



Fairfax County

ADVISORY SOCIAL SERVICES BOARD

2007 **ANNUAL REPORT**

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March 2008

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Executive Summary

This report is a summary review of the Department of Family Services public welfare and aging programs that are under the purview of the Advisory Social Services Board (ASSB). This report summarizes significant program trends, events and initiatives for 2007.

Introduction

In accordance with its responsibility to provide citizen oversight of the county's public welfare programs administered by the Department of Family Services (DFS), the Fairfax County Advisory Social Services Board (ASSB) presents this report summarizing significant program trends, events and initiatives in 2007 for three DFS divisions: Adult and Aging; Children, Youth and Families; and Self-Sufficiency.

This Executive Summary highlights key issues for which the continued attention and support of the Board of Supervisors are critical:

- Planning for and meeting the needs of a growing population of older adults.
- Managing the increasing workload of public assistance and social work staff.
- Nurturing community partnerships to enhance services and advance outreach.
- Implementing the plan to prevent and end homelessness in 10 years.
- Reaching out in various and innovative ways to serve a diverse population.
- Improving the county's ability to respond to the needs of its most vulnerable residents in the event of an emergency.

Meeting the Needs of a Growing Senior Population

The Advisory Social Services Board commends the Board of Supervisors for its excellent and detailed action plan to ensure a more "aging friendly" Fairfax County and meet the needs of the county's growing population of older adults. By 2010, persons age 65 and older will be 9.2 percent of the county's total population, 104,400 persons. By 2020, it is projected that there will be 138,600 persons age 65 and older living in Fairfax County, and they will be 11.6 percent of the total population.

As noted in the *Fairfax 50+ Action Plan*, it is crucial for the well-being of older residents that we work on developing opportunities in many areas, including housing, transportation, engagement, and specialized services.

The ASSB urges the Board to continue its leadership in this area and to press for progress in carrying out the initiatives described in its *Fairfax 50+ Action Plan*.

Managing Increased Demand for Social Services

Throughout the department, staff is experiencing increased demand for services. In Fiscal Year 2007, the DFS Self-Sufficiency Division managed an average monthly public assistance caseload of 49,681 cases, a 71 percent increase from FY 2001.

The increase in cases without corresponding state support for staff increases taxes the division's capacity to deliver services in accordance with federal and state requirements. Federal entitlement programs such as Food Stamps and Medicaid do not permit local agencies to create waiting lists if demand for services exceeds capacity.

Regulatory changes have increased the workload for social work staff as well. Federal and State policies in 2006 increased the minimum frequency of face-to-face, in-home visits between social workers and children in foster care. Proposed regulations at the state level will, if approved, also increase the frequency of required in-home reviews of foster and adoptive homes from once every two years to once every six months.

Adult Protective Services investigations have increased from 632 investigations in FY 2006 to 818 in FY2007. Child Protective Services hotline calls have increased from 27,790 calls in FY 2006 to 29,684 in FY 2007. Expenditures for emergency assistance to eligible families and individuals to help with rent or mortgage, security deposits, utility payments, and storage or moving expenses, increased 39 percent from FY 2006 to FY 2007.

The state is undertaking a broad workload study to help determine staffing needs in all social service areas. Results of the study are expected later this spring and will be reported to you, though additional state support for needed positions is not anticipated before the FY 2011 – FY 2012 biennium.

The ASSB asks the Board of Supervisors to monitor this situation closely to make sure that once the study is done, the state provides appropriate resources to enable localities to meet staffing needs.

Nurturing Community Partnerships

Community partnerships are vital for many aspects of the department's work. Such partnerships – for example, with neighborhood associations, faith communities, businesses, community-based organizations, and individual volunteers – greatly enhance the services that the department can provide in the community and are essential in prevention and education efforts.

The Adult and Aging division staff, working with other county agencies and community organizations, will hold a symposium in April to explore the prospect of forming neighborhood-based cooperatives to help older residents. A June forum for faith-based organizations will share information about local resources for older adults.

Community partnerships have enabled the Children, Youth and Families Division to expand programming at the Culmore Family Resource Center. New programs include Spanish literacy classes with George Mason University and Tenant and Workers United; computer classes for adults with St. Anthony's Catholic Church and the county's Office of Partnerships; a Girl Scouts Leadership Program with the organization "HACAN" - Hispanics Against Child Abuse and Neglect; and an exciting new program with the World Children's Choir.

The Self-Sufficiency Division is working with the county's Office of Partnerships and volunteers throughout the community to provide a free service to help clients file their federal income tax forms, enabling them to receive the earned income tax credit.

The county's extensive hypothermia program, overseen by the Department of Family Services, depends on a network of partnerships with nonprofit and faith-based organizations and thousands of community volunteers.

The Board of Supervisors' continued support of these and the department's many other partnership initiatives is greatly appreciated.

Preventing and Ending Homelessness

The Advisory Social Services Board supports the Board of Supervisors' efforts to meet the housing needs of its most indigent residents. Continued development of housing for persons with very low incomes is essential if we are to end homelessness in Fairfax County. The ASSB encourages the Board of Supervisors to press ahead with implementation of the plan to prevent and end homelessness in 10 years.

While the county works to develop permanent housing resources for low-income residents, the need for temporary homeless shelter continues. Recognizing that need, the Board of Supervisors supported the development of the Katherine K. Hanley Family Shelter, which opened in August 2007 and now operates at full capacity serving 20 families. Shelter House, Inc., operates the shelter under contract with DFS.

Shelter staff works closely with county service providers to prepare families for moving out of the shelter to permanent housing. Volunteers supplement these services with recreation, tutoring and other activities. The shelter and county staff have created a model of service delivery that supports the "housing first" concept articulated in the county's "Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness."

In addition to overseeing the county's six homeless shelters, the department manages the Partnership for Permanent Housing in collaboration with the Department of Housing and Community Development. During 2007, 25 families entered the program and are currently working with their case managers in preparation to purchase their first homes.

Serving a Diverse Population

The Department of Family Services continues to reach out in various and innovative ways to the county's diverse population. A new information and referral phone line for Vietnamese-speaking seniors is now in operation, staffed by volunteers. A similar service, also volunteer-operated, is available for Korean-speaking seniors. A Meals on Wheels route with Middle Eastern food was initiated for residents of Tysons Towers. A second Vietnamese Meals on Wheels route was begun, and Korean Meals on Wheels continue to be offered.

The Nurturing Parenting Program conducted 17 groups in FY2007, including three groups using a Spanish curriculum and two groups using a curriculum designed to be culturally appropriate for parents of African-American children. The Healthy Families Fairfax program serves a large

population of Hispanic families. A special team is also focusing on reaching out specifically to African-American families.

The department has 104 bilingual employees who provide services to non-English speaking clients in their own languages. Staff language capacity is supplemented with language interpretation services (including sign language) at no cost to clients.

The department also produces a wealth of public information available in multiple languages. The Adult and Aging Division program description, for example, is available in English, Arabic, Farsi, Korean, Spanish and Vietnamese. The department-wide program overview is available in nine languages, including Urdu, Somali, and Chinese. Child supervision guidelines and other popular information for parents and caregivers has been translated into multiple languages as well. All DFS public information materials, including translations, can be downloaded from the county Web site at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs.

Nationwide, there is an issue of a disproportionate number of African-American children in the foster care system, and Fairfax County is no exception. While about 10 percent of the children in Fairfax County are African-American, 41 percent of the children in foster care are African-American. Additionally, in recent years a disproportionate number of Hispanic children have entered foster care. While about 17 percent of Fairfax County's children are Hispanic, 24 percent of the children who entered foster care in FY2007 were Hispanic.

The department is a key participant in a collaborative effort, launched by Deputy County Executive Verdia Haywood, to bring together community resources to address this and related issues. The effort focuses on preventing and reducing the disproportionate presence of African American children in the county's foster care and juvenile justice systems and increasing school readiness and academic achievement.

Emergency Planning

During the past year, the Department of Family Services has conducted and participated in a number of planning efforts with the goal of improving the county's ability to respond to the needs of its most vulnerable residents in the event of an emergency.

A plan has been developed to determine how and where to open a shelter for residents with medical needs. An exercise with other county agencies was held to review the plan and to formalize roles and responsibilities. An exercise to practice opening a medical shelter will be held later in 2008.

A table-top exercise was conducted with multiple agencies to test out the assumptions of newly developed Family Assistance Center plan, which would be activated should the county experience a major disaster involving mass casualties. In addition, DFS has worked with the county's interfaith liaison, public safety chaplains and the Office of Emergency Management to develop criteria and training needs for a corps of chaplains that could be called upon to provide spiritual care in a Family Assistance Center.

