

Dutchess County Department
of Community & Family Services

Hope



Annual
Report
2020

A MESSAGE FROM
COUNTY EXECUTIVE MOLINARO

MISSION

*Assist and protect
vulnerable county
residents with the aim
of restoring each
individual to maximum
independence.*



2020 DCFS ANNUAL REPORT

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Hope.

It was the glimmer all of us in Dutchess County Government clung to during the worst days of the COVID-19 pandemic, and it was what inspired our Department of Community and Family Services (DCFS) staff to continue to provide the vital services on which thousands of residents rely.

In so many ways, 2020 was the most challenging year of our lifetime, presenting unprecedented challenges to seemingly every aspect of life – not the least of which was the delivery of critical programs and services by all our County departments, including DCFS, which benefit so many in our community.

While social distancing guidelines and restrictions on gatherings affected how and where DCFS personnel brought about a positive impact on the lives of the residents they serve, these dedicated men and women never wavered in their devotion to duty.

When tested like never before, our DCFS staff answered the call and did so admirably. In many cases, they modified their work practices. Often, they stepped out of their comfort zone – the old way of doing things – and adjusted how, where, and when they were available to provide assistance.

Most importantly, though, they provided their clients with hope – hope that their cases wouldn’t go ignored during these most challenging times; hope that the pandemic wouldn’t exacerbate the issues for which they sought DCFS’ counsel; hope that when their community faced its most perilous year in a century, their county government would not let them down.

In the pages that follow, you will read synopses of programs and services that bring about a positive impact on thousands of Dutchess County residents of every age, each year. Even more important, though, is the fact that they were provided so exquisitely this past year, offering to those who benefited from them more than the usual aid – but also offering them hope.

You’ll also see in this volume the faces of the Dutchess County Department of Community and Family Services, men and women whose tireless efforts to serve their neighbors were never more appreciated than during the pandemic. I thank each and every member of the DCFS staff; they have again earned the admiration of our entire county.

Every day, no matter the circumstances, they provide a hand up to those who need it. They provide guidance to those who seek it. Above all, though, they provide hope.

Marcus J. Molinaro
Dutchess County Executive

A MESSAGE FROM
COMMISSIONER JAAR MARZOUKA



2020. When that number was said, I used to think about the expression “20-20 Vision.” And in fact, early in 2020, I had the Lasix surgery done and while I gained the 20-20 vision, the year turned out to be much different than what any of us had anticipated! It has been a year marked with

changes and disruptions to the daily routine. And if there is one image that will clearly reflect the year 2020, it will undoubtedly be that of a mask!

While the world seemed to be at a standstill, we were moving. Responding to the pandemic involved thinking outside the box, adjusting the plans to every new piece of information and CDC or NYS guidance as they were issued. It was exhausting. But through it all, we never closed our doors. We never stopped serving the community residents who were seeking our assistance; equipped with PPE, we ventured into the field to make our safety assessments for our clients. I have never been so proud to be working alongside the DCFS staff.

The DCFS Team’s hard work and heartening promotion of our values during the past year have been nothing short of inspiring. As you read this annual report, I hope you will join me in thanking every single one of our team members for all their hard work, commitment, and invaluable contributions to our community. This vital work is integral to meeting the needs of the most vulnerable.

Sabrina Jaar Marzouka, J.D., M.P.H.
Commissioner

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DCFS ORGANIZATION

OUR MISSION:

Assist and protect vulnerable county residents with the aim of restoring each individual to maximum independence. We do this through the provision of:

- Temporary assistance and supportive services necessary to sustain vulnerable and disabled persons in a courteous, fair, and efficient manner.
- Protective services to children and adults at risk of being harmed.
- Services that will strengthen the family unit, promote positive youth development, encourage stability in living arrangements, and provide a nurturing environment.



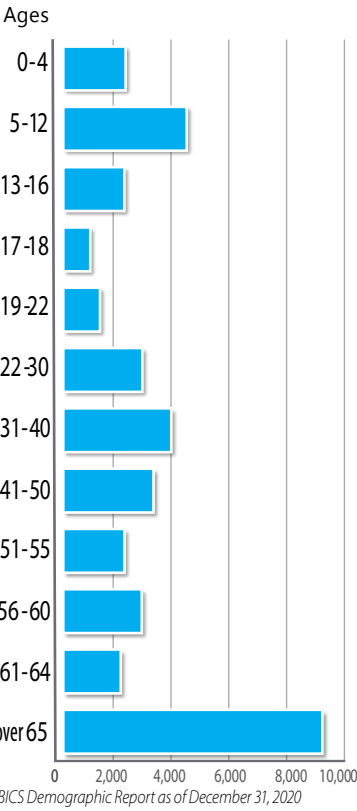
DCFS FACTS AT A GLANCE 2020

TOP MEDICAID PAYEES

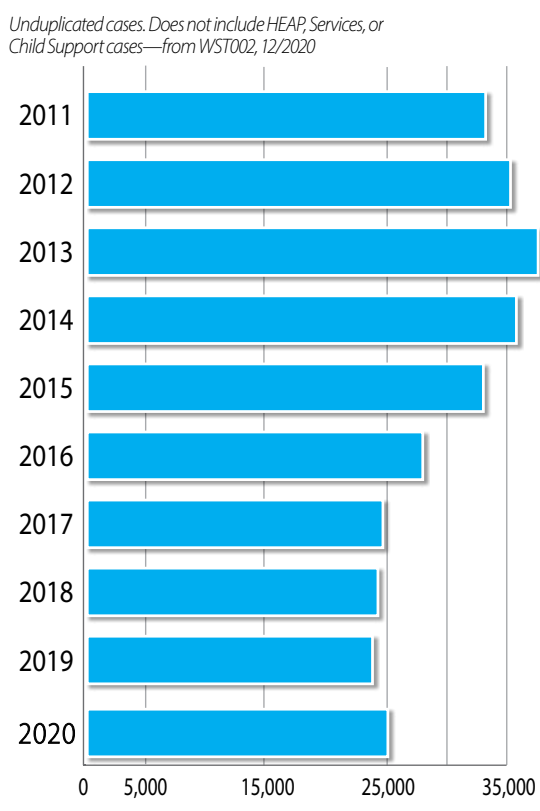
Medicaid payments to local businesses in Dutchess County serve as an economic stimulus and multiplier.

