

Fairfax County Department of
Family Services

Annual Report 2009

Advisory Social Services Board



Overview

Making a Difference in the Lives of County Residents

Now more than ever, the Department of Family Services (DFS) is making a critical difference in the lives of many thousands of county residents.

Responding to Challenging Times and Adapting to Change

Economic Recession

Thousands of county residents have been affected by the economic recession and are coming to DFS in record numbers, many for the first time. DFS reception offices throughout the county received 122,000 visits last year.

Most visitors are seeking public assistance, such as food stamps (now called supplemental nutrition assistance (SNAP)) and Medicaid. Applications for both programs have skyrocketed. To keep pace with the rapidly increasing workload, DFS has redesigned intake procedures, updated records management and redeployed front office staff positions.

People who have not had to write a resume in 20 years are now showing up at employment centers. Mid-level, experienced workers are now competing with lower-skilled and younger workers for fewer available jobs.

DFS launched a summer youth employment program in 2009 and acquired federal funding of over \$1 million, with the Northern Virginia Workforce Investment Board, to provide job training for displaced workers.



Working Families and Individuals Making Ends Meet

DFS' successful regional Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program in 2009 helped 3,280 low-income working families and individuals prepare and file their income tax returns to receive over \$4.4 million in federal refunds and tax credits.

Impact on Families

Job loss, homelessness and poverty can be risk factors for child abuse and neglect. Prevention programs, such as DFS' Healthy Families program for first-time parents, are in high demand, as are DFS parenting education programs and supportive services. Child protective services investigations and assessments increased 21 percent from FY 2006 to FY 2009 (from 1884 to 2287).

The county's shelter for victims of domestic and sexual violence has been consistently full for two years. Those needing counseling services now have to go on a wait list.

What People With Disabilities Need Most

People with disabilities in Fairfax County reported in a recent survey that their top needs are transportation, case management, assistive technology, medical assistance and employment.



Decreasing Resources for Vulnerable Adults

Adult Protective Services reports of abuse and neglect of adults with disabilities and older adults continue to increase in the county and in the state, and there are no new state resources available for staffing or services. Proposed reductions in the governor's budget target Medicaid funded services for adults with disabilities. Virginia's eligibility criteria for Medicaid funded services are already among the most stringent in the nation. The proposed reductions, if implemented, will have a drastic impact upon locally funded services, leaving vulnerable people with inadequate services for living safely in community homes.

Volunteers Help County's Older Adults – Our Fastest Growing Population

Older residents are the fastest growing population in the county. Volunteers have provided a highly successful solution to the challenge of providing needed services during difficult times. In 2009, 2,255 volunteers provided 78,199 hours of service – the equivalent of \$1.6 million in service to Fairfax County residents. They provided essential services such as home-delivered meals, transportation to medical appointments, assistance with grocery shopping, minor home repairs, and insurance counseling.

A Positive Trend

In spite of the challenging times, a positive trend is emerging. The number of children in foster care decreased dramatically. From FY 06 to FY 09, the number of children removed by CPS and placed in foster care went down by 48 percent (from 172 to 90), even as the number of CPS assessments and investigations increased. How is this possible? DFS has increased its efforts to locate and engage families and relatives to develop and carry out plans to keep their children safe. When needed, DFS provides intensive community-based services.

Lines of Service Initiative

In May 2009, DFS launched a department-wide initiative to examine its principal lines of service to improve processes and procedures, address gaps and concerns, and develop action plans to enable the department to meet the needs of a changing community during challenging times.

Cluster Care

Using the "cluster care" model of providing in-home services, DFS was able to stay within budget and help an increased number of older adults and adults with disabilities continue to live safely in their homes. Of those receiving these services, 86 percent remained in their own home for at least one year.