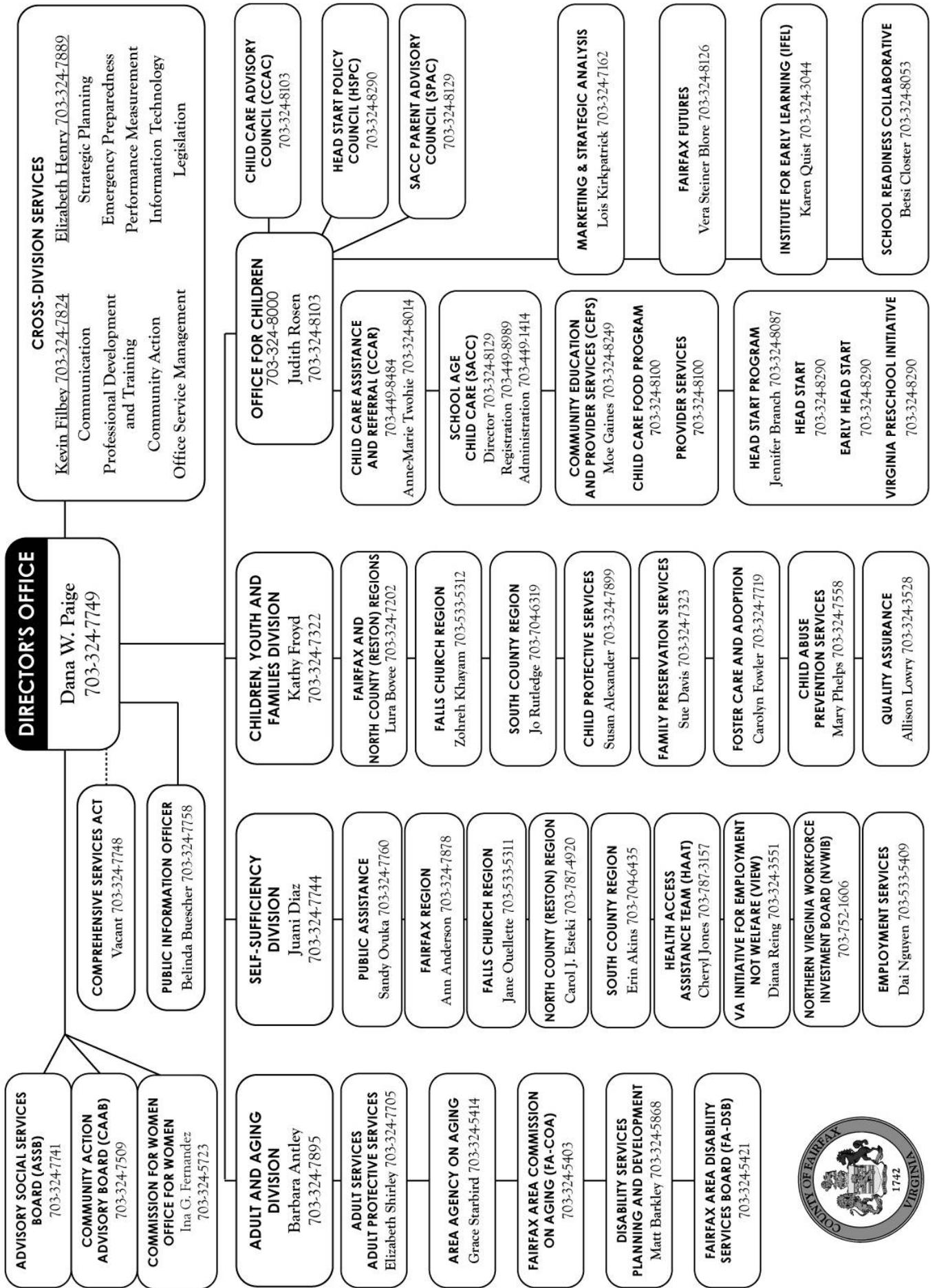
The department continues its work with other agencies to ensure that the essential needs component of the county's Pandemic Flu Plan will be viable.

As part of a countywide planning process, DFS drafted a continuity of operations plan to ensure that mission critical services, such as foster care, child protective services, adult protective services, and homeless shelter services would continue in the event of an emergency. Training and exercising of this plan will be rolled out in 2008.

DFS recruited and trained a pool of 100 employees who are designated as agency emergency personnel. These employees support shelter operations in collaboration with the Red Cross to provide basic immediate needs, including shelter and food, to disaster victims in Fairfax County.

Organization of the Fairfax County Department of Family Services

February 2008



Department of Family Services

Adult and Aging Division

The number of persons age 65 and over is growing at a faster rate than the overall population of Fairfax County. By 2010, persons age 65 and older will be 9.2 percent of the county's total population, 104,400 persons. By 2020, it is projected that there will be 138,600 persons age 65 and older living in Fairfax County, and they will be 11.6 percent of the total population. In 1980, more than 13 percent of older adults spoke a language other than English at home, and by 2000 the number had more than doubled and continues to grow. From 1980 to 2000, the percentage of minorities in the older adult population increased from 6.4 to 18.3 percent. The incidence of disabilities among elderly – includes such conditions as arthritis and Alzheimer's – doubles every five years after the age of 65. Because the oldest baby boomers will turn 75 in 2021, the need for assistive services and programs will accelerate rapidly after 2020.

The Adult and Aging Division is planning for, and adapting services for, a changing population. The Adult and Aging Division provides services that target older adults and adults with disabilities. The services maximize independence and enhance social support networks already established by families and communities. The division also provides leadership and partners with the community in developing new support networks. The Adult and Aging Division includes the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging, Adult Services, Adult Protective Services, and Disability Services Planning and Development. (www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs)

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Cluster Care

In response to increasing numbers of people needing services, and to avoid a waiting list for home based care, a more efficient model was implemented to provide the assistance necessary to allow elderly persons and adults with disabilities to stay in their own homes. This model, termed "cluster care," builds on ideas from other local jurisdictions around the country that align services around "naturally occurring retirement communities," communities in which a significant number of residents have aged in their homes. The cluster care model has three components: task-based home care, volunteer services and home delivered meals. With task-based home care, clients receive help with services such as housekeeping and personal care (for example, bathing). Task-based home care services are provided to functionally impaired, income eligible older adults and adults with disabilities. Clients are served primarily through contracts with two home health agencies.

Volunteers are recruited in the cluster areas to provide friendly visiting, shopping, telephone reassurance and other assistance. Instead of having meals prepared by home care aides, some clients are offered Meals on Wheels, which are delivered by volunteers.

Building on the community model of providing services, ElderLink, in a public-private partnership with Inova HealthSource, along with the Adult and Aging Division, faith communities, and other county agencies, developed a community outreach program, Project Independence, initially focusing on older adults living in Franconia/Rose Hill and Annandale.

The program offers in-home assessments, information on resources, fall prevention and exercise classes. The county's contracted occupational therapist assists with the in-home assessments.

To increase assistive equipment options available to Fairfax County residents, the Disability Planning and Development unit facilitated the development of a recycling program for durable medical equipment. The program is managed by the Foundation for Rehabilitation Equipment and Endowment (FREE) in conjunction with the Arc of Northern Virginia and other community partners.

Nutrition Program/Home Delivered Meals

Home delivered meals are provided for individuals age 60 and over who are unable to shop for or prepare their own meals. Over 800 older adults and 45 adults with disabilities, who are under the age of 60, are served annually. The objective of the program, mandated by the Older Americans Act, is to improve nutrition and maintain the physical, mental and/or cognitive functioning of homebound seniors as long as possible.

The Fairfax Area Agency on Aging has memorandums of agreement with 25 community volunteer organizations that coordinate and drive 44 meal delivery routes. Meals are purchased by the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging through contracts with the following groups: Fairfax County Department of Housing and Community Development, Inova Health System, the Hermitage in Northern Virginia, Fairfax County Public Schools, Huong Binh Deli, Middle Eastern Catering, and the Korean Central Senior Center. Recruitment of volunteers for the delivery of meals and volunteers for the management of the routes is an ongoing effort.

The Nutritional Supplement Program targets low-income and minority individuals who are unable to consume sufficient calories from solid food due to chronic disabling conditions, dementia, or terminal illnesses. Close to 500 persons are served through this program annually. Clients' families pick up cases of liquid supplement from 11 sites around the county.

In program year 2007, over 1,300 clients were served by the home delivered meals and nutritional supplement program. The total number of meals served to clients for both nutrition programs was 216,541.

Meal routes have been created to serve older adults who have nutritional needs but who are unfamiliar with American foods. There are now two Vietnamese Meals on Wheels routes, a Korean meal route, and a Middle Eastern meal route. Fairfax County's approach to home delivered meals was presented at the 2007 National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a) annual conference in California and received national attention in the Korean and Vietnamese press.

To increase meal options, a new service of weekly UPS delivered refrigerated meals has been initiated. This service option will help relieve the waiting list, and will provide meals for persons who do not need the well-being check provided by the volunteers. Some people receiving Meals on Wheels cannot prepare meals, but can heat up already prepared meals.

For older adults who are able to leave their homes and go to centers, the congregate meals program provided over 281,000 meals at 29 public and private congregate meals sites. More than 3,200 older adults participated in this program. Participants are increasing in numbers and in ethnic diversity. An ongoing challenge is to identify and provide nutritious meals that are both palatable and pleasing in order to encourage good eating and better health. This year, client satisfaction surveys about meals were translated and administered to non-English speaking participants. Of the surveys completed, 422, or 60 percent, were completed in Spanish, Chinese, Korean, or Vietnamese. Meal options are being assessed, and different menu selections are being introduced.

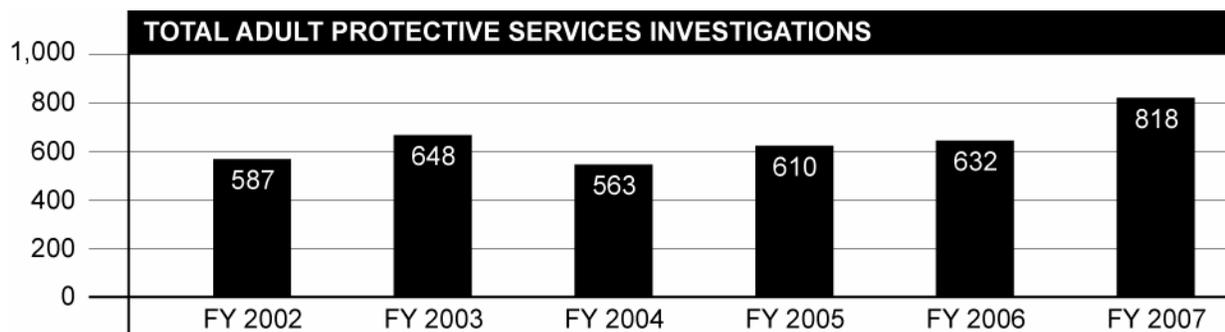
Fairfax Area Agency on Aging (AAA) Volunteer Services

In conjunction with the need to involve more volunteers in serving their neighbors, the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging volunteer services unit has been working to redesign their services. The unit is reorganizing into a regional approach with a name change to Volunteer Solutions. Each regional Department of Family Services office will have a volunteer coordinator to recruit and place individual volunteers and volunteers from local businesses and community organizations.