New York Catholic Health Plan	\$128,989,730
MVP Health Plan	\$124,882,670
New Horizon Resources	\$16,578,941
NYARC Dutchess County	\$15,897,112
Prime Health Choice	\$15,251,658
Cardinal Hayes	\$14,980,245
Hamaspiik Choice	\$13,727,243
Health Advantage Plan	\$13,528,565
Westchester Medical Center	\$13,048,318
Greystone Programs	\$11,620,423

ACTIVE INDIVIDUALS



DCFS CASELOAD SNAPSHOT



TOP NON-MEDICAID VENDORS

Hudson River Lodging-Plan G	\$3,169,367.66
Children's Home of Poughkeepsie	\$2,300,747.97
Berkshire Farm Center	\$2,006,550.26
Central Hudson	\$1,942,076.27
Community Housing	\$1,814,340.15
Dutchess County Probation	\$1,779,536.75
Astor Services	\$1,399,170.22
Grace Smith House	\$1,269,908.87
Family Services	\$1,076,420.76
Julia Dyckman/Andrus Memorial	\$847,710.03

2020 MODIFIED BUDGET

	Appropriations	Revenues
Administration (salaries, fringe, materials, other)	\$42,062,710	\$23,579,025
Non-secure Detention	\$1,511,002	\$979,928
Child Care Subsidy	\$6,130,000	\$5,806,567
Services for Recipients	\$8,397,424	\$3,225,905
Medicaid - Local payments	\$116,525	\$100,000
Medicaid - MMIS Payments	\$39,355,322	\$200,000
Special Needs Adults/Family	\$349,025	\$5,000
Family Assistance	\$8,528,811	\$8,374,089
Foster Care	\$33,044,019	\$25,919,202
Juvenile Delinquents/PINS	\$320,000	\$1,000
State Training Schools	\$3,000,000	\$0
Safety Net	\$8,225,177	\$2,835,000
HEAP	\$718,704	\$733,704
Emergency Aid to Adults	\$240,000	\$49,000
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program	\$0	\$0
Youth Administration	\$417,718	\$148,977
Youth Development/Delinquency Programs	\$0	\$0
Youth Services Unit	\$353,789	\$237,929
Youth Development Program	\$215,286	\$200,000
Youth Special Delinquency Programs	\$0	\$0
Youth Runaway & Homeless	\$134,506	\$100,769
Totals	\$153,120,018	\$72,496,095

ACTIVE CASES

Cases as of	12/31/19	12/31/20
SNAP	10,385	10,221
HEAP	2,151	2,332
Medicaid	7,541	8,813
Medicaid SSI	5,608	5,576
Family Assistance	464	421
Safety Net Assistance	569	513
Services (Adult/Children)	1,803	1,576

2020 Commissioner's Office

The Commissioner's Office consists of the Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner for Financial and Supportive Services, Deputy Commissioner for Services, Deputy Commissioner for Special Needs, Director of Administrative Services, Assistant to the Commissioner for Program Planning and Evaluation, Special Assistant to the Commissioner, Staff Development Director, and Confidential Administrative Assistants. The Commissioner's Office oversees the programs and operations of the department.



Theresa Giovannelli
Deputy Commissioner



Debra Bonnerwith
Deputy Commissioner



Sharon Avila
Confidential Administrative Assistant



Carol Domino
Confidential Administrative Assistant

HIGHLIGHTS

- In 2020, DCFS services were delivered to more than 1 in 10 Dutchess County residents, reaching over 30,000 unduplicated individuals across all programs.
- Several adjustments were made to the main office building to ensure social distancing for staff and clients. We expanded the Beacon satellite office, moving to the second floor of the building to accommodate an additional 4 staff transferred from the Poughkeepsie office.



- We introduced a mobile app for document submission, NYDocSubmit, enabling individuals to take pictures of their documents and submit them to our office using their Apple iOS or Android device. The application was used 2,974 times in 2020.



- DCFS launched the DCFSinfo email on the County website as part of the Commissioner's Rapid Response process. From the launch date of April 9, 2020 to December 31, 2020, the Commissioner's office received 735 inquiries through this medium.

Contact

DCFSinfo@dutchessny.gov

- The Department spearheaded the repurposing of vacant temporary housing units (PODs) at the Law Enforcement Center and DC Jail campus to be used as shelters for the homeless during the COVID-19 pandemic.



COVID IMPACT

Much of the delivery of services provided in 2020 were affected by the pandemic. The Department took several steps to mitigate the situation and ensure that staff and clients were safe, and that service level was maintained. We deployed laptops and cell phones to equip those employees who were permitted to work from home based on the State oversight agencies' guidance and restrictions. We were able to deploy close to 50% of the staff to rotate working remotely and in the office.



FAIR HEARINGS AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

William Sanchez
Special Assistant to Commissioner

The Fair Hearing and Quality Assurance unit represents DCFS in requested fair hearings, serves as liaison for NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance audits, and completes Child Care Subsidy audits for NYS Office of Children and Family Services. This unit also ensures quality performance standards by compiling and tracking outcome data, including monitoring and visiting contracted agencies.

FISCAL CHILD CARE AUDITS

- Completed 48 Fiscal Child Care Audits (DCFS is in full compliance) for NYS Office of Children & Family Services (OCFS)

CONTRACT MONITORING

- Conducted 4 contract monitoring site visits
- Completed 61 contract program desk reviews of self-evaluations

FAIR HEARING

The fair hearing process allows applicants and/or recipients to tell an Administrative Law Judge, assigned by the New York State Office of Temporary & Disability Assistance, why they think a decision made about their case is incorrect.

The Commissioner of OTDA assigns a designee from the Office of Administrative Hearings to review the findings of the hearing and to render a written decision based on the facts, rules and regulations that govern benefits issued by Medicaid, Temporary Assistance, SNAP, and Child Care.

FAIR HEARING ACTIVITY 2020

Fair Hearings Requested	640
Fair Hearings Held	565
Appellant Defaults	109
Appellant Withdrawals	259
Agency Decisions Upheld	60
Agency Decisions Reversed	15
Percentage of Fair Hearings in Favor of the Agency	97%
Postponed/Pending	86
Other Agencies	75
Correct When Made	8
Agency Withdrawals	9

COVID IMPACT

After all the fair hearing data was gathered, one obvious statistic was clearly established; there was a higher number of fair hearing delays as well as those permitted to be finalized in the client's behalf due to adjournments, no hearing decision rendered, pending agency or client withdrawal. There was a very low number of actual decisions rendered by OTDA for 2020. At the end of the year 130 fair hearings were still pending.



Bridget Goddard
Assistant to the Commissioner
for Program Planning and
Evaluation

CONTRACTS, POLICY & PLANNING

The Assistant to the Commissioner for Program Planning and Evaluation develops all Department of Community and Family Services plans, prepares funding applications for special programs, oversees the contracts, prepares and/or responds to requests for proposals and oversees the Office of the Medicaid Inspector General's Medicaid Compliance Audit Demonstration Project in Dutchess County.

CONTRACT ACTIVITY 2020

Adult Foster Care Services	1
Auditing	0
Credit Reporting	4
Child Care	2
Detention/Foster Care Institutions	41
Domestic Violence Services	8
Employment/Training/Transportation Services	10
SNAP Nutrition Education/HEAP	5
Genetic Testing	1
Homeless Prevention	5
Interpreter Services	1
Interdepartmental Services	7
Legal Services	2
Medical Exams/Services	4
Memoranda of Agreement	97
Preventive Services	27
Resource Parents	118
Service Agreements	18
Special Needs	10
Totals	361

Value of Contracts \$46,000,000+

THINK DIFFERENTLY

Dutchess County's ThinkDIFFERENTLY initiative's purpose is to support and advocate for individuals and families with special needs. We promote local efforts for improving accessibility, fostering acceptance, and building inclusion.



