application timeliness for regular and expedited food supplement applications, percentage of cases pre-reviewed, and the number of Food Supplement Program Policy Challenges completed by staff.

Place Matters Awards: The Child Welfare programs met 8 out of 9 of program goals. The measures achieved were as follows: Reduction in number of children in Out-Of-Home Care, reduction in the percentage of Children in Group Homes, increase in number of children in Family Homes, percentage of caseworker visitation of children in out-of-home care visited every month, percentage of child protective services cases open less than 60 days-investigative response, percentage of child protective services cases open less than 60 days-alternative response, number of children exiting foster care to adoption, and placement stability.

5th Annual Family Fun Fest - More than 875 people attended the 5th Annual Family Fun Fest on August 7, in downtown Denton. The event was hosted by the Caroline County Office of Child Support Enforcement and the Caroline County Department of Social Services Community Outreach Team to celebrate August as Child Support Awareness Month. In addition to community resources, refreshments, games, crafts, entertainment and other family-related activities, book bags filled with grade-appropriate school supplies were distributed to approximately 703 children.

His Hope Haven - Each year the Division designates a day for state employees to serve their communities in various ways. In 2015, CCDSS chose to serve the county on a local level and help "His Hope Haven – Mid Shore Family Shelter" (formerly Winter Haven) in Denton, which is one of the Agency's community partners. The Community Outreach Team (COT) coordinated with staff to collect of items to stock and prepare the shelter to open for the new season. The total number of items collected was 941 and included laundry soap, dryer sheets, kitchen and bathroom cleaners, shampoo, soap, deodorant, paper towels and toilet paper.

Meet Your Buds Day - The Department expects employees to encourage and inspire one another and to treat fellow employees with respect, courtesy, dignity, and equality. Through staff involvement, training opportunities and agency social events, awareness and an understanding of all programs is presented annually. The Training Committee has successfully launched its 5th Annual "Meet Your Buds Day" event, which provides half-day training sessions by experts and consultants that include "Morale and Self-Care", "Personal and Office Safety", and "Communications". The second half of the day-long event includes an "All-Staff Appreciation" picnic sponsored by the Create, Motivate and Improve Committee. The Training Committee also recently concluded its 3rd Lunch and Learn with Cultural Diversity as the topic.

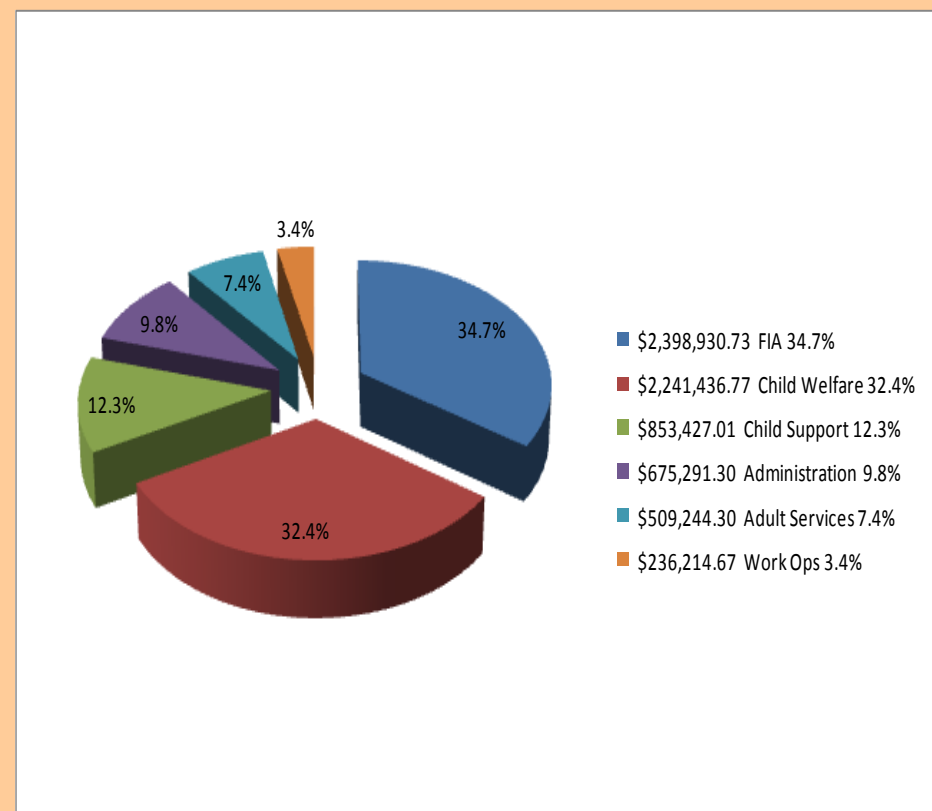
Please join me in thanking my staff and Board for their hard work and dedication.

