



Fairfax County Department of  
**Family Services**

# ANNUAL REPORT 2010

**Advisory Social Services Board**



### Making a Positive Difference - Responding to Challenging Times

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

#### Continuing Effects of Recession

The Department of Family Services continues to provide critical assistance to tens of thousands of community residents. Although the economy shows some signs of recovery, people affected by economic recession and job loss continue to come to DFS in record numbers seeking help, many for the first time.

Most people coming to DFS are seeking public assistance, such as Medicaid and food stamps (now called SNAP - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program). Applications for both programs continue to skyrocket. In just 18 months, from July 1, 2009, to December 31, 2010, the number of households receiving public assistance through the county's Department of Family Services increased by 31 percent, from 58,561 to 76,906 households.

DFS SkillSource (employment) Centers helped 61,396 job seekers in Fiscal Year 2010, including experienced workers displaced by the recession's impact as well as lower-skilled and younger workers competing for fewer available jobs.



#### Paying it Forward

Earlier this year, a man was standing outside the DFS customer lobby when the supervisor opened the office. The man told her that he now had a job and wished to repay DFS for the assistance he had received during his unemployment. The supervisor explained that repayment was not necessary, but the man insisted. He gave her a check for \$200 and a note: "My income will stabilize again and I will again be self-sufficient. I would like the money that DFS has provided me to be used for another needy case...thanks again for your support." His check was deposited in the department's "Needy Families and Children Fund" and will be used, as he wished, to help others.

#### Impact on Families

Job loss, homelessness and poverty can be risk factors for child abuse and neglect. Child protective services investigations and assessments increased 19 percent from FY 2008 to FY 2010 (from 2235 to 2677). Prevention programs are in high demand, such as the Healthy Families program for new parents, parenting education programs and supportive services.

Abuse and neglect of older people and adults with disabilities has also increased in recent years. Since 2008, adult protective services investigations have increased 17 percent and the number of clients needing protective services has gone up by 26 percent.

Artemis House, the county's shelter for victims of domestic and sexual violence, has been consistently full for three years. In FY 2010, the shelter staff housed 133 adults and 170 children. Due to the shelter's limited physical capacity (34 beds), many of those needing help were placed in motels and neighboring shelters. With just one domestic violence bed for every 31,000 people in the county, Fairfax County has the worst ratio in Virginia. Due to limited resources and increased demand, the county has had to set up a waiting list for survivors of domestic violence needing individual counseling. Forty-five people were on the waiting list in March 2011.



#### Early Childhood Support

Waiting lists are also growing for families needing Head Start and child care subsidies. The Head Start waiting list included 1,326 children in March 2011 and nearly 3,000 were on the waiting list for child care subsidies. The median income of families who receive subsidized child care is just over \$25,000 in a community where the annual cost of full-time preschool child care can range from \$8,000 to over \$13,000.

#### Independence and Stability through Employment

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) cases went up 21 percent in FY 2010. For many families, the need for public assistance is due to job loss and unemployment. The Virginia Initiative for Employment not Welfare (VIEW) helps families receiving TANF get back on their feet. Since FY 2009, enrollment for VIEW increased 19 percent (1,202 to 1,436).

#### Journey to Self-Sufficiency

An unemployed single mother enrolled in VIEW in 2008. While attending her courses at the Northern Virginia Community College, VIEW helped with the cost of child care and transportation to and from school. With the help from TANF, SNAP and Medicaid she was able to stay in her home and care for her daughter while attending school full time. After completing her certification in June 2010 she started a full-time job two months later as a medical technician. She is moving from public assistance to independence. Now both mother and daughter have a bright future ahead.



#### Many Volunteers, Many Languages, Big Impact

In FY 2010, 2,430 volunteers spent 79,660 hours (worth \$1.7 million) providing services for older adults and adults with disabilities, including home-delivered meals, transportation to medical appointments, and insurance counseling. Many people who need services speak a language other than English. Of the volunteers, 153 are bilingual or multilingual and can speak a total of 32 languages. Photo (right): A volunteer installs a shower grab bar to help an older person live safely at home.



#### Federal Stimulus Funds Helped Local Meals Programs Serve More Older Adults

In FY 2010, the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging received federal stimulus funds that were used to serve an additional 7,546 home-delivered meals to 22 clients on a waiting list for services in Falls Church and Annandale and to provide congregate meals to underserved older adults in Vienna, Annandale and Falls Church.