Toni-Marie Ciarfella
Deputy Commissioner for
Special Needs

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND YEARLY STATISTICS

- Continued to collaborate with Dutchess Community College on the two-year job readiness program "Think Ahead" by going to the virtual world of education.
- Anderson Center for Autism's (ACA) Autism Supportive Environment created story boards on COVID-19 response: including handwashing, mask wearing & social distancing.
- Expansion continued at www.thinkdifferently.net, which serves as a resource to local families. The website was visited 29,911 times.
- "Think Jobs" Round Table was held virtually in partnership with the Dutchess County Workforce Investment Board; 11 businesses and 19 providers attended.
- Coordinated bi-weekly agency provider meetings and TD Town Hall meetings
- Made COVID contact calls and collaborated to access PPE
- Served as Operational Lead in the planning of a large-scale recovery center
- Provided consultation for re-entry plans and sought sensory sensitive access to testing

ThinkDIFFERENTLY hosted the following events:

- Dutchess County's 4th Annual "Collaboration of Services and Care Across the Life Span for People with Special Needs" virtually in December which was attended by 75 providers and families.
- Drive-Thru ThinkDIFFERENTLY Picnic for people with special needs at the Dutchess County Fairgrounds in Rhinebeck.



- Dutchess Curbside Karaoke, & Q92.1FM visited five agency partners where socially distanced participants danced and performed upbeat classics during quarantine and partnered again for musical events at Bowdoin and Wilcox Parks.

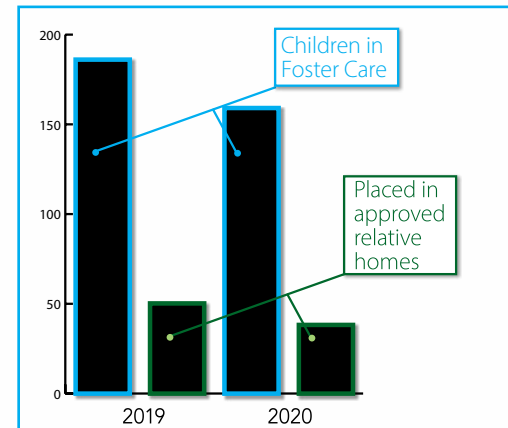


COVID IMPACT

The ThinkDIFFERENTLY (TD) Community, and County departments responded throughout the COVID-19 pandemic to support people of all abilities. TD switched seamlessly to virtual methods for education, outreach & trainings. Pivoting to help wherever we could, we remained responsive to the needs for those we serve and to our partner agencies. We remained agile to help and share key information with the community.

Commissioner's Office

NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE DECREASED



- The number of children in Foster Care continued to decrease and the percentage of children placed in approved relative homes slightly decreased. As of December 31, 2019, there were 186 children in foster care, with 27% (50) of them placed in approved relative homes. As of December 31, 2020, there were 159 children in foster care, with 24% (38) of them placed in approved relative homes.

- Adoption recruiter partnership with NYS Office of Children and Family Services, Children's Home of Poughkeepsie and the Wendy's Wonderful Kids Foundation continued. The recruiter worked with 12 children. Only one adoption was finalized in 2020 due to the impact of the pandemic on the process, including Family Court closing and holding limited proceedings.

- Deputy Commissioner Giovannelli was named an Athena Award honoree for her strong, successful, and collaborative professional leadership.



- Chris Corman was the winner of the 2020 Annual Commissioner's Award. Chris has the wonderful quality of being compassionate without compromising integrity or work ethic.



- Commissioner Marzouka gave a presentation at the Policy Forum in October for NYPWA.
- Commissioner Marzouka took part on panel for "Virtual Community Conversation: Equity & Housing" organized by United Way.
- An Eviction Prevention Line was launched so tenants in jeopardy of being evicted could call 211 to find out if they are eligible for any community housing resources. The program is a collaboration of DCFS, DC Planning & Development, and United Way of the Dutchess-Orange Region.



- Three local families were presented with pre-owned vehicles as part of the Way to Work program, formerly known as Community Solutions to Transportation (CST). The program helps low-income Dutchess County residents

obtain and keep a job, providing them reliable transportation to and from work.

Qualified participants must come from a family that receives Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or whose family income is less than 200 percent of the poverty level. DCFS Commissioner Sabrina Jaar Marzouka said, "Each of the families receiving a pre-owned vehicle today has invested



countless hours of dedication and sacrifice for this chance at a new life. Since the program's inception in 2001, 90 percent of vehicle recipients have remained independent from Temporary Assistance, and we look forward to helping more qualified and motivated residents improve their own lives and the lives of their loved ones."

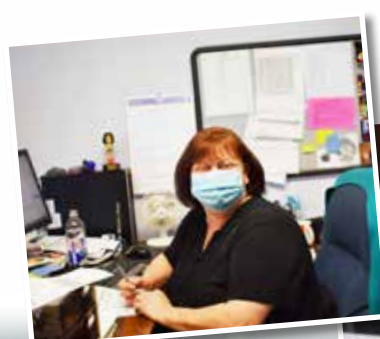
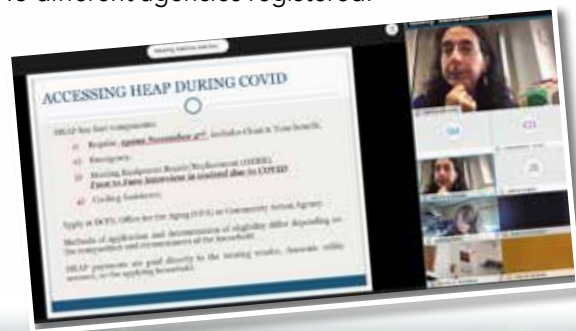


COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE SERVED ON THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES

- Agency Partner Grant
- Career Achievement Program Committee
- Chair of the NYPWA Deputy Commissioners' Leadership Network Steering Committee
- Child Advocacy Center's Leadership Committee and Multidisciplinary Team

- Council of Family and Child Caring Agencies Region V Workgroup (COFCCA)
- Criminal Justice Council
- Family Court Improvement Project
- Dutchess County Regional Chamber of Commerce's Headliner Award Committee
- Dutchess County's Domestic Violence Steering Committee
- Dutchess County's Human Trafficking Taskforce

- Dutchess County Regional Chamber of Commerce Women's Leadership Alliance
- Office for the Aging's Advisory Board
- Recovery and Resiliency Consortium
- Removing Barriers to Care Committee
- Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) Executive Committee
- Workforce Development Board
- Mount Saint Mary's Center on Aging and Policy – ProActive Caring Project's Steering Committee



ABOVE & BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY TEAM (ABCD)



In the 11 years that ABCD has been striving to improve the workplace and taking on initiatives to serve, we have never had a more challenging year than 2020. Early in the year, ABCD was off to a great start. The Committee held a winter hygiene supply drive for United Way which was very successful.

The Wellness Subcommittee was very active at the start of the year with three initiatives. A new program began thanks to the gracious offer from Karen Abramson, an Experienced Registered Yoga Teacher e-RYT, and Adaptive Yoga Specialist. Chair Yoga sessions, led by Karen, were well attended by DCFS staff until put on pause due to the pandemic and the need for social distancing.

A second offering by the Wellness Subcommittee was achieved by partnering again with Ozie Williams from the Department of Behavioral & Community Health to offer a presentation called "Let's Get Physical" during cardiovascular disease month. The third initiative was the "Empire Climber Stair Challenge" which unfortunately ended shortly after it started due to the pandemic, however, many coworkers continued to do the challenge on their own!



This year, the DCFS "Communities Responding to Overcome Poverty" (CROP) Walk fundraiser was adapted as we could not hold our popular bake sales. Instead, volunteers throughout the building sold chocolate and raffled gift baskets. The fundraiser took off, surprising us all by breaking our own record. We

raised \$1700, a portion of which stays locally and is awarded to Dutchess Outreach, Community Action Agency, Beulah Baptist Soup Kitchen, and the Fishkill Food Pantry.