Sincerely,

Osvaldina Gomes Daly, LCSW

Director

Total Expenditures



Source: R*Stars Report – DAF RG200 Agency Budget Report by Program, Organization, and Fund.



Child Support

The Caroline County Office of Child Support Enforcement provides paternity and child support establishment, as well as enforcement and modification of child support services to Caroline County families. During Federal Fiscal Year 2015, Child Support:

- Ended the service period with 1,409 child support cases
- Disbursed \$3,459,296 in child support payments (current support plus arrears)

Child Support is measured on performance in the areas of paternity establishment, support order establishment, current collections and payments made on arrears. In FFY 2015, Child Support:

- Established paternity for 103.64% of the children in our caseload who were born out-of-wedlock (annual goal 104.64%)
- Established support orders in 92.41% of our cases (annual goal 89.17%)
- Collected 66.92% of current child support owed (annual goal 67.35%)

Non-Custodial Parent Employment Program

- Collected payments from 70.18% of non-custodial parents owing arrears (annual goal 67.65%)

The State of Maryland initiated the Non-Custodial Parent Employment Program (NPEP) in April 2007. This program provides job readiness and job placement assistance to non-custodial parents who are able to work, but who are not paying child support. Program goals include regular and reliable child support payments, fewer children receiving public assistance, and an increased employment rate in the non-custodial parent population. The Office of Child Support Enforcement refers non-custodial parents to the job readiness and job placement programs operated by Family Investment. The court may also order non-custodial parents to participate. From the inception of the NPEP program through June 2015, the Caroline County program has:

- Referred 489 non-custodial parents with a total of 1,175 child support cases to NPEP
- Enrolled 231 parents in the program
- Assisted 175 parents to successfully complete the program
- Collected a total of \$2,834,692.53 in child support payments from 412 of the parents referred to NPEP

Parents as Partners

The Parents as Partners program provides case management and coordination of service delivery including employment development, parenting skills development, counseling, and assistance with child support-related issues to enable custodial and non-custodial parents to better meet the financial and emotional needs of their children. In SFY 2015, this program:

- Served 102 parents (408% of our annual goal)
- Assisted 25 parents in obtaining jobs
- Helped 1 parent retain employment for 90 days or longer
- Provided service linkages for parenting skills, job readiness and career counseling, life skills counseling, mental health treatment, and peer support groups

Parents as Partners participants paid a total of \$84,653.45 in child support during SFY 2015.