#### A Positive Trend in Child Welfare – Fewer Children Entering Foster Care

In spite of the challenging times, a positive trend continues in child welfare. From FY 2006 to FY 2010, the number of children placed in foster care went down by 39 percent, from 172 to 105, even as the number of Child Protective Services investigations increased. By employing new strategies to locate and involve family members in planning for their children's safety and well-being, by providing intensive services and respite support when needed, and by encouraging kinship care as an alternative to foster care when an out-of-home placement is necessary, DFS is seeing improved outcomes for at-risk children and families. Thanks to community partnerships, even with static resources DFS was able to offer parenting education to more families in FY 2010. This focus on prevention has contributed to the decline of children entering foster care.

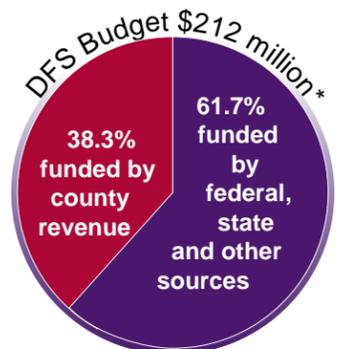
#### Lines of Service Initiative

The Lines of Service initiative DFS launched in May 2009 focused on identifying ways to work more efficiently and effectively throughout the department. This in-depth department-wide effort resulted in improvements in all of the lines of service and contributed to the department's success in achieving budget reductions of over \$4 million in FY 2011 while continuing to provide critically needed services during challenging times.

## Budget Summary

The FY11 Adopted Budget for DFS is \$212 million.\* Only 38.3 percent of the DFS budget was funded from Fairfax County's General Fund. The remaining funds came primarily from the federal and state governments and School Age Child Care fees. Approximately half of all expenditures are mandated by federal or state laws.

\*This figure does not include the \$360 million in federal and state public assistance benefits that DFS administers for local residents.



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

		FY 2008 July 1, 2007 - June 30, 2008	FY 2009 July 1, 2008 - June 30, 2009	FY 2010 July 1, 2009 - June 30, 2010	% Change FY08-FY10	Continuing Trends in the First 6 Months of FY 2011 July 1 - Dec 31, 2010	
Adult and Aging	<b>Adult Protective Services</b>	Number of investigations	854	924	1,000		+17%
		Clients needing protective services	424	460	535	+26%	
	<b>Adult Services/Case Management</b>	Number of clients served	2,404	2,514	2,429	+1%	
	<b>Fairfax Area Agency on Aging</b>	Volunteers serving older adults and adults with disabilities	2,032	2,151	2,430	+19%	
Self-Sufficiency	<b>Public Assistance</b>	Caseload (includes SNAP, Medicaid, FAMIS, FAMIS Plus, TANF, General Relief)	51,939	58,561	71,373	+37%	Public assistance caseload continues to surge in the first half of FY 2011, with 77,324 cases on average monthly, an increase of 32% over the average monthly caseload for FY 2009.
		Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) average cases per month	11,610	13,769	17,956	+55%	
	<b>Temporary Assistance for Needy Families</b>	Average number of cases per month	1,268	1,389	1,674	+32%	
		Clients served in the Virginia Initiative for Employment not Welfare (VIEW) program	1,026	1,202	1,436	+40%	
	<b>Employment and Training</b>	Number of SkillSource Center visits	38,231	56,811	61,396	+61%	
		Number of clients enrolled in intensive employment and training services	1,198	1,974	3,348	+179%	
		Number of tax returns done in Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program	2,423	3,280	3,863	+59%	
Children, Youth and Families	<b>Child Protective Services</b>	Calls resulting in CPS assessment or investigation	2,235	2,287	2,677	+20%	From July 1 - Dec 31, 2010, 100 children at risk of abuse or neglect were successfully diverted from having to enter foster care. Strategies included placing the child with extended family, providing respite support, and providing intensive services to the family.
		Number of high-risk families served by CPS (monthly average)	167	156	162	-3%	
		Number of children diverted from entering Foster Care	N/A*	N/A*	168	N/A*	
	<b>Family Preservation Services</b>	Average number of families served each month	417	408	398	-5%	
	<b>Family Partnership Program</b>	Number of Families Served through Family Partnership	N/A*	27	58	+123%	
	<b>Foster Care and Adoption</b>	Number of children entering foster care	122	132	126	-3%	
		Average number in foster care each month	456	399	373	-18%	
		Number of children leaving foster care	163	182	135	-17%	
		Number of children adopted from foster care	43	42	34	-20%	
		Number of children returning to parent or relative	N/A*	100	72	-28%	
<b>Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention</b>	Families receiving home visits from a Healthy Families social worker	598	617	640	+7%		
	Families participating in parenting classes	254	370	483	+90%		
Office for Children	<b>Child Care Assistance and Referral</b>	Number of children receiving tuition assistance	8,169	8,716	7,550	-8%	The number of families in parenting education continues to grow, with 275 families participating in the first half of FY 2011.
	<b>School Age Child Care</b>	Number of children served	12,144	12,429	13,134	+8%	
	<b>Community Education &amp; Provider Services</b>	Number of family child care providers with permits	1,960	1,971	1,994	+2%	
	<b>Head Start</b>	Number of children enrolled	1,055	1,092	1,111	+5%	
OFW& DSVS	<b>Domestic and Sexual Violence Services</b>	Calls received by Domestic and Sexual Violence Services Hotline	1,482	1,628	1,778	+20%	
	<b>Website</b>	Number of visits to the DFS Web site	N/A*	1,000,007	2,083,753	+108%	