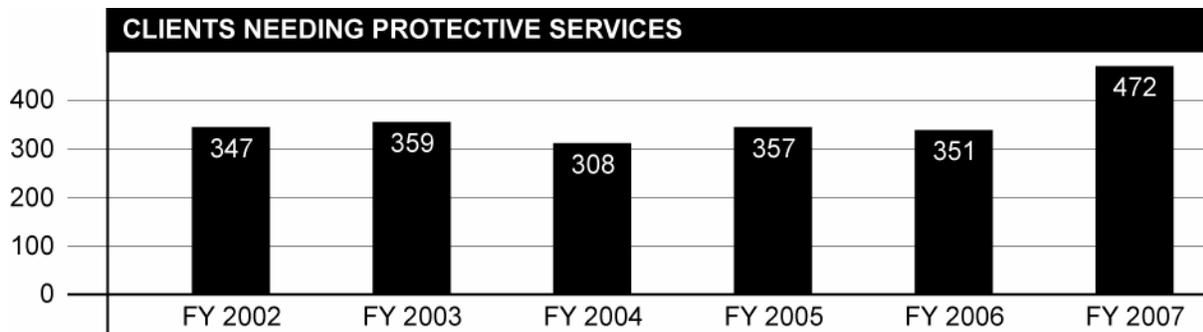
In 2007, a total of 2,293 volunteers performed 91,120 hours of volunteer service, providing such essential services as home delivered meals, telephone reassurance, friendly visiting, insurance counseling, and pet visits to nursing homes (Pets on Wheels Program). Based on the 2006 Independent Sector estimate for the dollar value of a volunteer hour (\$18.77 per hour), the total value of the 91,120 volunteer hours is more than \$1.7 million. The 2007 estimate for the dollar value of a volunteer hour will be released in April 2008. Volunteers also provided transportation to medical appointments and performed grocery shopping, minor home repairs, home maintenance, yard work, and other services that support older adults and adults with disabilities so that they can continue living in their own homes. (www.fairfaxcounty.gov/aaa)

Adult Protective Services

In fiscal year 2007, the number of Adult Protective Services investigations grew by nearly 30 percent from 632 investigations in fiscal year 2006 to 818 in fiscal year 2007.



Of the cases investigated: 74 percent involved persons over age 60; 26 percent involved persons under age 60; and 21 percent involved persons in institutional facilities. There were 472 adults needing protective services.



Of the cases of adults needing protective services:

- 118 involved caretaker neglect.
- 222 involved self neglect.
- 72 involved abuse.
- 55 involved financial exploitation.
- 5 involved other types of exploitation.

Northern Virginia Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program

During program year 2007, the Northern Virginia Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program advocated for the rights and well-being of residents living in the 33 nursing facilities and 77 assisted living facilities in northern Virginia. As of July 1, 2007, Fairfax County had 16 nursing facilities (2,194 beds) and 48 assisted living facilities (3,729 beds), for a total of 5,923 beds, or 55 percent of northern Virginia's 10,803 beds.

The Ombudsman Program handled 278 complaints through formal investigations and negotiations; 159 pertained to Fairfax County. Additionally, the volunteer ombudsmen handled 863 complaints that did not require formal investigations or mediation; 503 of those involved Fairfax County facilities. The program received 9,364 inquiries regarding resident care and facility information; 3,705 came from Fairfax County residents. Consultation to facility staff totaled 214, with 105 of those for Fairfax facilities.

During 2007, the program continued to benefit from a capable team of 73 volunteer advocates, 39 for Fairfax facilities, who significantly increased the program's impact and presence around the region. Volunteer ombudsmen are recruited primarily through area newspapers, volunteer bureaus, outreach presentations, and by word of mouth. The program is benefiting from good media exposure – new applicants are often familiar with the program from reading past publicity. Once trained, volunteer ombudsmen are assigned to one particular facility and are asked to visit at least four hours per week. (www.fairfaxcounty.gov/lcombudsman)

Caregiver Support

Through the Older Americans Act, the federal government provides funding to support family caregivers of elderly persons. The Fairfax Area Agency on Aging uses these federal funds to provide a range of services that support caregivers, including public information, support groups, respite care and assisted transportation. Cross-agency and public-private partnerships are formed to maximize use of the funds and provide more comprehensive services.

The Fairfax Caregiver Seminar Consortium provides seminars for family caregivers. Members of the consortium are the Alzheimer's Association – National Capital Area; Alzheimer's Family Day Center; Fairfax County's Departments of Community and Recreation Services, Health, and Family Services; Thomas West Financial Services; and the Fairfax County Public Library. Twelve seminars were held in fall 2007 and additional seminars will be held in spring 2008.

The "Fairfax Area Resources for Caregivers of Older Adults" (version two) was published in August 2007. *Caregiver Corner Online*, a monthly electronic newsletter sent to all who sign up for it on the county's Web site, reaches over 1,000 subscribers.

The Fairfax County Kinship Care Committee is a collaboration among the Department of Family Services, Fairfax County Public Schools, and other county agencies to research and meet the needs of grandparents and other relatives raising minor children. Two support groups for the relative caregivers have been meeting for more than three years.

In April 2007, respite was provided for the kinship families using two sites on the same day: the Gum Springs Community Center in Alexandria and the Mott Center in Fairfax. These two sites made it easier for kinship families from various regions of the county to attend, and grandparents and other relatives were able to spend time as they liked, knowing that the children were being cared for at the community centers.

The Kinship Care Committee and Fairfax County's Channel 16 produced a televised report, *Senior Times: Grandparents Raising Grandchildren*, which received national recognition from the Alliance for Community Media, as the winner in the seniors category of the 2007 Hometown Video Awards.

Education, Information, and Outreach

Adult and Aging's Disability and Caregiver Resources intake staff responded to more than 5,000 aging, disability and caregiver inquiries, by phone, walk-in, and Internet. The monthly newspaper, the *Golden Gazette*, reaches 25,000 people and now has more than 750 readers subscribing to the large print version. The newspaper is also available online and on tape. Over 6,000 people received long term care information at more than 150 speaking engagements by Adult and Aging staff. In addition, more than 800 county residents were counseled individually about insurance options, and as many attended education sessions on insurance options.

The Long Term Care Coordinating Council identified as a priority focus for its work the need to make information about long term care services readily available to the public. To help address this need, a partnership with SeniorNavigator was initiated. SeniorNavigator is a Web-based, statewide information service for seniors and those who care about them. To ensure access for persons without computers, SeniorNavigator Centers were established in 42 senior centers, libraries and community centers. The Fairfax Area Agency on Aging continues a leadership role in the ongoing partnership with SeniorNavigator.

The Fairfax County Department of Family Services' Disability Services Planning and Development unit developed a strategic partnership with SeniorNavigator and the Long Term Care Coordinating Council to form DisAbilityNavigator, which will provide comprehensive

information and referral services to people with disabilities in Northern Virginia. Ten public hearings were held to gather and document input from people with a variety of disabilities. This information will be used to make the Web site as useful and user friendly as possible. Funding was secured through the Long Term Care Coordinating Council's incentive fund. DisAbilityNavigator is scheduled to be launched in August 2008.

ISSUES/TRENDS

In 2007, the Board of Supervisors released *Anticipating the Future: Fairfax 50+ Action Plan 2007*, which identifies actions to be taken to address the needs of the growing number of older adults and to tap the talents of the older adults in our community. The Board's report focused on community planning and revitalization, universal design concepts to ensure that housing meets the needs of every age, affordability of housing, transportation planning, increased volunteerism and employment options for older adults, building on the strengths of our diversity, supporting caregivers, using technology to increase independence, addressing health and mental health challenges, taking steps for safety and security, and addressing the impact the growing population of older adults has on service capacity. In addition, the Board of Supervisors asked each department to develop initiatives in response to the increasing number of older adults, resulting in more than 60 proposals countywide. The Adult and Aging Division submitted plans for recruiting volunteers, expanding Project Independence (focus on assessments and exercise classes to enhance well-being), and increasing caregiver support.

Partnerships with neighborhood associations, faith communities, businesses, and community based organizations results in communities that support the well-being of older adults and adults with disabilities. Several neighborhood associations in the county are exploring the prospect of forming cooperatives for the purpose of purchasing and sharing personal and home maintenance services essential for living safely in their homes. This cooperative village model was initiated in Beacon Hill in Boston and has gained national attention. Adult and Aging division staff working in partnership with county and community organizations, is arranging an April 12 symposium to explore this and other village approaches so that local groups and neighborhood associations can consider the possibilities for creating a village in their own neighborhoods. Adult and Aging staff are also working with the Long Term Care Coordinating Council on a June forum for faith based organizations to increase awareness of resources for serving older adults.

The cluster care model is successfully and cost effectively arranging, facilitating, and purchasing essential services for persons who are not financially or physically able to secure services for themselves. Through the cluster care model, community gaps in services are identified and addressed. New this year are facilitated online grocery shopping for persons unable to leave home to shop and UPS delivered meals for persons who would otherwise be on a waiting list for Meals on Wheels. Availability and flexibility of funding is essential to continue the improvements being made through cluster services.

The Commission on Aging, the ASSB, and the Long Term Care Coordinating Council will continue to take the lead in assessing community service gaps for older adults and proposing innovative options for action. As noted in the Board of Supervisors' *Fairfax 50+ Action Plan*

development opportunities in housing, transportation, engagement, and specialized services exist and are crucial for the well-being of older adults.

Department of Family Services

Children, Youth and Families Division

Fairfax County is home to over 250,000 children. Those under age 20 account for over 25 percent of the county's population. That percentage is projected to remain steady through the year 2025. Children in Fairfax County are more likely to live in poverty than adults. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, since 1980, poverty rates for children have tended to be higher than those for all persons. Fairfax County's children are also more racially and ethnically diverse than the population as whole. According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2003 American Community Survey, 38.2 percent of Fairfax County's total population were racial or ethnic minorities while 45.1 percent of those under age 20 were racial or ethnic minorities.

The Children, Youth, and Families Division provides the following services to children and their families:

- Child Protective Services.
- Foster Care and Adoption Services.
- Family Preservation Services, including services to homeless individuals and families.
- Child Abuse Prevention Services.

The goals of these services are to protect children from harm and prevent abuse and neglect; support and enhance parents' and families' capacity to safely care for and nurture their children; and ensure the normal development and long-term emotional and physical health of children by supporting families.

The Children, Youth and Families Division strives to serve children and families in the most effective ways possible by incorporating best practices into daily service delivery, evaluating results, and implementing identified process improvements.

To assure accessibility, flexibility and responsiveness to the community, services are provided to families in each of the county's four regional human services offices (Fairfax, Falls Church, North County and South County), as well as in multiple smaller community-based sites.