Lastly, the ABCD Committee continued selecting the Bright Star employee award winners and reviewing employee suggestions.



LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

This is the 10th anniversary for the Leadership Program. The Leadership Development Program is based on the needs and interests of the staff. Each year begins with an Achievement Awards event recognizing the work completed in the previous year. Members generate and prioritize future topics during a brainstorming meeting. From this session, topics are selected for the year and volunteers step forward to research and provide an hour-long presentation on the selected topics. Prior to being



given, members' presentations are reviewed and approved.

On January 15, 2020, 27 attendees participated in the Achievement Awards Event for the 2019 achievements during which Sheila Appel, IBM US Regional Director for Corporate Citizenship Initiatives, was the keynote speaker. Two other sessions were held during the first quarter, a brainstorming session and a presentation by Kara Cerilli (ADM) on "The Upside of Stress". Due to COVID restrictions, no sessions were held from March through the end of the year.

The Leadership Development members look forward to resuming sessions. Thank you to all for their continued commitment to the program.



EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION 2020



COVID-19 didn't stop Commissioner Marzouka from giving her employees a heartfelt thank you for all their hard work to serve vulnerable residents of Dutchess County. She personally delivered cartloads of small tote bags

containing an Annual Report and small desk items to staff. Special kudos to DCFS staff for their perseverance through a trying year!



thank you



HOLIDAY CUBICLE DECORATIONS





Ted Starzyk
Director of Staff Development
and Human Resources

The Director of Staff Development is responsible for ensuring that the Department of Community and Family Services' workforce receives the training that is necessary to provide objective, competent and professional services to our customers. In Dutchess County, the Staff Development Division also encompasses the human resources and payroll functions.

The Staff Development and Human Resources Unit provides on-going personal and career development for DCFS staff members. This includes conducting needs assessments and planning for the delivery, scheduling and attendance of staff training programs that meet local, state, and federal mandates.

We have contracts with Adelphi University and SUNY Empire College which includes Dutchess Community College. The goal of these programs is workforce professionalism and promotional advancement within the civil service system.

PERSONNEL ACTIONS COMPLETED

New Employment Interviews Conducted	43
New Employees Hired	35
Promotions and Reassignments Processed	31
Leaves of Absence Processed	34
Separations from Dutchess County Service	62

TRAINING HOURS COORDINATED

Temporary Assistance/Intake	413
Services (Adult, Children, Youth)	739
Medicaid	372
SNAP	146
Child Support	160
Special Investigations	20
HEAP	16
Total	1,866



COVID IMPACT

Staff Development felt the impact of COVID and we adapted by performing necessary procedures from home when possible and in the office when unavoidable. In March, all classroom training stopped and was revamped into virtual training. The additional COVID employee benefits such as the Voluntary Layoff, Voluntary Separation, Families First Coronavirus Relief Act (FFCRA) and New York State Sick Leave (NYSSL) provided additional challenges for the unit but ultimately payroll was processed, and staff was trained.

2020 BRIGHT STARS

The ABCD Committee chooses Bright Star employees from those nominated by their peers. The Committee, made up of members from various units, examines and makes recommendations to the Commissioner on the monthly award recipient/s.

PRESENTING THE 2020 BRIGHT STARS:

JANUARY



Jade Sprauer
Medicaid

FEBRUARY



Amy Knox
Temporary Assistance

MARCH



Leah Bochar
Administrative Support

APRIL



Maritza Velasco
Medicaid

MAY



Kelly Feuer
Child Protective Services

JUNE



Vata Peters
SNAP

JULY



Michael Signorelli
Child Welfare

AUGUST



Greg Charter
Child Welfare

SEPTEMBER



Lisa Farciert
Adult Services

OCTOBER



Shaun Chesley
Computer Information
Services

NOVEMBER



Matt Pantano
Computer Information
Services

DECEMBER



Nancy Tomaszewski
Child Protective
Services

YEARS OF SERVICE AT THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND FAMILY SERVICES



Bridget Goddard
50 YEARS



Patricia Malinski
35 YEARS



Stacey Lembesis
30 YEARS



Mark Cashman
25 YEARS



Kathleen DiGiorgio
20 YEARS
Monica Balassone
Linda Chesley
Jeannine Guerra
Vicki Jaehnert
Michele Olmo
Mark Vandetta
Barbara VanNorstrand



Jessica Williams
15 YEARS
Elizabeth Abongo
Luisa Blanche
Theresa Giovanniello
Maninder Hira
Elizabeth Platel
Thomas Tait
Heather Wilkerson



Maureen Whittaker
10 YEARS
Margaret Holzberger
Jade McKeown-Brown
Donna Miles
Marsha Morris



Nyiila Thrasher
5 YEARS
Scott Bernhard
Julett Butler
Jamie Carey
Lisa Farcieri
Rebecca Foote
Natasha Grant
Denise Griffin
Danielle Lunsford
Sabrina Jaar Marzouka
Nicole Nelson
Jenna Secreto
Miles Shadman
Felicia Warren

Employee Generosity

ABCD members held a collection, and DCFS employees generously donated hundreds of items ranging from toothpaste to socks for the homeless to the United Way of the Dutchess-Orange Region's Winter Drive.



The **Administration Team** collected toys which were donated by staff for the 30th Annual Salvation Army Toy Drive.

Andrea Watson (AFS), **Barbara Ingram** (CW), **Denise Griffin** (AFS), and **Stephanie Perry** (AFS) coordinated the annual Salvation Army 'Angel Tags' Collection and received clothing, toys, and games for 50 children.

Andrea Watson (AFS), **Cheryl DeGroat** (AFS), and **Denise Griffin** (AFS) managed the DCFS Elizabeth Ann Karlson/Jennifer Bixby Food Pantry.

Children's Services organized another successful Foster Care Picnic (socially distanced and as two separate small groups-morning and afternoon) at Bowdoin Park. Several staff members from various divisions volunteered at the picnic.

The **Child Support Unit** held their annual collection of hats, gloves, mittens, and scarves for Grace Smith House.

Deputy Commissioner Theresa Giovanniello and the **CROP** (Communities Responding to



Overcome Poverty) **Walk Team at DCFS** raised \$1,700 to help fight hunger. Staff created unique raffle gift

baskets, and sold and purchased Gertrude Hawk fundraising chocolates.

Dutchess County's 8th Annual ThinkDIFFERENTLY Special Needs Picnic was held as a Drive-Thru event, in conjunction with the Office for the Aging's Senior Picnic at the Dutchess County Fairgrounds in Rhinebeck. **Deputy Commissioner for Special Needs, Dr. Toni-Marie Ciarfella**, and her assistant **Sandi Pierson**, helped to coordinate the event.

File Room staff and the **DCFS Wellness Committee** held a "Soup and Salad" fundraiser and raised \$460 for wellness activities.



Margaret Holzberger (ACCT) organized a St. Patrick's Day fundraiser with corned beef and cabbage, baked goods, and raffles, and raised \$653 for the Hearing Loss Association of America-MidHudson Chapter.

Staff Development coordinated the Holiday Wreath Fundraiser for Mental Health America of Dutchess County.