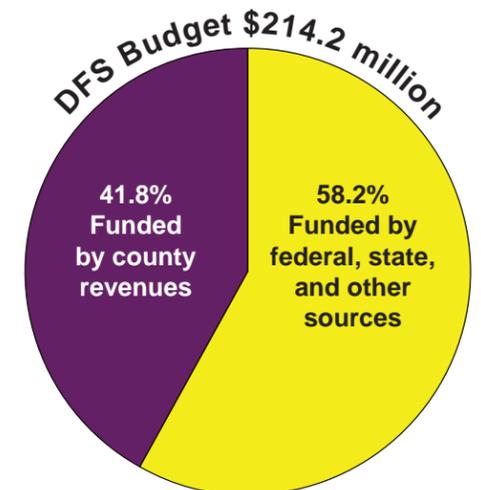


Journey To Self-Sufficiency

A mother with two young children was homeless, a victim of domestic violence, and suffered from physical and mental problems. With Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) cash assistance, SNAP and Medicaid she was able to meet some of her family's basic needs. The Virginia Initiative for Employment not Welfare Program helped her identify her strengths and find employment. Within months she was working, getting professional help with her mental and physical issues, the children were in child care and school, and the family moved into transitional housing. A year later she was able to buy a car, transition off public assistance, and was recently offered a full time job with benefits. She has traveled a long journey and looks to the future with hope.

Budget Summary

The FY 2009 budget for DFS was \$214.2 million. Approximately half of all expenditures are mandated by federal or state laws. Only 41.8 percent of the DFS budget was funded from Fairfax County's General Fund. The remaining funds came from the federal and state governments (67.1%), School-Age Child Care fees (31.2%), and other sources (1.7%).



Programs and Services

All titles in blue link to additional information on the county's Web site.

Adult and Aging

ADULT SERVICES

Provides and coordinates services for adults age 60 and older and for people with disabilities age 18 and older.

ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES

Responds to reports and concerns about abuse, neglect or exploitation of adults age 60 and older and of people age 18 and older who are physically or mentally incapacitated.

DISABILITY SERVICES PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Promotes the self-sufficiency and well-being of people with disabilities through advocacy, education and consultation regarding legal rights and protections, solution management, and by connecting people to resources and services.

FAIRFAX AREA AGENCY ON AGING

Organizes, coordinates and offers community-based services and opportunities to older adults and their families, leveraging an extensive network of volunteers and partners.

Volunteers

A 57-year-old woman with a disability recently needed assistance with grocery shopping. A DFS volunteer who lived nearby agreed to help. As the two got to know each other they discovered a mutual love of music and began attending concerts together. The client-volunteer relationship became a valued friendship.



Self-Sufficiency

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

Helps low-income individuals and families apply for and receive help (Medicaid, SNAP, etc.) to meet basic needs and attain self sufficiency. As of Dec. 31, 2009, the public assistance caseload DFS was handling had increased 27 percent in 18 months from 51,939 to 71,190.

LONG-TERM CARE

Specially trained staff determines initial and ongoing financial eligibility for long-term care programs such as Medicaid and Auxiliary Grants.

HEALTH ACCESS ASSISTANCE TEAM

Connects people in need with health care and a "medical home." Supports optimal utilization of health care resources.

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

Helps connect job seekers with employment and training opportunities. Offers employment workshops, occupational skills training, and job search assistance.

TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES (TANF)

Provides temporary financial assistance to needy families with children as parents prepare for and seek employment.

Children, Youth and Families

CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES

Protects children from abuse and neglect by assessing their safety, risk of harm, and the family's strengths and needs; provides services and support to families; takes action if necessary to assure the children's safety.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT PREVENTION

Supports families, particularly those at risk of child abuse or neglect, through community-based, family-focused and early intervention services.

Healthy Families Fairfax

When Tiffany entered the program, she was determined to create a better life for her children. Her social worker noticed language delays in two of Tiffany's children. With the help of a public health nurse, she was able to get them speech therapy services. Meanwhile Tiffany found work and recently received her second promotion. She now has enough money to move into a single-family home.



FOSTER CARE AND ADOPTION SERVICES

When children cannot safely remain with their families, they may enter foster care and live with a foster family or in a group home or residential facility. Services are provided to enable children to return home safely or to be placed in another permanent living arrangement such as with an adoptive family. Recruits foster and adoptive families.

