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Caroline County Department of Social Services



Annual Report 2017

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Mission & Vision Statements

Our Mission

County Department of Social Services protects the vulnerable and provides resources and opportunities that promote self-determination, safety and independence.

Our Vision

We envision Caroline County as a place where individuals and families are economically stable and safe from abuse and neglect.

Child Welfare Services
Adult Services
Administration

John R. Hargreaves
District Court & Multi-Services Center
207 South 3rd Street
Denton, MD 21629
410-819-4500

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

The Carter Building
300 Market Street
Denton, MD 21629
410-819-4500

Director's Message



I am pleased to present the Fiscal Year 2017 Annual Report for the Caroline County Department of Social Services. This report includes summaries from each division of the agency, providing a snapshot of programs and their impact on our local community.

In 2017, Caroline County DSS professionals responded to the needs of the community by effectively managing mandated programs in the areas of Child Welfare, Adult Services, Family Investment, Child Support, Non-

Custodial Parent Employment Program, and Parents as Partners. Their hard work, skill, and dedication shows a strong commitment to the integrity of those programs and to the well-being of Caroline County residents. Special initiatives and achievements in 2017 were:

7th Annual Family Fun Fest - Child Support Enforcement held its 7th Annual Family Fun Fest in downtown Denton where more than 1,000 people attended. A total of 713 book bags filled with school supplies were distributed to children in attendance. Twenty-four Community Partners set up as participants and provided information about their organizations to the public. In addition, twenty-four youth volunteers working to gain Service Learning Hours assisted with setup and take down. The RISE and DADS Programs hosted a 3-on-3 basketball tournament of the youth in the community and volunteer referees and score keepers were dads who are Non-Custodial Parents and participate in Agency programs.

Family Connections Unit — In 2017, 14 family finding referrals have been processed and 17 families have been served with the Kinship Care Program. The unit has begun to reach out to the local community partners and other programs in the agency to share the information regarding these new initiatives. This unit also oversees the Family Involvement Meetings, Interstate Compact On Placement of Children (ICPC), Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance (ICAMA), Resource Homes, Respite Care Program, and court ordered home studies.

Re-engaging Individuals through Successful Employment (RISE) - RISE is a grant funded program that began in SFY 2016. The goal of the Mid-Shore RISE program is to assist the non-custodial parent (NCP) in addressing and removing any and all barriers that may prevent them from obtaining and retaining employment. In the first grant year, the goal was to serve 75 NCP's through this program. By the end of SFY 2017, 131 customers had been served by the RISE program. RISE participants paid a total of \$161,604.58 in child support during SFY 2017.

As leaders and stewards of government programs, the Caroline County Department of Social Services team is committed to providing the best possible services and resources to the local community. Our dedicated staff makes a difference in the lives of residents each day and it is truly an honor to be a part of this outstanding effort.

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

Sincerely,
Osvaldina Gomes Daly, LCSW
Director

Family Investment & Child Support

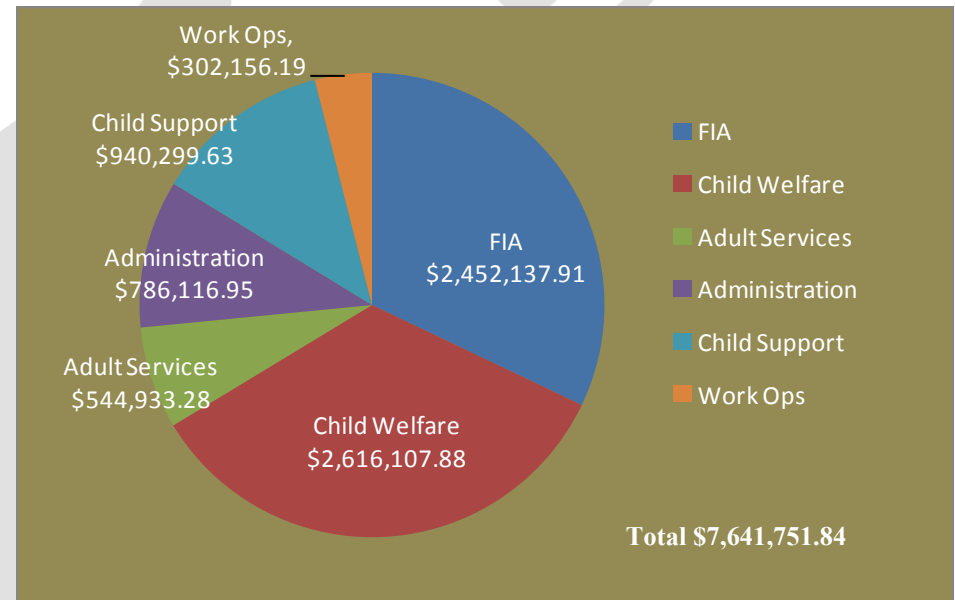
Re-engaging Individuals through Successful Employment (RISE)

