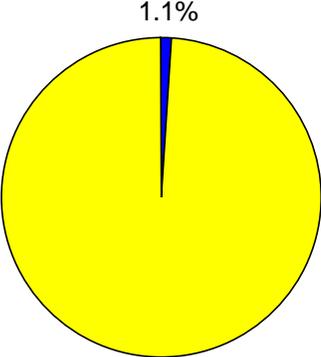


Department of Family Services

67-13-Intensive Services to At-Risk Families

Fund/Agency: 001/67	Department of Family Services	
Personnel Services	\$1,726,254	<div style="text-align: center;"> <p>CAPS Percentage of Agency Total</p>  <p>1.1%</p> <p>98.9%</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px auto; width: fit-content;"> ■ Intensive Services to At-Risk Families ■ All Other Agency CAPS </div> </div>
Operating Expenses	\$144,347	
Recovered Costs	\$0	
Capital Equipment	\$0	
Total CAPS Cost:	\$1,870,601	
Federal Revenue	\$935,190	
State Revenue	\$9,412	
User Fee Revenue	\$0	
Other Revenue	\$109,398	
Total Revenue:	\$1,054,000	
Net CAPS Cost:	\$816,601	
Positions/SYE involved in the delivery of this CAPS	37/37	

► CAPS Summary

The Department of Family Services provides Intensive Services to At-Risk Families through the Family and Child Program. The program area lost front-line staff and management support in 1997. Subsequent to that reduction in capacity, the Family and Child Program has restructured its service delivery process and target population to focus on families at highest risk of child abuse and neglect. The families served by this program are experiencing challenges that significantly impair family functioning and place children at risk of abuse or neglect: substance abuse, domestic violence, unemployment, serious mental illness, poor health, poor parenting skills and practices, limited learning ability, social isolation, homelessness or incarceration. Intensive services are designed to strengthen and stabilize the family, to increase the parent or caretaker's capacity to provide the necessary nurturing, protection, shelter and education for their children, and to assist the family to function more effectively and independently.

The program is also designed to provide support services that fulfill the agency's mandate to exhaust all options available to prevent child abuse and neglect and to prevent children from requiring foster home placement.

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Social workers provide an array of services to the families:

- Comprehensive assessment and development of a service plan;
- Intensive case management — coordinating and implementing the service plan;
- Initial and on-going crisis resolution;
- Counseling services — individual and family;
- Advocacy — assisting families in obtaining services from other organizations;
- Concrete services — rental and utility assistance, clothing, food, transportation, etc.;
- Parenting training and education — appropriate discipline, nurturing, child development;
- Life skills training — budgeting, household management, being a responsible tenant, working with the child's school;
- Court-ordered and Interstate Compact home studies;
- Monitoring purchased services (home-based care for families with a member who is disabled or who meet Comprehensive Services Act guidelines for home-based services); and
- Participation and follow-up services in Comprehensive Services Act mandated Child Specific Teams.

Families are referred to the program from such agencies and groups as: Child Protective Services (CPS); Foster Care and Adoption; Public School System; Coordinated Services Planning (CSP) in the Department of Systems Management for Human Services; various community based organizations; and through the Child Specific Team (CST) process. Families also self-refer.

Social workers in this program area work with families facing serious challenges, including a growing number of immigrant families. Serving these families and building a support network for them is challenging, as many are isolated without family and friends on whom they can rely.

The number of families that are "undocumented" present the greatest challenge, as they are ineligible for many of the services and benefits that are necessary in order to attain some level of self-sufficiency. Approximately 20 percent of the families served in the program speak English as a second language or do not speak English at all.

The number of families identified as "high risk" is increasing as the social workers have increased their outreach efforts, acting upon referrals made by CPS, the community, the schools and through multi-agency staffings. The social workers strive to prevent more intrusive agency involvement (CPS or Foster Care) through the provision of preventive services.

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Family Group Conference Initiative

In June 2000, the Family and Child Program developed and implemented a Family Group Conference model for the Department based on a model that originated in New Zealand and is currently operating in various social service agencies in the United States. In this model, family members, friends, community service providers and others join together in a "family conference" to support parents in developing a protection and care plan for their children. The program started taking referrals in November 2000.

The social worker acts as a coordinator, preparing the families and others involved in their lives for the conference, facilitating the conference, and providing follow-up to determine if the family's plan of care for their children is effectively meeting the family's needs.

Social workers in CPS, Foster Care and from within the Intensive Services Program have made referrals when they have assessed that children are at imminent risk of being removed from their homes, or that a safe plan is needed in order for children to be returned to their families from foster care.

Although less than a year old, this program has already proven to be successful. All of the conferences that were convened resulted in plans which have enabled children to remain with their parents or to be cared for by extended family members, and foster home placement has been averted.

Prevent Placement Initiative:

The Family and Child Program has implemented an intensive prevention initiative which focuses on supporting African-American families (who are disproportionately represented in foster care in Fairfax County and throughout the nation) who are at imminent risk of losing custody of their children due to abuse and neglect issues. The staff involved in this effort also work with families of other ethnic or cultural backgrounds as well. These social workers have smaller caseloads than the other social workers in the program, and provide an intensive level of service to the families, which includes daily contact, in many instances.

► Method of Service Provision

County-employed social workers provide "direct" services, e.g. counseling, teaching life skills, advocacy, etc., and provide case management, the coordination and monitoring of other services that include purchased services, or services provided by other Human Services or community organizations. Case management includes teaming with other professionals in various disciplines to ensure that appropriate, effective, comprehensive services are delivered.

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► Performance/Workload Related Data

Title	FY 1998 Actual	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Actual	FY 2001 Estimate	FY 2002 Estimate
Average number of families served per month	NA*	NA*	264	249	249
Average number of children served per month	NA*	NA*	621	597	600
Percent of Families who are at risk of child abuse and neglect who are satisfied with services	NA*	88%	89%	90%	90%
Percent of Intensive Family Service cases with children who are at risk of abuse and neglect in which there is no subsequent CPS investigation.	90%	99.8%	99.8%	90%	90%

* Data for FY 1998 and FY 1999 is not comparable to FY 2000 through FY 2002. Prior to FY 2000, social workers provided predominantly short-term emergency assistance. In FY 2000 as the program migrated to the intensive services model, the scope of work changed and social workers began providing intensive services to "high risk" families.

► Mandate Information

This CAPS is Federally or State mandated. The percentage of this CAPS' resources utilized to satisfy the mandate is 51 - 75%. The specific Federal or State code and a brief description of the code follows:

- Legal codes/regulations: Selected Virginia Social Service Laws and related statutes:
- Code of Virginia 63.1-55. Child Welfare and other services: Each local DSS shall provide services that protect the welfare of all children; prevent the neglect, abuse, exploitation or delinquency of children; and prevent the unnecessary separation of children from their families by working with the families to resolve issues which disrupt the family functioning.
- Code of Virginia 63.1-55.8 Foster care services and placement defined: Foster care services means the provision of services for a planned period of time to a child ... "and his family when the child (l) has been identified as needing services to prevent or eliminate the need for foster care placement". . . .
- Virginia Department of Social Services Regulations- Volume VII, Section II Prevention and Support Services for Families- Chapter E: These services are designed to strengthen the family in order to prevent family break-up. Families with children who are likely to enter foster care unless services are provided, and are not being served by CPS are the target population served by CPS.