FAMILY PRESERVATION SERVICES

Works with families who are at risk of child abuse, neglect or family dissolution. Helps family attain stability and self-sufficiency and improve family functioning.

Office for Children

CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE AND REFERRAL

Helps families find and pay for child care.

SCHOOL AGE CHILD CARE

Offers fun, safe and educational care for 5-12 year olds before school, after school and during school vacations in most Fairfax County elementary schools.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND PROVIDER SERVICES

Provides technical assistance and home inspections to ensure that family child care homes meet the requirements of the Home Child Care Permit. Administers the United States Department of Agriculture Food Program.

HEAD START

Provides quality early childhood education and comprehensive family support services to income-eligible families with children (birth to 5 years old) and to expectant mothers.

Office for Women & Domestic and Sexual Violence Services

DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE SERVICES

Provides information, counseling, resources and emergency shelter for victims of domestic and sexual violence. Also provides batterer intervention counseling treatment services.



Statistics (All numbers are based on fiscal year unless otherwise noted)

		FY 2008 July 1, 2007 - June 30, 2008	FY 2009 July 1, 2008 - June 30, 2009	% Change FY08-FY09	First 6 months FY 2010 July 1 - Dec. 31
Adult Services/Case Management	Number of clients served	2,404	2,514	+4%	1,805
Adult Protective Services	Number of investigations	854	924	+8%	549
	Clients needing protective services	424	460	+8%	213
Disability Services Planning and Development	Services provided to persons with head injuries	4,919	5,763	+15%	n/a
Fairfax Area Agency on Aging	Meals served to older adults and adults with disabilities	630,976	618,485	-2%	303,404
	Meals on Wheels and Liquid Nutrition recipients	1,769	1,836	+4%	1,141
	Volunteers serving older adults and adults with disabilities	2,032	2,151	+6%	2,150
Public Assistance	Caseload (includes SNAP, Medicaid, FAMIS, FAMIS Plus, TANF, General Relief)	51,939	58,561	+13%	68,299
	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) average cases per month	11,610	13,769	+19%	17,025
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families	Average number of cases per month	1,268	1,389	+10%	1,597
	Clients served in the Virginia Initiative for Employment not Welfare (VIEW) program	1,026	1,202	+17%	957
Employment and Training	Number of SkillSource Center visits	38,231	56,811	+33%	32,483
	Caseload	1,198	1,974	+40%	2,228
	Number of tax returns done in Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program	2,423	3,280	+26%	n/a
Child Protective Services	Number of calls received by the Hotline/Helpline	29,792	25,072	-15%	11,975
	Calls resulting in CPS assessment or investigation	2,235	2,287	+2%	1,289
	Number of high-risk families served by CPS	167	156	-6%	158
Family Preservation Services	Average number of families served each month	417	408	-2%	405
Foster Care and Adoption	Number of children entering foster care	122	132	+8%	67
	Average number in foster care each month	456	399	-13%	377
	Number of children leaving foster care	163	182	+10%	83
	Number of children adopted from foster care	43	42	-2%	25
Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention	Families receiving home visits from a Healthy Families social worker	598	617	+3%	490
	Families participating in parenting classes	254	370	+31%	267
Child Care Assistance and Referral	Number of children receiving tuition assistance	8,169	8,716	+6%	7,627
School Age Child Care	Number of children served	12,144	12,429	+2%	12,989
	Number of children with special needs served	1,175	1,145	-3%	1,165
Community Education and Provider Services	Number of family child care providers with permits	1,960	1,971	+5%	1,971
Head Start	Number of children enrolled	1,055	1,092	+3%	1,161
Domestic and Sexual Violence Services	Calls received by Victims Assistance Network helpline/hotline	1,482	1,628	+9%	1,016
Web Site	Number of visits to the DFS Web site	n/a	1,000,007	n/a	823,031



Advisory Social Services Board

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A publication of the County of Fairfax, Virginia.

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To request this information in an alternate format, call
703-324-5870; TTY 703-222-9452.

March 2010