2020 Administrative Services



Peter Simon
Director of
Administrative Services

The Director of Administrative Services helps develop and present the annual budget and is responsible for the supervision and coordination of the fiscal and operating functions. The following units are overseen by the Director: Accounting, Central File, Reception, Purchasing, Welfare Management System and Computer Information Services. The Director of Administrative Services serves as the agency's Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) Officer.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

- Received and processed 20,613 calls at the switchboard (those callers who did not use the main menu options and chose the "operator")
- Completed 321 building work orders
- Processed payments/vouchers for
 - * 188 travel orders
 - * 10 cases for state auditors
 - * 86 DCFS contracts totaling \$15,589,708
 - * 16 Youth Services contracts totaling \$305,783
 - * 6 Think Differently contracts totaling \$104,178



COVID IMPACT

With most of our services being mandated, support staff had to be steadfast throughout the pandemic. Reception, Central File, the Administrative support team, Accounting, and our IT staff answered the call. They responded with dedication and a feeling of pride in their work, knowing that our clients still needed to receive their services and our vendors needed to keep their doors open. The heart of operation kept beating and continued to supply the rest of the body with everything it needed to sustain others. Peter Simon commented, "I was never any prouder to be part of such a team."



Brian Napoleon
Director of Budget and Finance

ACCOUNTING

- Maintained accounts for 157 clients in receipt of Supplemental Security Income who need help managing their money. Deposits of \$1,812,159 and issuance of 12,157 checks totaling \$1,777,204 occurred on behalf of these clients.
- Collected over \$67,800,000 in state and federal reimbursements of department expenses
- Arranged and paid for 141 indigent burials in the amount of \$250,190

COVID IMPACT

The impact of COVID on the Accounting unit was tremendous. As a unit that cannot function remotely, the most immediate challenge was performing the unit's essential functions while simultaneously meeting pandemic workplace guidelines. For months, the Accounting unit rotated staff to triage crucial functions. Once on-site staffing levels were slowly permitted to increase, Accounting began digging out from an overwhelming backlog of less essential (but still important) work that built up since the beginning of the pandemic. The Accounting unit continued its unflappable approach to meeting the needs of our clients, vendors, and coworkers.



ACCOUNTING TRANSACTIONS PROCESSED IN 2020

Services	Number	Amount
Title IV-D Assistance	1,900	\$172,000
Family Assistance	14,800	\$6,582,000
Adult Care and Emergency Assistance	200	\$244,000
Safety Net Assistance	19,900	\$9,137,000
Medical Assistance	100	\$33,000
Emergency Aid to Families	100	\$149,000
Title XX Services for Recipients	400	\$439,000
Non-Title XX Services for Recipients	12,500	\$9,738,000
Foster Care and Adoption Assistance	13,500	\$12,646,000
Child Care Assistance	9,700	\$5,176,000
Independent Living Program	400	\$52,000
Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)	7,600	\$284,000
Total	81,100	\$44,652,000



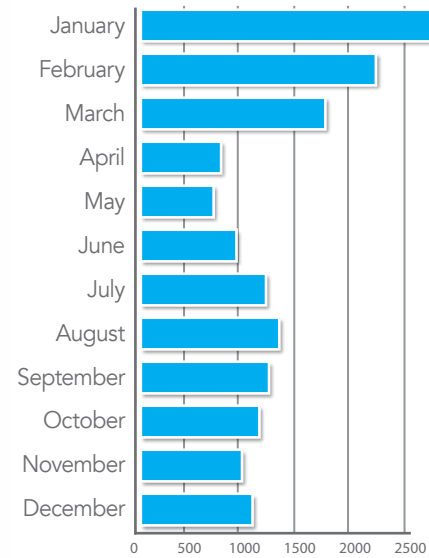
Administrative Services

RECEPTION

Reception is responsible for accepting program applications and receiving supporting documents as well as registering visitors.

NUMBER OF CLIENT TRANSACTIONS IN RECEPTION

(Poughkeepsie and Satellite Offices)

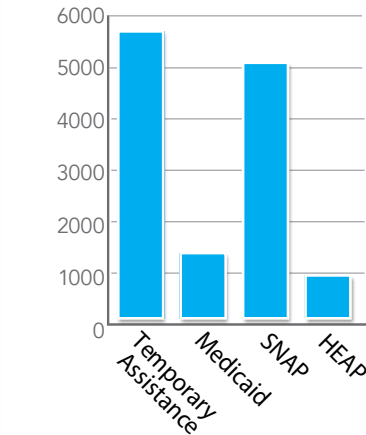


Total Transactions 15,246

My Full View tracking system data

APPLICATIONS/ DOCUMENTS DROPPED OFF

My Full View tracking system data



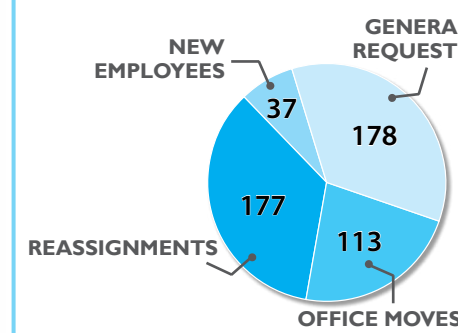
NEW Reception wheelchair charging station



COMPUTER INFORMATION SERVICES

- Added all printers to PrinterLogic for ease of printer installation.
- Expanded kiosk service to Beacon office.
- Extended network service in EDGC to accommodate office expansion.

EMPLOYEE CHANGE REQUESTS



COVID IMPACT

CIS found itself in the middle of the COVID storm at DCFS. The agency suddenly had half their staff missing from the building and were in desperate need of remote capability. There was also a great need to quickly redeploy staff around the building to conform with social distancing practices. No one was prepared for this level of disaster response. Without IT help many units were unable to do their jobs at all; it was on CIS to get all these workers set up. Our focus was split in many directions. The CIS staff met these challenges and grew more able to accommodate large changes on short notice.

CENTRAL FILE

- Assigned 3,821 new case numbers
- Managed USPS and interoffice mail for entire DCFS staff
- Processed 127,219 pieces of outgoing US Mail (not including inter-office mail)
- Prepared and imaged documents for the following units: Medicaid, Temporary Assistance, SNAP, HEAP, and satellite offices
- Received 2,293 kiosk transactions
- Recorded 6,473 incoming voter registration forms (forms included in benefit application packets)
- Completed 980 hours of Spanish translation for agency interviews, visitations, paperwork, field visits, telephone calls and emails
- Processed 125 Print Shop orders including forms, business cards and specialty orders
- Filled 4,591 supply orders
- Maintained 825 items for the supply room inventory



Every time I come here Shatya is helpful and has a smile. ~ AC





Family First Transition Funds were made available to youth who aged out of foster care during the pandemic. The supports provided to each youth who was eligible for 100% federal reimbursement through the NYS Office of Children and Family Services utilization of Families First Transition Act funding for this purpose.

to \$6,500 if they were at risk of homelessness and/or their permanency resource disrupted. The funds needed to be used assisting the youth with achieving independence. The department made extensive efforts to locate the young adults to ensure they accessed these funds. Ms. Terry is one of five youth to receive these funds.