The Fairfax region includes the central and western areas of Fairfax County, including the City of Fairfax, Centreville, Burke, and parts of Chantilly. Among the initiatives developed by CYF in this region is the Village Improvement Team for the London Towne area. This team of social workers is working in partnership with the London Towne Elementary School staff to bring human services information and services to families in the neighborhoods served by the school. The social workers attend school events and activities to get to know the families and better understand their needs. A survey has been developed that will be distributed to all families to get their feedback on this outreach effort, the goal of which is to make meaningful connections with families. These connections will help families in need seek support and services before their situations become more serious.

The Falls Church region includes the eastern border of the county, including McLean, Annandale, and the City of Falls Church. A major child welfare issue facing this region is

meeting the needs of a diverse population. A significant effort in the Falls Church region in the past year included expanded programming at the Culmore Family Resource Center, including:

- Spanish literacy classes (in partnership with George Mason University and Tenant and Workers United).
- Computer classes for adults (in partnership with St. Anthony's Catholic Church and the county's Office of Partnerships).
- Healthy Relationships Program (in partnership with the Granato Group).
- Girls Scout Leadership Program (in partnership with Hispanics Against Child Abuse and Neglect).
- A new community children's chorus in partnership with the World Children's Choir.
- The Milagros Group, teaching youth jewelry making and sewing skills.

This work is supported by a renewed partnership group including more than 40 nonprofit, faith and community members who meet monthly to guide the center's efforts..

The North County region includes the northern part of Fairfax County, including Reston, Herndon, Great Falls, and parts of Chantilly. Initiatives in the Reston region last year include:

- Family and Community Connections – The Neighborhood Networks staff in the North County region designed an approach for working with families and their communities that was presented at the Prevention Comes First Conference, sponsored by the Governor's Office for Substance Abuse Prevention. This practice model formalizes the process of bringing together the family and all members of the support network developed through the family's participation in the Neighborhood Networks Program. It allows all the members of the family's community support network to meet each other and talk about how they, along with the family, will work to keep the family stable and the children safe even after DFS involvement ends.
- African-American Young Men's Group – This group was initiated by and is led by African-American male staff from the North County region and the Early Intervention Strategy Team (EIST). The group provides a safe and supportive opportunity for young African-American men attending South Lakes High School to practice decision-making skills with male role models.

The South County region includes the southern portion of the county, including the Route 1 corridor, Fort Belvoir, Springfield, and Lorton. Some initiatives in the South County region last year include:

- Parent Support Groups at Riverside, Woodlawn and Woodley Hills - A four-week parent support curriculum was developed that provides information and guidance to help parents better understand and support the educational system. This curriculum also helps parents navigate the human services system.
- Juvenile Court Evening Reporting Center – The Children, Youth and Families Division has engaged in a partnership with Juvenile Domestic Relations Court to operate a reporting center in the South County region during evening hours for children on probation and their parents. CYF provides a parent and adolescent curriculum designed to enhance overall relationships to include effective communications, conflict resolution, and stress management.

ISSUES/TRENDS

Several overarching issues and trends in our community influence services provided by and initiatives undertaken by the Children, Youth and Families Division.

Child Welfare Reform

Several efforts are underway at the national, state and local levels to enhance child welfare services. Virginia has embarked on a major reform effort to improve the lives of many of its most vulnerable children and families and to make the Commonwealth a leader in the field of children's services. A Council on Reform, or CORE Team, has been created to develop a vision for children's services, evaluate services to children and families, and help inform state policy and practice to implement appropriate reforms. Fairfax County is represented on the CORE Team by the deputy county executive, the director of the Department of Family Services and the director of the DFS Children, Youth and Families Division.

The First Lady of Virginia Anne Holton began the "For Keeps" initiative to hear from youth in foster care and from foster parents to find ways to better meet their needs, to find permanent families and family connections for children who are in foster care or are at risk of entering care, and to champion efforts to improve family and community supports for all children. Through a partnership with the Casey Strategic Consulting Group, a number of recommendations have been made to strengthen children's services in many human services agencies in Virginia. Many of the "For Keeps" recommendations are being incorporated into the CORE Team's work. The Fairfax County Department of Family Services is a key participant in these efforts at the state level.

The Children's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has begun the second round of the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR). Virginia's review will be in the summer of 2009. As the largest metropolitan area in the state, Fairfax will be one of the localities reviewed, as it was in 2003. To support the continued improvement of services to children and families and to help prepare for the review, the CYF Division implemented internal quality assurance case reviews. These internal reviews use the same instrument the federal government uses and focus on system performance by evaluating our progress toward achieving better outcomes for children.

Addressing the Disproportionality of Minority Children in Foster Care

Nationwide, there is an issue of a disproportionate number of African-American children in the foster care system, and Fairfax County is no exception. While about 10 percent of the children in Fairfax County are African-American, 41 percent of the children in foster care are African-American. Additionally, in recent years a disproportionate number of Hispanic children have entered foster care. While about 17 percent of Fairfax County's children are Hispanic, 24 percent of the children who entered foster care in FY 2007 were Hispanic.

The Community Collaborative, sponsored by Deputy County Executive Verdiana L. Haywood, brings together government and community members with a strong interest in reducing the overrepresentation of African-American children in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems and improving school readiness and performance. In 2007, the Community

Collaborative sponsored a “Day of Learning” for human services leadership staff. As a group, they viewed the PBS video series, “Race: The Power of an Illusion” and discussed ways they could impact the issue of disproportionality. The Children, Youth and Families Division is continuing this effort and is also holding sessions in 2008 for all division staff to watch and discuss the videos. Ongoing education and changes in practice and policy to address this issue will continue.

A significant focus of the CYF Division is finding permanent families for children in foster care and recruiting foster and adoptive families who reflect the cultural diversity of the children in foster care. The Fairfax Families4Kids initiative enables children waiting for adoptive families to meet prospective adoptive parents and mentors. Since the majority of the Fairfax County children waiting for permanent families are African-American, efforts to engage community members are focused primarily toward the African-American community. Partnerships with community organizations and businesses are an important aspect of this effort. Additionally, 10 foster parents have been trained as ambassadors from the foster care program to make educational presentations in the community about the needs of children in foster care and the need for foster and adoptive parents. The ambassadors often reach out to their personal networks to accomplish this.

Kinship care is a vital component in addressing the issue of the high numbers of African-American children in foster care, because it shares the family-centered philosophy of the African-American culture and provides support to family members who provide primary care for children. In 2007, the Department of Family Services and its partners sponsored two series of support groups for grandparents and other relatives raising children, as well as regular respite Saturdays for caregivers. The department also developed and published a *Kinship Care Resource Guide for Family Caregivers* which can be found online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfsfactsheets/kinship_care_guide.htm.

In 2007, the Nurturing Parenting Program offered two classes using a new version of its curriculum specifically designed to be culturally appropriate for parents of African-American children. In addition, three groups using the standard curriculum were conducted in Spanish. Neighborhood Networks, a school-based parent networking initiative, involved 30 families, almost half whom were African-American. The Early Intervention Strategy Team (EIST) continued its work to provide community-wide public awareness and education about this issue through a series of dialogue groups with community service providers.

Meeting the Needs of a Diverse Population

Since Fairfax County is so large and diverse, local government agencies face significant service delivery challenges including recruiting social workers and foster/adoptive families who reflect the cultural composition of the population we serve. This is critical, not only because of the language capacity, but also for specific cultural understanding and relationship building. CYF continues to develop strategies for recruiting social workers, as well as foster and adoptive families and volunteers to ensure diverse representation. The Children, Youth and Families Division has a regional community-based model of service delivery which integrates public, private, community-based organizations and faith communities. This approach allows families and children to be served within the context of their own community and culture.

Achieving Permanency for Older Children

Fifty percent of the children in foster care at the end of FY 2007 were over the age of 13. There is a growing need for more services for older youth in foster care.

The department has undertaken several efforts to increase permanency for children. The Fairfax Families4Kids initiative focuses on placing children ages nine and older for adoption. These children awaiting adoption are now featured on the Fairfax County Web site. Fairfax County also participates in a partnership with the Washington Area Council of Governments and the Freddie Mac Foundation called The Heart Gallery, a traveling display of photographic portraits of children from the metropolitan area and elsewhere awaiting adoption. The partnership also produces the weekly television show, "Wednesday's Child," which has featured several Fairfax County children who need adoptive homes.

Prevention of Homelessness and Support for Homeless Families

The lack of affordable housing in Fairfax County remains a serious problem and a significant stressor on low-income families, making it difficult for them to remain stable and meet the needs of their children. There are significant waiting lists for Housing Choice (Section 8) vouchers and public housing, permanent supportive housing and other support services programs.

The Katherine K. Hanley Shelter, opened in summer 2007, has space for 20 families and offers an opportunity to intervene in the cycle of homelessness that many families experience. In addition to overseeing the county's six homeless shelters, the department manages the Partnership for Permanent Housing in collaboration with the Department of Housing and Community Development.

Managing an Increasing Workload

In 2004, the Commonwealth of Virginia expanded Structured Decision-Making (SDM) to 27 pilot agencies including Fairfax County. This model, which is being piloted across the CYF Division, provides a framework for more efficient, consistent, and valid decision-making for child welfare agencies. It uses different criteria at each decision point to address the issues at each stage of a case. The use of this model requires additional social worker time for completing various assessments, conducting additional visits with families, and for additional supervisory review.

In March 2006, the State Board of Social Services policy increased the minimum frequency of face-to-face, in-home visits between social workers and children in foster care from quarterly to monthly. This change is congruent with the direction being taken by the Administration for Children, Youth and Families in the Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006. These visits must occur regardless of where the child lives – within Fairfax County, elsewhere in the state, or out of state.

The Virginia Department of Social Services has issued proposed regulations regarding the review of foster and adoptive homes. If the regulations are approved as written, the in-home review of foster and adoptive homes will increase from once every two years to once every six months.

All of the changes indicated above are supported by CYF and local implementation is underway. However, this puts significant pressure on current staff resources.