Re-engaging Individuals through Successful Employment (RISE) is a grant funded program that began in SFY 2016. The goal of the Mid-Shore RISE program is to assist the non-custodial parent (NCP) in addressing and removing any and all barriers that may prevent them from obtaining and retaining employment. Parents who are able to work, but who are unemployed or underemployed and falling behind in child support payments, attend pre-employment training in which job search skills and strategies are taught. They work intensively with a case manager who assists with removing barriers in order to obtain and retain employment with an end result of increased and/or consistent child support payments. Since implementation, non-custodial parents have participated in training to obtain certifications as forklift drivers, road flaggers, and Serv Safe, which consists of a certification for food handling and food protection managers. Through the success of the program, a total of 255 participants obtained jobs, 152 full time positions and 103 part-time positions. Of those, 180 remained on the job after 90 days of employment.

The goal was to serve 200 NCP's through this program for SFY 2017 and 135 customers were served by the RISE program.

RISE participants paid a total of \$402,042.61 in child support during SFY 2017.

Total Expenditures



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

Family Investment & Child Support

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 2017, Child Support:

- Ended the service period with 1373 child support cases
- Disbursed \$3,491,828 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 2017, Child Support:

- Established paternity for 110.41% of the children in our caseload who were born out-of-wedlock (annual goal 110.91%)
- Established support orders in 95.74% of our cases (annual goal 92.41%)
- Collected 69.92 % of current child support owed (annual goal 69.28%)
- Collected payments from 73.08% of non-custodial parents owing arrears (annual goal 72.86%)

Non-Custodial Parent Employment Program

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 2017, the Caroline County program has

- Referred 805 non-custodial parents with a total of 1991 child support cases to NPEP
- Enrolled 411 parents in the program
- Assisted 178 parents to successfully complete the program
- Collected a total of \$4,184,762.36 in child support payments from 648 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 2017, this program:

- Served 206 parents (257% of our annual goal)
- Assisted 29 parents in obtaining jobs
- Helped 35 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 \$156,441.33 in child support during SFY 2017.

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Child Welfare Services

In-Home Services/Investigations

Total Child Welfare Reports: 678

Total Responses Assigned: 182 (27% of Total Reports)

Child Protective Services (CPS) Responses - 52 (84% of Assigned Responses)

Request of Other Agencies (ROA)/Courtesy Responses - 30 (16% of Assigned Responses)

CPS Response-Type Breakdown:

Investigative Response (IR) Assignments — 107 (70% of CPS Responses)

Alternative Response (AR) Assignments— 45 (30% of CPS Responses)

Physical Abuse: 42 (27 % of CPS Responses)

IR: 28 (67% of Physical Abuse CPS Responses)

AR: 14 (33% of Physical Abuse CPS Responses)

Neglect: 74 (49% of CPS Responses)

IR: 43 (58% of Neglect CPS Responses)

AR: 31 (42% of Neglect CPS Responses)

Sexual Abuse: 36 (24% of CPS Responses)

Findings:

Total Closures - 173

Indicated: 28 (16% of Total Findings)

Physical Abuse: 3 (11% of Indicated Findings)

Neglect: 22 (78% of Indicated Findings)

Sexual Abuse: 3 (11% of Indicated Findings)

Unsubstantiated: 39 (23% of Total Findings)

Physical Abuse: 8 (21% of Unsubstantiated Findings)

Neglect: 23 (58% of Unsubstantiated Findings)

Sexual Abuse: 8 (21% of Unsubstantiated Findings)