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- In-Home Services/Investigations & CPS Stats
- Services to Families with Children—Intake (SFC-I)
- Consolidated Services
- Interagency Family Preservation (INFPS)

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- Foster Care
- Adoption
- Respite Care
- Resource Homes

Adult Services 7 & 8

- Adult Protective Services (APS)
- Social Services to Adults (SSTA)
- In-Home Aide Services (IHAS)
- Project Home (PH)
- Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP)
- Emergency Transitional Housing Services (ETHS)
- Emergency Assistance (EA)

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Parents as Partners 10

Expenditures 11



Child Welfare Services

In-Home Services/Investigations

Child Protective Services (CPS)

- Total Child Welfare Reports Received: 452
- Total CPS Assignments: 161

CPS Response-Type Breakdown:

IR Assignments—110

Physical Abuse IR	33
Neglect IR	46
Sexual Abuse	30
Mental Injury	1

AR Assignments—51

Physical Abuse AR	15
Neglect AR	36

Findings

• Total Findings: 114

Indicated: 34

Physical Abuse	7
Neglect	19
Sexual Abuse	8

Unsubstantiated: 24

Physical Abuse	4
Neglect	15
Sexual Abuse	5

Ruled Out: 56

In-Home Services/Consolidated Programs

Services to Families with Children – Intake (SFC-I) - There are four caseworkers in this unit that provide SFC-I and Consolidated Services to families. In 2015:

- 63 were referred for assessment services SFC-I (21 additional families were carried over from FY '14) Total: 84 Families received Assessment Services
- 29 Families accepted Assessment Services
- 15 Families were referred and accepted on-going Consolidated Services.
- 13 Families received services SFC-I (This is 13 out of the 29 who accepted SFC-I)
- 32 Children received SFC-I services
- 100% of those children were able to remain with family

Family Investment

The Family Investment Division provides income, income supplements, service subsidies, medical coverage, and work opportunities to low income families in Caroline County. During State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2015, Family Investment:

- Provided Food Supplement assistance to a monthly average of 6,813 individuals in 3,241 households.
- Provided Temporary Cash Assistance to a monthly average of 311 children and 53 adults in 173 households.
- Provided Medical Assistance to a monthly average of 2,816 community care households, 125 Long Term Care individuals, and 776 individuals receiving Supplemental Security Income.
- Provided Temporary Disability Assistance to a monthly average of 91 individuals.
- Assisted 41 families through Emergency Assistance to Families with Children with expenses for items such as rent and utilities.
- Screened 214 Family Investment and Child Welfare customers for substance abuse, referred 19 individuals for assessment and 5 for treatment.
- Provided pre-employment training to 164 TCA, Food Supplement and Child Support customers.

Family Investment is measured on performance in the areas of administrative processes (application timeliness), accuracy, and independence (job placements and work participation). In SFY 2015, Family Investment:

- Achieved a 98.85% application timeliness rate in regular Food Supplement cases and a 99.57 % application timeliness rate for expedited Food Supplement cases completed for SFY 2015.
- Assisted 91 individuals receiving Temporary Cash Assistance or owing child support obtain jobs (117% of our annual goal) for FFY 2015.
- To date, achieved a 72% Work Participation Rate—FFY 2015 (144% of our annual goal – the number of work eligible Temporary Cash Assistance customers participating in a countable work activity for the required number of hours each month).

The Office of Home Energy Programs (OHEP) helps families pay utility bills, minimize heating crises and make energy costs more affordable. These programs are measured on performance in outreach or increasing the number of families in the community who access services. In SFY 2015, OHEP:

- Processed 1,929 applications for the Maryland Energy Assistance Program (MEAP), which provides assistance grants to help with the payment of home heating bills. 1,709 families were certified for a total of \$1,131,933.50 in grants.
- Processed 1,891 applications for the Electric Universal Service Program (EUSP), which provides financial assistance with electric bills. 1,679 households were certified for a total of \$685,668 in assistance.
- Processed 1,021 applications for the Electric Universal Service Arrearage Program, which provides financial assistance with past due electric bills. 207 households were certified for a total of \$176,265.40 in assistance.