Children, Youth and Families Division

Child Protective Services

The Child Protective Services (CPS) program is designed to protect children from abuse, neglect and exploitation. Child Protective Services social workers assess child and family strengths and needs and provide services and support to families, such as counseling, referral to parenting programs, child care and other supports to enable children to remain safe in their own homes.

INITIATIVES/PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

The Family Intervention, Resource and Engagement (FIRE) Program – The FIRE Program offers families intensive, short-term crisis intervention and family education services in their home for six to eight weeks. The program goals include preventing out-of-home placement of children, assuring the safety and well-being of children, improving family functioning, collaborating with the family to develop a service plan based on their strengths and competencies, providing culturally competent and community-based services and engaging the extended family and community resources to provide support to the family. Staff is available and accessible to the family 24 hours a day, seven days a week. In 2007, the third year of this program, 63 families received services.

Childhelp USA Children's Center of Virginia - The Childhelp USA Children's Center of Virginia, supported by a public-private partnership, provides a child-friendly facility where victims of sexual abuse receive the continuum of services needed to interrupt the abuse and treat its effects. In 2007, its fifth year of operation, the center served 653 children from infants through age 17, and 469 non-abusing parents or guardians with assessments, investigations, intervention and treatment services.

With funding by a grant from the Victims of Crime Act, Childhelp has begun providing individual and group therapeutic services to sexual abuse victims at the center. During FY 2007, CPS social workers and other partners provided individual and group therapeutic services to 536 sexual abuse victims at the center. Additional therapeutic services are available as a result of a partnership between CPS, Childhelp, the Multicultural Clinical Center and Inova Kellar Center for families impacted by sexual abuse.

PROGRAM STATISTICS

Child Protective Services Hotline

Hotline social workers receive reports of alleged abuse or neglect and assess the information. If the situation meets Virginia's definition of abuse or neglect, the complaint is assigned to a CPS

social worker for investigation or assessment. The hotline is also a helpline since many calls are from people seeking information.

TELEPHONE CALLS TO THE CPS HOTLINE/HELPLINE					
FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007
30,879	31,749	35,430	31,388	27,790	29,684

CPS Investigations and Assessments

Social workers in CPS are responsible for investigating or assessing allegations of child abuse and neglect and providing short-term services when needed.

CPS COMPLAINTS PER YEAR					
FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007
2,302	2,022	2,310	2,071	1,884	2,084

* Of the 2,084 complaints made to the hotline in FY 2007, 23% (488) were investigations; 74% (1,532) were family assessments; and 3% (64) were courtesy interviews for other child protective service agencies.

Ongoing Treatment Services

CPS ongoing treatment social workers are responsible for providing continuing services in serious situations where the child remains in the home and may be at risk for future abuse or neglect, including court-ordered monitoring. Many of these families are involved with multiple service providers addressing a variety of needs. CPS ongoing treatment social workers collaborate with the family and service providers to develop specific interventions to address the needs and goals of the family and to reduce risk and increase safety for the child.

MONTHLY AVERAGE OF FAMILIES RECEIVING ONGOING TREATMENT SERVICES					
FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007
292	225	219	196	154	144

The monthly average number of families receiving ongoing treatment services has dropped by over 50 percent over the past five years. One factor contributing to the decline was a realignment of responsibilities within the Children, Youth and Families Division to improve services and supports for families. The reduction in child abuse neglect complaints reported and ongoing treatment cases also reflects the increasing availability and effectiveness of prevention services available both within the department and in schools and community-based services.

Children, Youth and Families Division

Foster Care and Adoption

Foster care is the provision of substitute care and rehabilitative services for children temporarily separated from their parents. Foster care can be provided until a child is returned to the family or placed in an adoptive home or other permanent living arrangement. Children may be placed in a

variety of settings including foster homes, group homes, hospitals and residential treatment facilities.

Adoption services include counseling to birth parents and preparing for and placing a child into an adoptive home when efforts to reunite the child with his or her birth family are unsuccessful. Support in the form of subsidy payments, therapy and other social services is provided to adoptees and adoptive parents before and after an adoption is finalized.

INITIATIVES/PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Foster Care

Number of Children in Foster Care

The following charts show the number of children entering foster care and the monthly average number of children in foster care over the past six years:

MONTHLY AVERAGE NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE					
FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007
496	475	479	447	437	464

NUMBER OF CHILDREN ENTERING FOSTER CARE					
FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007
186	177	202	164	210	209

At the end of FY 2007, African-Americans comprised 41 percent of the county's foster care population. The African-American population in foster care has decreased nine percent since FY 2003.

The fastest growing group of children in foster care is the teen population. Nearly one-third (29 percent) of the children who entered foster care in FY 2007 were age 13-17. The average age of children in foster care at the end of FY 2007 was 11.43.

AVERAGE AGE (in years) OF CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE AS OF JUNE 30					
FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007
11.91	12.18	12.23	12.48	12.18	11.43

Of the 184 children who exited foster care during FY 2007:

- 36 percent were returned home.
- 19 percent were placed in the custody of relatives.
- 19 percent were placed for adoption.

The remaining 26 percent exited for reasons such as turning 21 years old or refusing to remain in foster care after turning 18. The median length of stay for all children in foster care in FY 2007 is 1.42 years, reflecting a steady decline from 2.71 years in FY 2000.

Independent Living Services

In FY 2007, 239 (50 percent) of the children in foster care were age 13 or older. The department continues to enhance placement and independent living resources to serve older children. Older youth in foster care often have severe emotional or behavioral difficulties requiring expensive, long-term residential treatment. Adolescents, especially those who are in care for a number of years, face numerous challenges in becoming self-sufficient adults once they leave the foster care system. Without proper services, these youth are at risk of homelessness, unemployment, incomplete education and untreated illnesses. All youth in foster care between ages 16 and 21 must receive a range of services to help them transition to independent living. The department operates a mentor program for teens and provides mentor foster homes for those older, more responsible youth who need support rather than parenting. Youth are encouraged to remain in foster care past their 18th birthday so they may continue to receive the services necessary to obtain an education, finish treatment programs, and establish a support network. The department received grant funding for the past three years from the state to implement a program, "Choices for Success," customized specifically for teens and young adults who are close to transitioning out of foster care services. The department's foster care and employment/training programs are partnering to deliver intensive services including educational workshops about job readiness skills, career assessments, paid and unpaid work experiences, assistance with finding financial aid, and other supportive services to help these young people achieve their goals for living independently.

Foster and Adoptive Home Recruitment and Training

- **Ongoing Recruitment and Retention Efforts** – Ongoing recruitment and retention of foster/adoptive families is critical. This area remains a challenge, both locally and nationally. Despite significant efforts, the Fairfax County pool of foster parents continues to need expansion.

The department approved 21 families as adoptive families during FY 2007. As of January 1, 2008, the department had 20 children waiting for identification of an adoptive home. The children who wait the longest for adoptive placement tend to be African-American, male and school-aged. They may have educational delays, behavioral or psychiatric problems, a history of sexual abuse and/or medication needs. Recruitment efforts on behalf of children awaiting adoptive placements include presentations at community fairs, town meetings, churches, businesses and social organizations. Partnerships established with faith-based organizations in all regions of the county enable the department to conduct orientations and training in the community and to participate in events hosted by those organizations to raise awareness about adoption.

The racial/ethnic balance of the department's 170 foster homes remained the same during 2007. Caucasian families make up the majority of foster homes (68%). Twenty-two percent of DFS foster homes are African-American, six percent are multi-racial and two percent are Hispanic. The remaining two percent are American Indian and Pacific Islander. The

department works to increase the cultural diversity of foster homes through culturally sensitive recruitment efforts and partnerships with community organizations, businesses and faith communities. The department has developed a strategic recruitment plan that targets certain neighborhoods and media channels for reaching minority foster/adoptive families. As part of this effort, the Foster Care and Adoption Ambassador Program was implemented. Ten foster and adoptive parents are currently trained to speak publicly on behalf of the department to educate residents about the needs of children in foster care. They utilize their personal networks to carry out this community education.

For additional information on Foster and Adoptive Parent Recruitment, please refer to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/childreneyouth/fostercare.htm (“Becoming a Foster Parent”).

- Fairfax Initiative to Increase Adoptive Homes for Hard-to-Place Children** – The Fairfax Families4Kids initiative strives to find permanent families and lifelong connections for children in foster care age 9 and over, the majority of whom are male and African-American. The children and youth take part in monthly activities that provide them with an opportunity to interact with other children who need homes and to meet potential adoptive parents and mentors. Through this experience the children gain self-confidence, develop poise, and actively participate in the recruitment process on their own behalf. In FY 2007, 44 children and youth were served through Fairfax Families4Kids. Twenty-eight community based organizations partnered with the department in this initiative. A professional photographer volunteers her services to photograph many of the children and events. In 2007, six children were featured in the Metropolitan Washington Council of Government’s Heart Gallery, sponsored by the Freddie Mac Foundation, a photo display that lets the community know about the children who need permanent families.

Adoption

Finalized Adoptions

As of December 31, 2007, 19 percent (90) of the children in foster care had the goal of adoption. The 35 finalized adoptions during FY 2007 represent 19 percent of the children who exited foster care during the year.

FINALIZED ADOPTIONS - FAIRFAX COUNTY FOSTER CARE YOUTH					
FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007
46	27	43	30	40	35

Children Receiving Subsidized Adoption Services

Families who adopt children with special mental, emotional and medical needs are entitled to receive ongoing casework support from the department, as well as federal and state financial assistance to enable the permanent placement of these children. Support includes home-based services, counseling and treatment, child care, health and education services, respite care, transportation services, and quality assurance for services received. The number of post-final order subsidy cases continues to grow as the adoptions of children are finalized, because most children are eligible to receive assistance until age 21. This growth in the number of post-final

order subsidy cases was offset in FY 2007 by the unusually large number (46) of young people who turned 21 during that year, reaching the age limit for eligibility for the subsidy.

ACTIVE ADOPTION SUBSIDY CASES (POST-FINAL ORDER)					
FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007
520	522	551	563	592	595

Note: Numbers are the total at the close of each fiscal year.