Each youth was eligible for up

Hope

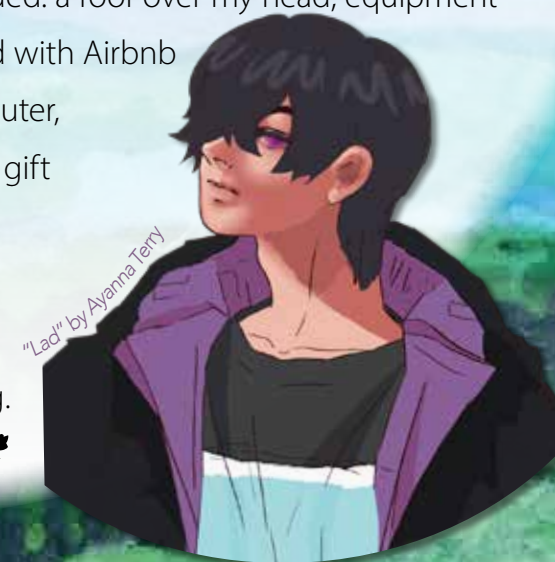
***"Darkness can only
be scattered by
light, hatred can only
be conquered by
love. I plead with you –
Never, ever give up on
hope, never doubt,
never tire, and never
be discouraged.
Be not be afraid."***

Pope John Paul II



Ayanna Terry's Story

The \$6,500 I received from the FFPSA Transition Fund was nothing less than a godsend to me. Around the time of becoming a recipient I had just moved out of my foster home of 4 years to be closer to my university, the School of Visual Arts, and gain a level of independence in my life. With the couple of thousands of dollars that I saved from working two part-time jobs, I rented an Airbnb on the outskirts of the Bronx for 2 months. The rest of money was to be budgeted between goods for my livelihood and university expenses. I figured that while attending classes full-time I could pick up a part-time job. However, this plan fell through very quickly; it was difficult finding a job, leaving me with no income. Art supplies were expensive, my laptop was virtually unusable for completing art assignments, and tuition was beyond what I could pay. To compensate for those expenses, I ate one meal a day so I wouldn't have to spend as much on food. When I was contacted about the FFPSA Transition Fund, it felt like a huge weight had been taken off my shoulders. I explained my situation and the things I needed: a roof over my head, equipment to complete art assignments, and groceries. I was provided with Airbnb gift cards to extend my stay, a brand new desktop computer, printer, and software to complete artwork with, and a gift card for groceries. Having these expenses covered made it possible for me to focus on paying tuition, rather than a plethora of costs that made life feel overwhelming.



2020 Adult Services



Patricia Sheldon
Director of Adult Services

Adult Protective Services (APS) serves adults (age 18 and older) who, due to physical or mental impairments, are unable to protect themselves from abuse, neglect, financial exploitation, or other harm and have no one who can assist them responsibly. This mandated service is available to all adults regardless of income and resources. Adult Services also provides Housing Services, Family Type Home Program administration, Foster Family Home for Adults inspections, and Domestic Violence Liaison assessments.

Case Managers investigate and assess safety and risk to adults residing in the community and assist in obtaining services to strengthen their ability to live in the community for as long as possible with the least restrictions. Adults have the right to make their own decisions. Services are voluntary except in cases of extreme need when the adult lacks capacity to make reasonable decisions on their own behalf.

DCFS received 682 Adult Protective Services referrals, of which 455 (66%) were age 60 or older. At intake, 25% of cases had at least one risk factor indicating abuse or neglect. Adults age 60 and older comprised 75% of the cases which alleged abuse or neglect from another person. Financial exploitation was noted in 44% of all abuse cases for all age groups. Homelessness for vulnerable adults dropped from 23% of cases in 2019, to 16% in 2020. Mental illness was indicated as a suspected impairment in 61% of all APS referrals.

- We saw a decrease in requests for temporary housing assistance. This may have been partially due to interventions related to COVID-19, such as the eviction moratorium, quarantine placements, and individuals sheltering in place. Temporary housing cases decreased by 8% a total of to 555 in 2020. The number of single individuals provided temporary housing decreased by 1% and the number of families decreased by 12%.
- The average length of stay in temporary housing for families was 16 weeks, and 14 weeks for single individuals. The overall length of stay in temporary housing was 15 weeks, an increase of 15% from 2019. The overall cost of providing temporary housing increased by 4.74% in 2020 (per Cognos temporary housing payment report).

- Affordable housing options for families and individuals continued to be an obstacle for county residents with income deficiencies and/or mental and physical impairment. We submitted a shelter supplement plan for families for state approval. The goal is to secure and maintain permanent housing; thereby, reducing the cost and length of stay in temporary housing.



PRESENTATIONS GIVEN TO THE PUBLIC AND PARTNERING AGENCIES

- Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD)
- New York State Parole

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Unfortunately, were not held in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

DUTCHESS COUNTY COMMITTEES/TEAMS

Meetings were conducted via telephone or virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Council of Aging Serving the Elderly (CASE)
- Long-Term Care Council
- Coalition for the Homeless (Webster House Shelter for Single Persons)
- Housing Consortium-Meetings
- Mental Health Dependency and Providers
- New York Division of Parole, Dutchess County Probation, and the Department of Behavioral and Community Health
- In-service presentations offered to PSA staff included an overview of New Rent Laws of 2020 by Legal Services, and Mobil Crisis Overview.



ADULT SERVICES 2019 2020

PSA Cases		
PSA Referrals	643	682
PSA Assessments	521	467
PSA Open/Ongoing	409	406
Representative Payee	149	119
Guardianship	31	35
Emergency Housing Cases/Households	602	555
Total Persons Served in Emergency Housing	933	870
Licensed Family Type Homes	11	14
Domestic Violence Screenings*	178	115

Statistics from Cognos and Adult Services Automated Project (ASAP)
*corrected from 2019 Annual Report

TEMPORARY SHELTER EXPENDITURES

Year	Amount	Stay in Weeks
2011	\$2,924,690	12.4
2012	\$2,511,476	15.4
2013	\$2,168,106	*N/A
2014	\$2,212,208	*N/A
2015	\$1,540,523	9.1
2016	\$2,181,981	11.9
2017	\$2,493,962	12.7
2018	\$3,738,726	12.0
2019	\$6,082,441	13.0
2020	\$6,312,314	15.0

Statistics from Cognos and Adult Services Automated Project (ASAP) *Stay in weeks figure not available in 2013 and 2014.

The impact of COVID-19 on the APS division was significant. New work procedures were implemented. Staff adapted to working remotely and utilizing technology. The pandemic also made it difficult for our staff to meet the face-to-face meeting mandates. Despite the pandemic, Adult Services workers continued to accept referrals, conduct assessments, contact service providers, and provide ongoing services to vulnerable Dutchess County residents.

COVID IMPACT

ACCOMPLISHMENTS & YEARLY STATISTICS 2020

2020 Children's Services



Colleen Mahoney
Director of Children's Services

The Children's Services Division provides a wide array of services to promote the safety, permanency, and well-being of Dutchess County children. Services are provided directly by staff members in the division and through contracts with many public and private community agencies. Services address issues including, but not limited to, substance abuse, mental illness, developmental disabilities, domestic violence, sexual abuse, medical needs, and childcare. Contracts for a continuum of foster care services are also maintained, from foster home care through institutional care.