Adult Services

Adult Protective Services (APS) received 151 referrals for investigation. Of the 151 cases:

- 97 cases were screened out.
- 13 cases were investigated for exploitation.
- 25 cases were investigated for self-neglect, 5 cases were investigated for neglect by others.
- 5 cases were investigated for abuse.
- 6 cases were APS continuing.
- Department was Guardian of the Person for 5 adult clients.
- New Screening Risk Assessment Tool is in effect for APS/SSTA.
- New Policy & Practice Initiative (PPI) Training and all staff members were trained by August 2014.

Social Services to Adults (SSTA) services assist clients through case management to maintain their independence and remain in their community. There was an average of 97 cases that received SSTA services for FY 2015 and an average of 205 cases on the SSTA Registry.

In-Home Aide Services (IHAS) are support services provided to **SSTA** clients based on need and availability of services. These services may be in the form of chore and/or personal care. In FY 2014, there were:

- An average of 47 individuals who received chore and/or personal care services.
- An average of 5 cases on the IHAS Registry.

Project Home (PH) is a program that houses and provides case management services to adult clients who are physically and/or mentally disabled. In FY 2015:

- 5 customers resided in the 3 certified Project Care Homes.

Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP) primarily assists eligible adults and families with eviction prevention. Rental costs have steadily increased over the last two years even though funding has not increased. In FY 2015:

- 23 adults and families who were presented with eviction notices were assisted with funds to prevent eviction subsequently preventing homeless situations.

Emergency Transitional Housing Services (ETHS) provides funds for first months rent or back rent to prevent homeless situations. Funds may also be utilized for temporary lodging, and emergency food. In FY 2015:

- 98 clients were assisted with ETHS funds. Rental costs have steadily increased while funding has decreased for the fourth year in a row.

Emergency Assistance (EA) In FY 2015, an average of 66 adults and/or families per month contact the Adult Services Unit for emergency assistance or referrals. Contacts are in the form of walk-ins, telephone calls, and repeat calls from/to clients and vendors. In FY 2015:

- 790 clients were served; 98 through ETHS, 23 through HPP, and 94 through EA. EA clients were assisted with utility cut-offs, medications, and homeless individuals. There were 72 homeless individuals served from the ages of 6 months to 72 years. The total number of bed-nights for the shelter was a total of 3,020. Limited funding is available to the Department to assist EA clients.

Child Welfare Services

In-Home Services/Consolidated Programs *continued*

Consolidated Services

The Place Matters initiative was implemented to improve the services offered to Maryland's children and families that include family-centered practice, a focus on permanency practice, targeted child well-being practices, placement and community resource development, and resource home recruitment and retention.

From July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015:

- 20 families were referred as a result of a CPS Investigation
- 15 families were referred as the result of an SFC-I Assessment
- 58 children were serviced through this program
- 49 or 89% of those children were able to remain with family (9 children entered Foster Care, 1 child entered through a Voluntary Placement Agreement)



Interagency Family Preservation Services (INFPS)

- There are two Social Workers and one Family Support Worker designated to provide INFPS Services. Referrals can come from the Child Welfare Unit of the Department of Social Services, Department of Juvenile Services, and Mental Health Services through Core Services Agency, Board of Education, and the Caroline County Health Department.
- Families will receive 3 months of high intensive services in the home, in some cases up to 20 hours per week. They can receive up to, but no more than, a total of six months of service from INFPS.
- 9 families were provided INFPS services in FY 2015
- 21 Children were provided INFPS services in FY 2015
- 18 or 86% of those children were able to remain with family (3 children entered foster care, 1 child entered through a Voluntary Placement Agreement)

Child Welfare Services

In-Home Services *Continued*

Out-of-Home Services/Foster Care and Adoptions

As of June 30, 2015 — 36 children were served in Foster Care. A total of 42 Children were served in OOH Placements for FY 2015.

- 1 Child was reunited with their immediate family
- 1 Child went into the Guardianship Assistance Program (GAP)
- 6 Children were adopted. 2 of those children were adopted by a relative
- Another child was transferred back to Dorchester County

Entering Foster Care:

- 1 Youth entered Foster Care as a Voluntary Placement Agreement (transferred from Kent Co.)
- 2 Substance Exposed Newborns came into care as well as a sibling group of 2 sisters (who are placed with relatives), another sibling group male and female (who are with their mother in treatment) and a 16 year-old male.