Children, Youth and Families Division

Family Preservation Services

Family Preservation Services are designed to improve family functioning and increase self-sufficiency in families who are at moderate to high risk of child abuse, neglect or family dissolution. These families may struggle with a number of complex issues that destabilize the family structure, such as family violence, poor parenting, substance abuse, mental or physical illness, and/or homelessness. This program area also oversees the department’s efforts to prevent homelessness and to provide short-term shelter and transitional housing support to move families into more permanent housing.

INITIATIVES/PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Intensive Services

Family Preservation Services staff works with families referred to them by Child Protective Services (CPS) and Foster Care; Fairfax County Public Schools; Department of Systems Management for Human Services — Coordinated Services Planning (CSP); Fairfax Area Christian Emergency and Transition Services (FACETS) and other local human services providers.

Social workers provide an array of services to families: comprehensive assessment; case management; counseling; parent training and education; linkage to other services; monitoring of purchased services; life skills training; court-ordered home studies; and court-ordered protective supervision.

The Domestic Violence staff continued to provide specialized direct services (safety planning, court accompaniment, education and referral) to families impacted by domestic violence. They are a significant presence on workgroups, most notably the Fairfax County Domestic Violence Service Operations Transition and Redesign Project and the Domestic Violence Prevention, Policy and Coordinating Council, both of which seek to enhance services to victims and their families through improvement, alignment and integration of services.

The Family Group Conference coordinators continued to organize and facilitate conferences for families at risk of abusing or neglecting their children, focusing their efforts on locating and

engaging relatives to provide support to the families. They also provided numerous trainings and consultations to county staff, as well as other agencies that are developing programs.

In 2007, 66 percent of the families served by Family Preservation Services social workers demonstrated improvement in family functioning and well-being after receiving intensive services.

FAMILIES SERVED BY THE FAMILY PRESERVATION SERVICES PROGRAM						
Monthly Average:	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007
Number of Families Served	245	297*	333	344	331	386
Number of Children in Families	544	632	703	737	659	735

Note: In 2007, almost 38% of the families served spoke a language other than English in the home; approximately 66% of those families spoke Spanish. In FY07, the FPS program served a total of 672 families, an unduplicated count.

Services to Prevent Homelessness and Serve Homeless Families and Individuals

Although the results of the *2007 Point in Time Survey* had not been released to the public in time to be included in this report, we know from past estimates that at any given time approximately 2,000 people in the Fairfax-Falls Church community – including nearly 700 children – are homeless. Some live in shelters, motels, transitional housing or “doubled up” with other families awaiting shelter placement. The Department of Family Services oversees the county’s six emergency shelters and hypothermia programs and contracts with several nonprofit organizations to operate the shelters.

Shelters – In FY 2007 a total of 2,071 persons were served in the full-service emergency shelter program, receiving shelter, meals and case management services. Of those individuals, 1,609 were adults without children, and 462 were members of 130 families with children. An additional 561 single adults were served as part of the program’s overflow and hypothermia prevention programs, many of whom may have received services as part of the full-service program at another time during the year, and therefore do not represent an unduplicated count.

Reston Interfaith operates the Embry Rucker Shelter, which serves both individuals and families. New Hope Housing operates Eleanor Kennedy (adults) and Mondloch II (families). Volunteers of America operates the Bailey’s Shelter (adults). Shelter House, Inc., operates two county family shelters: Shelter House and the Katherine K. Hanley Family Shelter.

TOTAL NUMBER OF HOMELESS PERSONS SERVED IN THE EMERGENCY SHELTER SYSTEM						
	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007
Individuals (duplicated)	1,916	1,788	2,194	1,861	2,260	2,170
Persons in Families	510	498	382	440	454	462
Total	2,426	2,286	2,576	2,301	2,714	2,632

Note: Does not include 561 single adults served in the winter hypothermia program.

Services for Families and Children

Emergency Assistance – Emergency assistance provides eligible families and individuals with a grant or loan to help with rent or mortgage, security deposits, utility payments, and storage or moving expenses. The Department of Family Services and the Department of Systems Management for Human Services (DSMHS) work together to provide emergency assistance. Expenditures increased 39 percent from FY 2006 to FY 2007.

EMERGENCY HOUSING ASSISTANCE EXPENDITURES (FY 2003 - FY 2007 COMPARISON)					
	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007
Total	\$203,215	\$219,822	\$210,374	\$254,728	\$354,593
Number of Households Served	not counted	not counted	352	427	561

Katherine K. Hanley Family Shelter –Construction of the Katherine K. Hanley Family Shelter was completed on schedule in July 2007 and the opening ceremony was held on August 4, 2007. Shelter House, Inc., was selected to conduct the day-to-day operations of the shelter, with oversight and management provided by DFS. The shelter began receiving families in mid-August, and reached full capacity of 20 families in October.

The shelter and county staff have created a model of service delivery which supports the “housing first” concept articulated in Fairfax County’s “Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness.” Shelter staff works closely with county service providers including DFS - Office for Children, DFS Employment Services, Health Department nurses, and the Homeless Liaison for Fairfax County Public Schools to prepare families for moving out of the shelter to permanent housing. Volunteers supplement these services with recreation, tutoring and other activities. The Hanley Shelter serves as a model for the other family shelters to emulate as new strategies for serving homeless families are adopted.

Katherine Hanley, the former Fairfax County supervisor for whom the shelter is named, has agreed to be the honorary chair of the Shelter Advisory Board which held its first meeting on September 25, 2007. The board includes representatives from the business and faith communities, service and homeless organizations, neighborhood representatives, and DFS. The purpose of the board is two-fold: to facilitate good communication between the shelter and the surrounding residential and business community, and to assist Fairfax County and the shelter operator in identifying and developing resources for the families.

Motels - When space is not available at the family shelters and no other housing alternatives exist, homeless families with children may be placed in motels. The department works with community partners to provide services to families while they await placement in the shelter. Since FY 2005, the number of families served has gradually decreased; our partners have suggested that the families are larger, and therefore are waiting longer for appropriate shelter space to accommodate them.

HOMELESS PERSONS IN MOTELS						
	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007
Number of Families	180	134	134	122	94	83
Number of Persons	647	465	415	399	346	324

Transitional Housing - The department continued to administer two federally funded transitional housing grant programs – the Community Housing Resource Program (CHRP III) and Reaching Independence through Support and Education (RISE). The department’s nonprofit partners (Northern Virginia Family Service, Reston Interfaith, Shelter House, United Community Ministries and New Hope Housing) operated these programs, which provide support services to high-risk, formerly homeless families in scattered-site, community-based housing. In FY 2007, 82 families received services in these programs.

Partnership for Permanent Housing - Permanent Housing Initiative – During 2007, 25 families entered the program and are currently working with their case managers in preparation to purchase their first homes. The families receive supportive services and case management from nonprofit organizations, and participate in ongoing training on money management, credit restoration, banking services, savings programs and homeownership seminars.

Services for Individuals

Medical Respite – Eighty-seven percent of homeless individuals are either mentally ill, chronic substance abusers or have a dual diagnosis of mental illness and substance abuse; approximately 31 percent have chronic health problems. This year, DFS in partnership with the Fairfax County Health Department and Reston Interfaith, continued the Medical Respite program for homeless persons living in shelters. The program provides a temporary stay, combined with nursing and supportive services, for homeless persons recovering from more intensive illnesses and/or injuries.

Hypothermia Prevention – There is a continuing need in the county for hypothermia prevention services for persons who do not stay in the county’s emergency shelters. For the winter of 2007 – 2008, the county partnered with homeless service providers (New Hope Housing, Reston Interfaith, Volunteers of America, FACETS) and the faith community to provide hypothermia prevention services in various parts of the county. The many partners in this effort, including 2,300 volunteers from 63 faith communities have a shared understanding that temporary shelter is a very limited solution and that attaining permanent housing for homeless people is the desired solution.

Faith communities in southern Fairfax County united to provide hypothermia prevention services for the last two years and are providing the service again this winter. Another hypothermia prevention site that opened last year in Reston is continuing this winter to provide shelter in the northern part of the county.

Children, Youth and Families Division

Child Abuse Prevention Services

Throughout the Children, Youth and Families Division, services are focused on strengthening families and preventing abuse and neglect. The Child Abuse Prevention program area was developed to enhance the division's prevention efforts. Child Abuse Prevention Services support families, particularly those at risk of child abuse or neglect, through community-based, family-focused prevention and early intervention services.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Five strategies are utilized in Child Abuse Prevention Services: one-to-one education of family members; group-based parenting education conducted at community sites; drop-in, neighborhood-based service delivery and coalition building to improve family and community conditions; community-wide public education and awareness initiatives; and engaging the community by involving volunteers and donors in child welfare programs.

One-to-One Education and Support of Families

The Healthy Families Fairfax and mentoring programs provide one-to-one education and support of families.

Healthy Families Fairfax is a home-based early intervention and prevention program offering first-time parents at risk of maltreating their child an opportunity to learn parenting skills and receive emotional support and case management services. It is supported through a partnership among DFS, the Fairfax County Health Department and three nonprofit organizations – Northern Virginia Family Service, UCM-Community Solutions and Reston Interfaith.

HEALTHY FAMILIES FAIRFAX						
	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007
Number of Families Served	604	649	671	650	684	638
Number of Children Served	391	449	707*	615	630	563

* Until FY 2004, the number of children served was tabulated differently than the number of families. In FY 2004, a more accurate method of calculating children served was established capturing the number of children served throughout the year.

Mentoring - Children and parents who are clients of DFS, and would benefit from one-to-one mentoring, are referred to receive four to eight hours per month of mentoring by trained volunteers. Through the BeFriend-A-Child (BAC) and BeFriend-A-Parent (BAP) mentoring programs, volunteers provide role modeling, companionship, support, guidance and advocacy. Mentors help children develop the protective capabilities that come from having positive self-esteem, hobbies and interests, good decision-making skills, and a sense of responsibility. BeFriend-A-Parent goals include increasing parent self-esteem, decreasing stress and isolation, and helping parents rely less on their children

to meet their emotional needs. Sixty-six children were served in the BeFriend-A-Child program, and 17 parents were served in the BeFriend-A-Parent program in FY 2007.

Group-Based Education and Support

The CYF Division offers two group-based education/support programs: the Nurturing Parenting Program and Good Touch, Bad Touch®.