Ruled Out: 59 (34% of Total Findings)

AR Closures: 47 (27% of Total Closures)

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 FY 2017:

- 106 Families were referred for assessment services SFC-I
- 40 Families accepted Assessment Services SFC-I
- 21 Families were referred and accepted on-going Consolidated Services.
- 60 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) 2017, Family Investment:

- Provided Food Supplement assistance to a monthly average of 6,256 individuals in 3,102 households.
- Provided Temporary Cash Assistance to a monthly average of 267 children and 45 adults in 150 households.
- Provided Medical Assistance to a monthly average of 106 Long Term Care individuals, and 802 individuals receiving Supplemental Security Income.
- Provided Temporary Disability Assistance to a monthly average of 101 individuals.
- Assisted 46 families through Emergency Assistance to Families with Children with expenses for items such as rent and utilities.
- Screened 154 Family Investment and Child Welfare customers for substance abuse, referred 12 individuals for assessment and 7 for treatment.
- Provided pre-employment training to 108 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 2017, Family Investment:

- Achieved a 99.19 % application timeliness rate in regular Food Supplement cases completed and a 99.58 % application timeliness rate for expedite Food Supplement cases completed for SFY 2017.
- Assisted 106 individuals receiving Temporary Cash Assistance or owing child support obtain jobs (116% of our annual goal) for FFY 2017.
- Achieved a 56% Work Participation Rate – FFY 2017 (112% 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 2017, OHEP:

- Processed 1,768 applications for the Maryland Energy Assistance Program (MEAP), which provides assistance grants to help with the payment of home heating bills with 1,298 families certified for a total of \$931,408.00 in grants
- Processed 1,688 applications for the Electric Universal Service Program (EUSP), which provides financial assistance with electric bills with 1,250 households certified for a total of \$728.880 in assistance
- Processed 863 applications for the Electric Universal Service Arrearage Program, which provides financial assistance with past due electric bills with 161 households certified for a total of \$157,410.64 in assistance

Adult Services

Adult Protective Services (APS) received 125 referrals for investigation. Of the 125 cases:

- 85 cases were screened out
- 14 cases were investigated for exploitation
- 13 cases were investigated for self-neglect, 6 cases were investigated for neglect by others
- 1 case was investigated for abuse
- 6 cases were APS continuing
- Department was Guardian of the Person for 5 adult clients
- Risk Assessment Screening Tool remains in effect for APS / SSTA
- Policy & Practice Initiative (PPI) is in effect using the Caseload Priority Analysis (CPA) tool for open cases

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 67 cases who received SSTA services for FY 2017
- There was an average of 94 cases on the SSTA wait list

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.

- There was an average of 51 individuals who received chore and/or personal care services
- There was an average of 7 cases on the IHAS wait list

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 2017:

- 3 customers resided in the 2 certified Project Care Homes

Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP) primarily assists eligible adults and families with eviction prevention. Rental costs have steadily increased even though funding has not increased. In FY 2017:

- 14 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 month's rent or back rent to prevent homeless situations. Funds may also be utilized for temporary lodging, and emergency food. In FY 2017:

- 71 clients were assisted with ETHS funds despite rental costs steadily increasing and the funding remaining the same since FY'2013
- A total of 230 bed nights was provided to the local shelter with ETHS funding

Emergency Assistance (EA) In FY 2017, an average of 53 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 2017:

- 635 clients were served; 27 households through ETHS (\$16,976), 14 households through HPP (\$5,341), and 29 households through EA. EA clients were assisted with utility cut-offs and medications. There were 117 homeless individuals served from the ages of infant to 70 years. The total number of bed nights for the local shelter was 4358. Limited funding is available to the Department to assist EA clients and to pay for bed nights at the local area shelter (July 2016 – July 2017)
- Housing Counselor and Aftercare Program (HCAP) – Grant Funding for His Hope Haven Homeless Shelter for a case management position (July 2016 – June 2017) \$36,916
- Service Linked Housing Program (SLHP) - Grant Funding for Interfaith Housing for a case management position (July 2016—June 2017) \$17,196

Child Welfare Services

In-Home Services/Consolidated Programs *continued*

Consolidated Services

The Consolidated Services offer a continuum of non-entitlement service programs designed to promote the safety and well-being of children and their families; enhance a parent's ability to create a safe and stable home environment; and maintain permanency while preserving family unity.