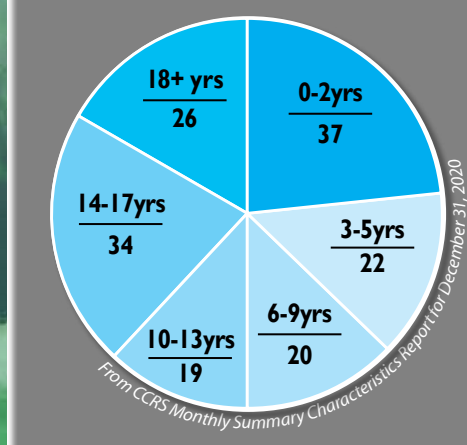
CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES

Child Protective Services (CPS) investigates reports of alleged child abuse or maltreatment received through the State Central Register (SCR) 24 hours per day, seven days per week. CPS participates in the Multidisciplinary Investigative Team at the Child Advocacy Center, to conduct investigations with law enforcement regarding allegations of sexual abuse and serious physical abuse of children.

CPS CASE SUMMARY	2019	2020
Reports investigated by CPS	2,488	2,100
Abuse Petitions	44	13
Neglect Petitions	518	213
Petitions requesting Termination of Parental Rights	119	48
Surrender Petitions Filed in Family Court	31	24
Foster Care Review Permanency Hearings	377	182
Investigations from Child Advocacy Center (CAC)	231	236
Indicated	47	54
Unfounded	184	182
Pending	0	0

Dutchess County and NYS Office of Court Administration databases and logs, 2020

CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE BY AGE



FOSTER CARE

The Foster Care unit ensures safe, nurturing temporary care for each child, with the goal of returning the child to family if possible, adoption if the family cannot be reunited, preparation for living independently, or discharge to another resource as is appropriate for each child. Whenever possible, children can be placed with relatives as foster parents.

- Opened 4 new foster parent homes and 17 new relative foster parent homes
- Trained 29 new relative and non-relative foster families in Model Approach to Partnerships in Parenting (MAPP), Caring for Your Own, and/or Deciding Together
- Held Orientation Meetings on a one-to-one basis via phone
- Discharged 5 foster children to subsidized guardianships with relatives through KinGAP
- Placed 6 children in direct custody of relatives
- Organized annual foster family picnic in August with a variety of activities and foods
- Conducted Parent-to-Parent meetings, to develop positive relationships between birth parents and foster parents
- Continued our working partnership with the Redlich Horowitz Foundation. In 2020, a software grant of \$10,000 was approved by Redlich to develop an online portal accessible to foster parents and agency staff to expedite the foster home certification. The software also enables us to identify barriers in the approval process, track trends and manage staff performance.

- Worked with a contract agency, Fostering Hope Together, to receive the Redlich Horowitz COVID-19 Technology grant. The grant provided funding to purchase tablets to ensure children in foster care maintained virtual connections with relatives during the pandemic when in-person visits were unable to occur.
- The Adoptive and Foster Family Coalition of NY (AFFCNY) provided a two-day virtual workshop, *Resiliency: What It Is and How To Build It to Foster, Adoptive and Custodianship Families*. This training provided families with skills to help children who have experienced trauma build resiliency to have better long-term outcomes.
- The Adoptive and Foster Family Coalition of NY (AFFCNY) provided another training, *Kin First: The Follow The Love* approach to finding a permanent parent for every youth on the verge of aging out.

This training was provided to DCFS and contract agency staff and identified strategies to recruit lifetime parents for youth aging out of foster care.

- Provided Family Team Meetings to 13 CPS, 20 Foster Care and 60 Preventive families
- Referred 3 families to the Coached Family Visitation program with Mental Health America
- Received a CAPTA/CARA Grant that allowed for a co-located Public Health Nurse to work with young children in families who have been impacted by substance use.
- Co-located domestic violence, substance abuse, guardian and adoption services, and a Wendy's Wonderful Kids worker within the Children's Services division
- Received 131 preventive referrals in 2020. 91 families were offered and received preventive services. 27 families declined services, 9 referrals were withdrawn, and 4 were duplicate referrals.

OPEN FOSTER HOMES (as of 12/31/2020)	
70	Foster/adoptive Homes
36	Kinship Homes

ADOPTION

Children available for adoption may be surrendered for adoption by their parents or may be freed for adoption through a Family Court decision to terminate parental rights. Often our foster parents become adoptive parents.

CHILDREN IN CARE	2019	2020
Foster Homes	88	82
Institutions	31	18
Group Homes	1	5
Group Residence	1	1
Agency Operated Boarding Homes	7	4
Supervised Independent Living	5	4
Approved Relative Foster Homes	51	41
Other	3	3
Total	187	158

From December 31, 2020 CCRS in Care Summary Report

ADOPTION ACTIVITY	2019	2020
Children Discharged To Adoption	28	16
Children with adoption as a goal at year end	60	51

From December 31, 2020 CCRS in Care Summary Report

COVID IMPACT

The impact of COVID-19 on Children's Services was significant. We received fewer CPS reports, preventive referrals, and had fewer foster care placements. There were many Family Court delays. We held fewer trainings and conducted individual foster parent orientation sessions by phone instead of group meetings. Using PPE and social distancing we conducted CPS investigations. We supervised family visits using creative means both in person and virtually. Child welfare staff continued their duties, working from the office or remotely so services to our families did not stop.

Jade and Laurie, I want to commend you for your work on this case. Both the case record and petition documented strong diligence on your part to try to locate a resource for this youth.
~ DB

Children's Services



OUR COMMUNITY SERVICE CONTRACTS INCLUDE:

AGENCY	SERVICE
Abbott House	Homebased preventive services for families at risk of having their children placed in foster care
Astor Services for Children and Families	Crisis intervention waiver services, homebased preventive services, forensic evaluations and the Enhanced Coordinated Children's Services Initiative (ECCSI)
Berkshire Farm Center and Services for Youth	Homebased preventive services for families at risk of having children placed in foster care and non-secure detention
Child Abuse Prevention Center	Child Advocacy Center, special needs and parent empowerment parenting programs, community education
Children's Home of Poughkeepsie	Emergency foster care which includes diagnostic evaluations when needed
Grace Smith House	Two domestic violence liaisons provide direct client services, training and consultation regarding domestic violence issues
JFC Consulting	Medical consultation on child abuse and maltreatment cases
Lexington Center for Recovery	Co-located staff who can perform drug/alcohol screens and assessments as necessary
Department of Behavioral and Community Health	Co-located Public Health Nurse Co-located staff who can perform drug/alcohol screens and assessments as necessary
Office of Probation and Community Corrections	Preventive services for youth involved in the juvenile justice system, to avoid the need for detention or out-of-home placement
Westchester Institute for Human Development	Child sexual abuse medical examinations
Mental Health America	Coached family visitation and court appointed special advocates



CPS Staff from Child Advocacy Center



2020 JUVENILE JUSTICE PLACEMENTS	Pre-Dispositional Placements	Non-Secure Detention	Secure Detention	Foster Care
Persons in Need of Supervision (PINS)	11	N/A	N/A	3
Juvenile Delinquents (JD)	N/A	16	19	7 DCFS 9 OCFS
Juvenile Offender (JO)	0	0	1	
Adolescent Offender (AO)	0	0	2	