The Nurturing Parenting Program is a structured educational experience for parents and children including adolescent children. In FY 2007, the Nurturing Parenting Program conducted a total of 17 groups, including three groups using the Spanish curriculum, two groups using the curriculum designed to be culturally appropriate for parents of African-American children, and three adolescent groups.

NURTURING PARENTING PROGRAM						
	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007
Number of Families Served	145	152	197	231	195	174
Number of Parents Served	194	199	265	321	267	240
Number of Children Served*	229	226	335	392	310	252
Number of Groups Held**	15	15	19	23	18	17

* Number of children served includes young children and adolescents.

** Four groups were held in Spanish in FY 2002, three in FY 2003, five in FY 2004, six in FY 2005, four in FY 2006 and three in FY 2007. All others were in English.

Good Touch, Bad Touch® is a comprehensive child abuse prevention curriculum to teach students in preschool through 6th grade the skills that play a major role in preventing or interrupting child abuse/sexual abuse in their own lives. Based on pre- and post-tests, participating children showed a marked increase in their understanding about how to protect themselves from harm. In FY 2007, 371 children participated in 47 Good Touch, Bad Touch® groups.

Information about the Nurturing Parenting Program and the Good Touch, Bad Touch® Program, as well as other parenting resources, is available to the public on the DFS parenting resource Web page at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/ParentingResource/default.htm.

Neighborhood-Based Organizing and Coalition Building to Improve Family and Community Conditions

Family Resource Centers offer culturally sensitive, prevention-focused programs. The primary goal is to strengthen families in their own neighborhoods by providing parents with opportunities to learn and improve their skills in raising and nurturing their children. The department operates two centers: the Culmore Family Resource Center and the Springfield/Franconia Family Resource Center. Family Services provides financial support for several other centers. A total of 26,344 visitors (duplicated count) dropped in and/or participated in programs at the centers in FY 2007.

Neighborhood Networks (NN) is a collaboration between DFS and Fairfax County Public Schools focused on educating and connecting families to support systems. Families nominated by the schools for this program are families who are committed to good parenting and stability and encourage their children to work for a better life. Neighborhood Networks partners with schools in each region. In the North County region, the schools are: Forest Edge Elementary, Dogwood Elementary, Terraset Elementary and McNair Elementary. In the Fairfax region, the new partner school for 2008 is London Towne Elementary. In the Falls Church region, the partner school is Annandale Terrace Elementary. In the South County region, the partner schools are Riverside Elementary, Woodlawn Elementary, and Woodley Hills Elementary.

NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORKS						
	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007
Number of Children Served	58	69	101	113	113	104
Number of Families Served	16	21	28	33	33	30
Number of Partner Schools	3	5	6	6	8	8

* Numbers include children and families served across multiple years.

Engaging the Community through Public Awareness and Education

The Early Intervention Strategy Team and the Blue Ribbon Campaign Committee educate professionals and the public about child abuse and neglect prevention.

The Early Intervention Strategy Team (EIST) was established in November 1996 to address the disproportionate representation of African-American children in the Fairfax-Falls Church area needing out-of-home services. The team was charged with identifying reasons for this disproportionate representation and to develop individual, family, school and community early intervention strategies for working with at-risk African-American children and their families. The EIST uses small group dialogue to engage frontline workers in learning from their own and others' experiences. The goal is to have service providers integrate awareness of the African-American culture and early intervention philosophy into their service delivery.

Blue Ribbon Campaign to Prevent Child Abuse

As part of a larger national Blue Ribbon Campaign focusing on preventing child abuse, the department's local campaign continues to assume greater responsibility for educating the Fairfax community on child abuse prevention. Blue Ribbon outreach efforts are supported by various public and private organizations and corporations.

Outreach and education efforts for 2007 include:

- 79,000 Blue Ribbon Campaign items were distributed at events held in April.
- 109,000 additional Blue Ribbon Campaign items were distributed throughout the year, including:
 - Blue Ribbon business card magnets with phone numbers for CPS Help/Hotline.
 - Blue Ribbon notepads with phone numbers for CPS Help/Hotline.
 - Bookmark cards, "10 Tips for Keeping Kids Safe."

- Blue Ribbon Pencils “Keeping Kids Safe in Fairfax County.”
- Stickers, pencils, and “Words that Help Kids” posters.
- 92,000 copies of “Understanding and Guiding Children as They Grow and Develop” were distributed in English and Spanish.
- 25,000 pocket-size “Child Supervision Guidelines” were distributed in English, Farsi, Spanish, Korean and Vietnamese languages.

The materials produced and distributed by the Blue Ribbon Campaign can be accessed at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/childreneyouth/blue_ribbon_campaign.htm.

Engaging the Community by Involving Volunteers and Donors in Child Welfare Programs

The Volunteer Services Program recruits, trains and supports volunteers to work with the division’s programs and the families they serve. The CYF Family Donor Program accepts donations from businesses, community organizations and individuals for children and families in child welfare programs who need clothes and other essentials.

VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT						
	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007
Total Unduplicated Volunteers* does not include group or special event volunteers	N/A	N/A	N/A	147	149	128
Total Unduplicated Volunteer Hours	N/A	N/A	N/A	9,808	10,422	9,191
Value of Volunteer Hours FY 2006: \$18.04 FY 2007: \$18.40	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$174,484	\$188,013	\$169,114

* A new volunteer database tracking system was created during FY 2005.

DONOR CONTRIBUTIONS						
	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007
Value of Donations	\$283,426	\$252,404	\$299,051	\$287,670	\$329,833	\$123,827
Total Number of Donors	153	194	213	290	290	118

* Beginning in FY 2007 holiday donations for children in foster care are managed by the Foster Care and Adoption program area instead of Child Abuse Prevention.

Department of Family Services

Self-Sufficiency Division

The Self-Sufficiency Division provides the following services to job seekers and economically disadvantaged residents of Fairfax County and the cities of Falls Church and Fairfax:

- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).
- Virginia Initiative for Employment not Welfare (VIEW).
- Medicaid and Family Access to Medical Insurance Security (FAMIS).
- Food Stamps.
- Other cash assistance programs (e.g., General Relief, Energy Assistance)
- Workforce Investment Act (WIA) – Adult, Dislocated Workers and Youth Services.
- Other grant-funded employment and training programs.

The goal of public assistance programs is to prevent individuals from falling into poverty beyond a certain level. These federal and state programs provide those who are unemployed, underemployed or unable to work due to age and/or disability access to basics, such as health care, food and shelter. Services are provided in each of the county's four regional human services offices (Fairfax, Falls Church, South County and Reston), as well as in multiple community-based sites such as area hospitals, and Community Health Care Clinics. Employment and training services are also community based and delivered through one-stop employment centers, called SkillSource Centers, which serve employers and job seekers.

There has been a steady and significant increase in demand for public assistance since FY2001. This trend can be attributed to policy changes at the state and federal levels, successful outreach efforts, increasing population and most recently, changes in the economy.

In Fiscal Year 2007, the division authorized more than \$292 million in public assistance benefit payments (not included in the agency's budget) on behalf of county residents and managed an average monthly public assistance caseload of 49,681 cases, a 71 percent increase from FY 2001. The department has made continuous efforts to streamline business practices and has extended hours of operation to better meet customer needs. Even so, the increase in cases without corresponding staff increases is taxing the division's capacity to deliver services in accordance with federal and state requirements. It should be noted, that unlike other services in the county where waiting lists may be created if demand for services exceeds capacity, federal entitlement programs, such as Food Stamps and Medicaid, do not permit this practice. These mandated programs give everyone the right to apply for benefits, receive a determination of their eligibility, and receive benefits if eligible, within policy established timeframes regardless of associated workload created and staff capacity to handle the additional work. Agencies that fail to meet performance mandates (timeliness of delivery of services and quality) may be placed in corrective action ranging from 'technical assistance' from state and federal agencies to financial sanctions depending on the severity of the situation. Families and individuals in need are greatly affected when they cannot access these basic services in a timely manner.

A description of the programs offered and a caseload breakdown by year since 2001 follows:

AVERAGE NUMBER OF MONTHLY PUBLIC ASSISTANCE/WELFARE REFORM CASES						
	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007
TANF	1,149	1,253	1,378	1,419	1,422	1,364
Food Stamps	6,952	7,487	8,899	9,855	10,299	10,553
Medicaid	20,814	23,224	29,875	32,889	35,667	35,696
VIEW	243	322	390	419	414	366
Other	2,103	2,369	1,986	1,910	1,699	1,702
TOTAL	31,018	34,333	45,528	46,491	49,501	49,681

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE HIGHLIGHTS

Food Stamps Program

In FY 2007, an average of 10,553 families per month received \$1.6 million in nutrition assistance through the Food Stamps program, or \$19.8 million for the year. The purpose of the Food Stamp program is to alleviate hunger and malnutrition by providing eligible low-income families additional food purchasing power through income supplementation.

Medicaid/Family Access to Medical Insurance Security (FAMIS) and FAMIS Plus

In FY 2007, an average of 43,917 individuals (13,714 adults and 30,203 children) participated in the Medicaid/FAMIS Plus programs. The county also enrolled an additional 5,668 children in FAMIS. In FY 2007, a monthly average of \$22.3 million (or \$267 million for the year) was paid out under the Medicaid/FAMIS Plus programs to county residents. The federal/state funded Medicaid and FAMIS programs pay medical service providers for services rendered to eligible elderly, disabled and blind individuals; pregnant women; and low-income families with children. FAMIS is the federal/state program that provides low-cost health insurance for children in low-income families that earn too much to be eligible for Medicaid, but do not have private health insurance. FAMIS Plus is Virginia's name for children's Medicaid.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and the Virginia Initiative for Employment not Welfare (VIEW)

In FY 2007, an average of 1,364 families per month received \$459,776 per month in TANF benefits, or a total of \$5.5 million for the year. In addition to the cash benefit, 1,036 parents received employment services under the VIEW program.

The TANF program provides monthly cash assistance to low-income families so families can stay together. VIEW is the mandatory employment program for able-to-work parents with children 12 months of age or older receiving TANF. The maximum amount of benefits a participating TANF family receives ranges from \$242 per month for one person to \$570 per month for six or more people. The average monthly TANF grant in Fairfax County is \$326.