From July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017

- 16 families were referred as a result of a CPS Investigation
- 1 family transferred from another county
- 28 Substance Exposed Newborns
- 21 Families were referred as the result of an SFC-I Assessment
- 91 children received Consolidated Services
- 85 or 94% of those children were able to remain with family (2 children entered Foster Care, 4 children entered through a Voluntary Placement Agreement)

Interagency Family Preservation Services (IFPS)

There is one Social Worker designated to provide IFPS 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 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.
- 5 families were provided IFPS services in FY 2017
- 10 Children were provided IFPS services in FY 2017
- 5 or 50% of those children were able to remain with family (5 children entered foster care)

Child Welfare Services

In-Home Services *continued*

As of June 30, 2017 — 29 children were active in Foster Care (21 males and 8 females). A total of 38 were served in Out-of-Home placements for FY 2016.

- 3 Children were successfully reunited with their immediate family
- 5 Children was placed with relatives
- 0 Children were adopted
- 1 Youth signed themselves out after turning 18

Entering Foster Care:

- 6 Youth entered Foster Care due to neglect
- 1 Substance Exposed Newborns came into care as well as a group of 5 siblings due to neglect
- 1 Voluntary Placements; 1 child needed assistance due to a disability and 2 children are in a time limited voluntary placement

Current Permanency Plans:

- 2 Children in Foster Care currently have a plan of adoption
- 22 Children in Foster Care have a plan of reunification
- 5 Youth permanency plan is Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA)

Family Connections Unit

In March 2016 CCDSS created a second Out of Home unit. In June 2016 the unit added a Family Finding/Kinship Navigation Worker and then in January of 2017 a Full Time Family Involvement Meeting (FIM) Facilitator was added.

During the past fiscal year 14 family finding referrals were processed and 17 families have been served by the Kinship Care Program. In the past fiscal year, the unit began reaching out to our local community partners and other programs within the agency to share the information regarding these new initiatives. This unit also oversees the Family Involvement Meetings, Interstate Compact On Placement of Children (ICPC), Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance (ICAMA), Resource Homes, Respite Care Program, and Court ordered home studies.

Respite Care Program

Respite care is designed to provide a caretaker and their child(ren) with a 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 with mental health or behavioral issues, as well as children in the foster care system. Licensed foster homes are used to providing 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 2017, 28 children were served through this program.

The goals and outcomes for FY 2016 are as follows:

- 277 overnights were used for respite care, 28 children were served (unduplicated):
- 14 providers were utilized; Caregivers (families) were 90% satisfied
- The workers were 90% satisfied and the providers were 90% satisfied

Child Welfare Services

Family Connections Unit *continued*

- 100% Foster Parents will continue to do foster care with 100% saying they will continue to provide foster care because of respite services available to them.

Resource Homes

From July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017 the agency:

- Maintained an average of 23 licensed foster/adoptive homes. As of June 30, 2017 the diversity of our homes was 13 Caucasian families, 9 African American Families and 1 African American and Asian Family.
- Held two community informational sessions to recruit new Foster Parents in March and August.
- 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 celebration for foster/adoptive families and foster children
- Celebrated Foster Parent Appreciation Month (May) by delivering hanging flower baskets to each foster parent family
- Caroline County Foster Parents continued participating in the local chapter of the Foster Parents Association
- Participated in the Foster Parent Resource Home Conference held on March 18, 2017 at Chesapeake College featuring speaker, Kyla Liggett-Creel, LCSW-C, PhD
- Partnered with Talbot County DSS to recruit and promote foster care and adoption services during the Party in the Park Multi-Cultural Fair held on May 7, 2016
- Held the PRIDE Foster Parent Training in Caroline County in April and May of 2017 (FY2017). We continue to partner with the five (5) Mid-Shore DSS's for a collaborative training effort.

Adult Services

The Adult Services Unit consists of a unit supervisor, three (3) full time case workers, one (1) administrative assistant and two (2) in-home aide workers. Also, through a partnership with Upper Shore Aging, the unit includes one (1) full time case worker (35 hours per week) and one (1) part time case worker (14 hours per week). In FY 2017, 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