Current Permanency Plans:

- 9 Children in Foster Care currently have a plan of adoption
- 20 Children in Foster Care have a plan of reunification
- 2 Youth have a plan for Guardianship
- 11 Youth permanency plan is Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA)

Respite Care

Respite care is designed to provide the caretaker and the child(ren) with short-term separation during times of crisis and to prevent a higher level of services from becoming necessary. The program also offers planned respite intervention for caretakers who are caring for children diagnosed as severely handicapped, emotionally disturbed or medically fragile, as well as children in the foster care system. Licensed foster homes are used to provide respite care.

Respite care is provided for a maximum of 72 hours per incident. The program pays for a maximum of 12 days per child during the contract year. Additional days are assessed on a case-by-case basis. In FY 2015, 36 children were served through this program.

The goals and outcomes for FY 15 are as follows:

- 277 overnights were used for respite care. 85 of the 277 overnights were considered to be crisis overnights. 60 overnights were considered to be planned overnights.
- 35 children were served (unduplicated)
- 14 children were served in crisis respite. 21 children were served in planned respite.
- Funding is provided by the Caroline Human Services Council
- 22 providers were utilized. The caregivers (families) were 60% satisfied.
- The workers were 97.5% satisfied and the providers were 90.94% satisfied.
- 89.38% of the children served remained in their homes of origin. 100% maintained their foster care placement
- 80% Foster Parents will continue to do foster care. 100% of the foster parents say they will continue to provide foster care because of respite services available to them.

Child Welfare Services

Resource Homes-July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015 the Agency:

- Maintained an average of 27 licensed foster/adoptive homes. As of June 30, 2015 the diversity of our homes was 17 Caucasian families and 10 African American Families.
- July 24, 2014 participated on the Bridge Radio Station to recruit foster homes for older youth.
- Held one (1) community informational session to recruit new Foster Parents on April 7, 2015.
- Attended and marketed "Foster Care and Adoption Services" at Summer Fest and Family Fun Day in Caroline County.
- Collaborated with other mid-shore Departments of Social Services to recruit additional foster/adoptive families.
- Held annual multi-county holiday celebrations for foster/adoptive families and foster children.
- Foster Parent Appreciation Month (May) was celebrated by delivering hanging flower baskets to each foster parent family.
- Caroline County Foster Parents continue to participate in the local chapter of the Foster Parents Association.
- Participated in the Foster Parent Resource Home Conference held at Chesapeake College, Speaker Pfc. Lenox Trams held on March 7, 2015.
- Party in the Park, Multi-cultural Fair: On May 2, 2015. We partnered with Talbot County DSS to recruit and promote foster care and adoption services.
- PRIDE Foster Parent Training was held in Caroline County in April and May of this fiscal year. We continue to partner with the five (5) Mid-shore DSS's for a collaborative training effort.
- Completed one (1) roundtable foster care group. The topic was "LTGBTQ Youth, The Educational Checklist, and Legislative Changes" and was held on November 13, 2014. The discussion was led by Kitty Nelson, Supervisor of Out-of-home care.

Adult Services

The Adult Services Unit consists of a unit supervisor, two full time and one half time (2.5) case workers and two (2) in-home aide workers. Also, through a partnership with Upper Shore Aging, the unit includes (1) full time case worker (35 hours per week) and (1) part time case worker (14 hours per week). In FY 15, the AS unit accomplished:

- 100 % (exceeding the state goal of 96%) of Adult Protective Services (APS) investigations indicated or unsubstantiated having no re-occurrence in six months
- 98.75% (exceeding state goal of 97%) for individuals receiving assistance to remain in the community.