VIEW participants who were employed during FY 2007 achieved an average wage of \$9.44 per hour and average monthly earnings of \$1,342. It should be noted that VIEW families become

ineligible for TANF and VIEW at the 24-month time limit for the program or when wages from employment, combined with other available income, reach 100 percent of the federal poverty level (for example: \$1,431 monthly, the Federal Poverty Level for 2007 for a family of three).

During FY 2007, the Fairfax County VIEW program provided 1,036 parents with economic, social and employment services including skills training and supportive services that helped them keep their families together. The VIEW program also provided:

- More than 600 educational and vocational assessments.
- 89 neuropsychological evaluations for participants who screened in with potential hidden disabilities. The evaluations were followed up with referrals and services to help participants overcome or manage the identified challenges.
- More than 60 VIEW participants with English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes.
- 636 participants, who became employed, with follow-up services including extended Medicaid, transportation and child care support when needed.
- 286 VIEW participants with meaningful work activities ranging from skill training to volunteer work experience.
- 88 individuals with a certificate for completing intensive job readiness training in Workplace Essential Skills classes.

Other Public Assistance Programs

Other important public assistance programs managed by DFS that address needs of eligible low-income families and individuals in our community include: Energy Assistance, Refugee Assistance, General Relief, Aid to Families with Dependent Children / Foster Care (AFDC/FC), Auxiliary Grants for the elderly and disabled, Fraud Prevention, and Repatriation. These programs comprise approximately 3.4 percent of the public assistance caseload or 1,702 cases. Another critical program administered by DFS, the seasonal Energy Assistance Program (Cooling, Heating and Crisis Assistance), served more than 1,350 additional county residents.

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Extended Business Hours – In late 2005, DFS extended its hours of operation for public assistance services in response to requests from customers and in keeping with the department’s strategic goal to improve access to services for clients. Public assistance services are now available Monday through Thursday, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., and Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. This is a change from the previous schedule of Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Since these expanded hours of operation have been in place for over a year, the department is now gathering data and surveying clients as part of the evaluation process.

Continuous Quality Improvement – As caseloads continue to rise and budgets shrink, the division is undergoing again a process analysis and system reengineering. Working with a nationally recognized expert in the field of process improvement, the division will rethink its approach to service delivery in an effort to continue to maximize efficiencies, maintain excellent customer service and meet federal and state performance mandates.

Health Access Assistance Team (HAAT) Program - The HAAT program is a partnership among the Fairfax County Community Health Care Network (CHCN), the Fairfax County Health Department, the Office of Partnerships and Northern Virginia Family Service. The HAAT mission is to ensure that people without health insurance have access to and use the most appropriate health care resources available to them. This is achieved by simplifying access to federal, state and local health care services through coordinated “points of entry.” HAAT teams are located at each of the three Community Health Care Network offices located in Reston, South County and Bailey’s Crossroads. In FY 2007, over 8,000 families were assessed and evaluated for enrollment in health care programs including Medicaid, FAMIS Plus, FAMIS, State and Local Hospitalization, CHCN, Medical Care for Children’s Partnership (MCCP), MCCP Kaiser, and Kaiser-Bridge. Individuals ineligible for enrollment are connected to other resources in the community, such as pharmaceutical assistance programs. Effective April 1, 2006, HAAT was given responsibility for the recertification process for patients enrolled with CHCN, a function previously provided by the Department of Systems Management for Human Services (DSMHS). An average of 500 patients a month must recertify for continued services through CHCN.

CASH (Creating Assets Savings and Hope) Volunteer Tax Assistance Program - The Self-Sufficiency Division is working with the Fairfax County Office of Partnerships to provide free tax preparation services to low-income working families. The goal of the program is to enable families to avoid commercial charges for tax preparation services, maximize their tax their refunds by avoiding expensive advance tax refund loans, and to refer families to community resources that provide free services to maximize financial assets through savings and bank accounts, financial education, budget coaching, and credit repair. Tax preparation services are provided at regional human services offices, libraries, and community centers.

EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

The Self-Sufficiency Division of the Department of Family Services, under contract with the SkillSource Group, Inc., manages and delivers Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and other federal and state funded employment and training programs. The SkillSource Group, Inc. is the administrative arm of the Northern Virginia Workforce Investment Board (NVWIB). The NVWIB is the governing body for this local workforce area, which includes the counties of Fairfax, Prince William and Loudoun, as well as the cities of Falls Church, Fairfax, Manassas and Manassas Park.

Employment and training services are delivered through one-stop centers called SkillSource Centers, which serve employers and job seekers. A combination of mandatory (under WIA) and voluntary partners enable clients to access a wide variety of employment and support services under one roof. The Department of Family Services operates three of the five SkillSource Centers in this region, in South County, Falls Church, and Reston, plus an additional employment resource center in Fairfax.

2007 Program Statistics

- 27,000 visits were made to the employment and SkillSource Centers in Fairfax County, representing over 10,000 individuals. The centers reported 956 placements with an average annual salary of \$35,547. We estimate that the number of placements is vastly under-reported because job placements for individuals not enrolled in WIA programs are tracked on a voluntary basis.
- 192 individuals were enrolled in Intensive Services through Workforce Investment Act programs. Eighty-eight participants were placed in jobs with an average annual salary of \$41,849. Another 36 participants completed occupational skills training and were placed in jobs at an average annual salary of \$49,736. The remaining 68 participants are currently conducting their job search and/or in training.
- The Center for Business Planning and Development, which is co-located at the Falls Church SkillSource Center and provides small business startup and expansion services, helped to start 41 new businesses in 2007, expand 11 existing businesses, and create 53 new jobs.

2007 Program Highlights

- **Third Annual “Envision Your Success” Career and Entrepreneurship Expo**
More than 60 employers exhibited at the Third Annual Career and Entrepreneurship Expo, in March 2007, which featured a mega job fair, and workshops on careers (for adults and youth) and business startup. The event attracted over 2,500 job seekers and prospective entrepreneurs, a significantly higher attendance than in 2006 when 1,800 individuals attended the Expo. This year’s event is scheduled for March 29, 2008. The EYS Expo is the Employment and Training program’s major event, with the primary goal of connecting job seekers to employers who have available jobs, and prospective entrepreneurs to business startup resources.
- **Job Corner Youth Employment Center**
Job Corner opened in the department’s Falls Church regional office to help meet the growing need for youth employment services in our local area. Job Corner is a youth-friendly, safe place where teens and young adults can find positive adult role models, job leads, education options, apprenticeship information, workshops on job readiness skills, public transportation tips, scholarship listings, and other free resources to help them prepare for the world of work. Job Corner served as the headquarters for the Educating Youth through Employment (EYE) initiative of the SkillSource Group, Inc., and hosted workshops on careers and financial management for over 70 young people. Job Corner has welcomed numerous community stakeholders for information sessions, tours, youth job search resources, and workshops.
- **Statewide SHARE (Sharing How Access to Resources Empowers) Network**
Virginia is launching a statewide initiative to establish one-stop employment center access points at faith and community-based organizations (FCBO). The project emerged

from the US Department of Labor's investment in pilot grants to engage FCBOs as committed and active partners in the workforce investment system, and to increase access for individuals who cannot, or would not, visit an existing one-stop center. The statewide goal is to establish 17 SHARE access points by spring 2008. Three SHARE access points are underway in this local workforce area, with plans to add additional sites based on geographic need and FCBO interest.

- **Initiatives for Underserved Populations**

The Fairfax County SkillSource employment centers continue to pursue funding opportunities to help underserved populations, including ex-offenders and long-term care workers.

For Ex-Offenders

The success of the Virginia Serious and Violent Offender Re-Entry Initiative to facilitate the re-entry of ex-offenders into the community has enabled a continued partnership with the Virginia Department of Corrections, to provide employment services as a critical component to successful community re-entry. In 2007, the Northern Virginia Workforce Investment Board was awarded funding from the Governor's discretionary fund to establish an employment resource center in the Fairfax County Pre-Release Center, in partnership with the Office of the Sheriff.

For Long-Term Care Workers

Based on the success of the Virginia Department of Medical Assistance (DMAS) program to serve long-term direct health care workers, the Fairfax County SkillSource employment centers have established a cross-division partnership with the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging to improve job satisfaction among personal care aides and increase retention rates to improve overall client satisfaction.

ISSUES/TRENDS

- An economic recession is forecast by some economists for the near future. Traditionally, when the country is in a recession, more county residents will seek support from public assistance and employment services further increasing the department's workload.
- The Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) is updating its caseload standard formula. VDSS uses this formula to determine the number of staff required to support the work of local agencies. The county's legislative program attachment, *Critical Needs in Human Services*, points out that using the current state formula, which was developed in 2000, DFS would need approximately 62 additional workers to maintain the level of performance required by state and federal regulations. The updated caseload formula is expected to be available in spring 2008, though state funding for needed positions is not anticipated to be considered until the FY 2011 – FY 2012 biennium.

- **Virginia Community College System (VCCS) Designated State Agency for the Workforce Investment Act**

Since the inception of the Workforce Investment Act in 1998, the Virginia Employment Commission has been the designated fiscal and administrative agency and grant recipient for the federal WIA program. Effective July 1, 2008, the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) will assume these responsibilities. The VCCS will also make recommendations to the Governor, in consultation with the Workforce Sub Cabinet, on the expenditures of the Governor's 15 percent WIA statewide discretionary funds and the 25 percent statewide Rapid Response funds; administer the WIA Rapid Response program; promote regional cooperation; and provide support to the Virginia Workforce Council. Executive Order 61 was signed on January 4, 2008, and the impact to the local workforce areas has not yet been determined.

- **Planned Consolidation of Local Workforce Areas**

In the Governor's Strategic Plan for Workforce Development, the top priority is to "Create substantial structural reform through consolidations to reduce administrative costs and streamline and integrate workforce policy and services for business, workers, and job seekers." One of the strategies to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of regional and local workforce development efforts is to consolidate regional Workforce Investment Boards during 2008.

This report can be viewed online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/pdf/ASSB2007.pdf

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Fairfax County is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination in all county programs services and activities and will provide reasonable accommodations upon request. To request this information in an alternate format, call 703-324-5870; TTY 703-222-9452.

March 2008