\*Data not available. DFS started tracking this in more recent years.

## Department of Family Services

Mission: Promote the well-being of our diverse community by protecting and improving the lives of children, adults and families through advocacy, education and effective supportive services.

### Adult and Aging

#### ADULT SERVICES

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

#### DISABILITY SERVICES PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

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

#### ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES

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

#### FAIRFAX AREA AGENCY ON AGING

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



#### Disability Mentoring Day

Students and adults with disabilities learned about careers in county government at the annual "Disability Mentoring Day" coordinated by the DFS Disabilities Services Planning and Development team.

### Self-Sufficiency

#### PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

Helps low-income individuals and families apply for and receive help (Medicaid, SNAP, etc.) to meet basic needs and attain self-sufficiency.

#### LONG-TERM CARE

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

#### HEALTH ACCESS ASSISTANCE TEAM

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

#### EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

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

#### TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES (TANF)

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

### Children, Youth and Families

#### CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES

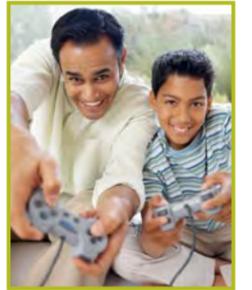
Protects children from abuse and neglect by assessing their safety, risk of harm, and the family's strengths and needs; provides services and support to families; takes action if necessary to assure the children's safety.

#### CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT PREVENTION

Supports families, particularly those at risk of child abuse or neglect, through community-based parent education and other family support services.

#### Fathers in Touch

With limited parenting skills, Mark struggled as a father after receiving custody of his two adolescent sons. Child Protective Services became involved. Mark entered the 12-week Fathers in Touch (FIT) program and learned from other fathers about self-care, self-awareness, effective communication skills and age-appropriate parenting strategies. Mark and his oldest son were the keynote speakers at a recent FIT graduation.



#### FOSTER CARE AND ADOPTION SERVICES

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

#### FAMILY PRESERVATION SERVICES

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

#### FAMILY PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

Brings family members (immediate and extended) together, empowering them to make decisions regarding the safety, stability and well-being of their children. The setting is family driven and focuses on family strengths.

### Office for Children

#### SCHOOL AGE CHILD CARE

Offers fun, safe and educational care for 5-12 year-olds before school, after school and during school vacations. SACC centers are located in most Fairfax County public elementary schools, as well as in the Key and Kilmer Centers, which serve 5-21 year-olds who have multiple disabilities.

#### COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND PROVIDER SERVICES

Issues the Home Child Care Permit; provides training and assistance to family child care providers; and administers the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program, which helps child care providers offer, plan and pay for nutritious meals served to children in their care.

#### CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE AND REFERRAL

Helps families find and pay for child care.

#### HEAD START

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

### Office for Women & Domestic and Sexual Violence Services

#### DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE SERVICES

Provides 24-hour crisis hotline, information, counseling, resources and emergency shelter for victims of domestic and sexual violence. Also provides batterer intervention counseling treatment services as well as education, outreach and training on domestic and sexual violence issues.

#### End the Cycle of Violence

Alice's abusive husband threatened her with loss of custody of her daughter if she left him. With help from DFS she learned about her legal rights, sought shelter and petitioned for a protective order. Alice has since found a full-time job and lives on her own with her daughter. She says that she was able to leave the abusive relationship after she realized that she was not alone, that she had rights and that help was available for women in her situation.





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Fairfax County Department of  
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[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs)

**This report is also available online with links to additional background information about the Department of Family Services.**



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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.