Dutchess County Data, CCRS and JDAS system

HUMAN TRAFFICKING TASK FORCE / SAFE HARBOUR

The mission of the Dutchess County Task Force Against Human Trafficking is to prevent human trafficking by working collaboratively to raise knowledge and awareness in our county, to identify potential victims and to provide comprehensive trauma informed services. Safe Harbour is a partnership between DCFS, NYS Office of Children and Family Services, and the Dutchess County Task Force Against Human Trafficking to identify trafficked or at-risk youth and offer prevention and intervention services. Both initiatives are spearheaded by DCFS staff member, David Garcia, Dutchess County's Safe Harbour coordinator. We currently have 21 organizations on our task force.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Received referrals on 21 at-risk youth, none of which were confirmed as victims of human trafficking
- Conducted a community awareness presentation at Monte's in Amenia with Alliance to End Human Trafficking
- Provided a Human Trafficking and Safe Harbour presentation to the Astor Leadership Committee
- Hosted a *Human Trafficking 101* training at the Children's Home of Poughkeepsie with Special Agent Bruce May of the FBI
- Conducted a Human Trafficking presentation at Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
- Gave a presentation to staff from Mental Health America at the Poughkeepsie Middle School
- Facilitated the *LOVE146 Not a Number* curriculum to a youth group
- Presented information on Safe Harbour at the Red Sand Gala hosted by Vassar College
- Presented an awareness training on human trafficking and sexting at the Grace Smith House's *Love Shouldn't Hurt* conference held at Dutchess Community College for high school youth
- Presented information on Safe Harbour at Enhanced Coordinated Children's Services Initiative (ECCSI) System of Care Training (virtually)
- Presented information on Safe Harbour at the Annual Human Trafficking event hosted by Senator Sue Serino (virtually)



COVID IMPACT

The pandemic directly impacted the mission of our task force. Our everyday roles and responsibilities were challenged as we sought to provide services to youth that we support. We had a drastic decline in our referrals, awareness presentations, and prevention-education programs. But we move forward with promising new opportunities.

2020 Youth Services



Karmen Smallwood
Director of Youth Services

The Division of Youth Services' mission is to ensure every youth has a fair and equal opportunity to attain his/her full potential by providing and encouraging services which strengthen family life and by supporting families in their essential function of nurturing the youth's overall development.

Youth Services administers OCFS funding to support the community in providing services that promote positive youth development, decrease juvenile delinquency, and increase public awareness of youth issues.

The Division also provides free, confidential, short-term support services for youth ages 4 to 21. Youth are referred by schools, family, law enforcement, and others to receive help dealing with personal, family, or school difficulties.

In 2020, 106 youth received short-term support services. 81 cases were closed and 79 (over 83%) participants achieved at least one goal. 9 workshops were conducted for 69 attendees (52 youth and 17 adults).

DUTCHESS COUNTY YOUTH COUNCIL

Youth Services' staff facilitates the Dutchess County Youth Council which is comprised of students in grades 9 – 12 who meet monthly to develop service projects and learn valuable leadership skills. 20 students participated this year. Several speakers joined their monthly meetings to discuss opportunities and services. Council members also provided input on the functionality, design, and outreach strategies for the Path To Promise website and the digital youth hub called "The Tag".

DUTCHESS COUNTY YOUTH BOARD AND COORDINATING COUNCIL

Council members are appointed and meet monthly to establish local criteria for New York State Office of Children and Family Services (NYSOCFS) funding allocations, review proposals and make recommendations for grant and scholarship awards.

In 2020, the Youth Board awarded \$275,710.89 to 15 local organizations and awarded a \$1,500 scholarship to a current Dutchess Community College (DCC) student and a \$1,500 scholarship to a Dover High School student who attended DCC in the fall.



COVID IMPACT

Staff worked diligently to disseminate information about COVID19 testing sites, delivered food to individuals and families, worked with schools to secure childcare for essential workers, provided funding to assist organizations with obtaining necessary supplies, and met with families to assist them with developing effective coping strategies. Despite the new barriers and challenges caused by the pandemic, staff has remained resolute in our commitment to meet the needs of children, youth, and families.



The Path To Promise is a multi-year effort to ensure all young people in Dutchess County, from birth to age 19, have the assets they need to achieve their full potential as they grown into young adults.

PATH TO PROMISE IDENTIFIED DOMAINS

Learning	Acquiring knowledge leading to the success of students in future college or career aspirations
Material Basics	Providing for the basic needs of youth and families, including housing support and food
Safety	The feeling of being protected from danger, risk, or injury
Family/Social Relationships	Having pro-social bonds with family, peers, and other adults providing opportunities for emotional and spiritual growth and support
Mental Health	Opportunities to develop or support positive psychological and emotional well-being, including enrichment and leadership, and pro-social growth opportunities
Physical Health	Ensuring access to quality health care, opportunities for positive body growth and development, and access to appropriate and quality responses to cases where children get sick or hurt

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Established the Path To Promise website (www.pathtopromise.net) which provides a user-friendly interface for delivering information on local services.
- Assisted Dutchess County teens in developing **The TAG**, a digital youth hub serving as a clearing house for all youth related programs, events, jobs/ internships, and volunteer opportunities.
- Commissioned **"Nothing About Me Without Me"** song, written, recorded, and produced by creator of Ill Harmonic, Tim McQueen, that reflects the Path To Promise motto.
- Coordinated the **Dutchess County Youth Summit** along with the Dutchess County Workforce Investment Board (DC WIB). 150 youth attended the 2020 virtual summit. Attendees learned about the Path To Promise initiative, participated in workshops and received the "Tree Arrington Leadership Award".



To learn more about Path to Promise, visit the Dutchess County website at:
www.pathtopromise.net

2020 Child Support Services



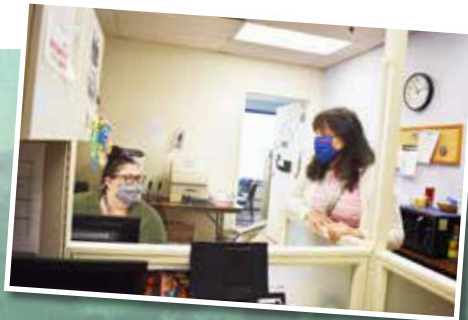
Kevin McDonald
Social Welfare Manager II
Child Support

The New York State Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE), within New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, is the agency responsible for administering the child support program through all the local social services districts.

The Child Support Division works closely with Dutchess County Family Court to establish and administer child support under the New York State program. Upon request, services are provided to custodial parents, noncustodial parents, and minors under twenty-one years of age.

SERVICES CAN INCLUDE

- Establishment of child support and/or spousal support
- Location of absent parents through a variety of computer matches available within state and federal systems
- Establishment of paternity for those receiving public assistance (Medicaid recipients/ applicants are required to cooperate with child support to establish paternity and obtain medical support.)
- Modification petitions for change in circumstances, and cost-of-living adjustment of court orders
- Medical benefit executions requiring enrollment of dependents in third party health insurance
- Support collection and monitoring of payments until disbursement of monies associated with that order become the responsibility of the NYS Central Collection Agency
- Enforcement of court orders
- Income executions when a noncustodial parent is employed
- Collection of arrears from federal and state tax refunds, OTB and lottery winnings, and bank accounts
- Suspensions or denials of New York State driver's or professional licenses
- Initiation of violation proceedings in Family Court
- Referrals to the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance's program for collection and seizure of assets, which targets individuals with child support payments over four months in arrears



CHILD SUPPORT COLLECTIONS

- Collected \$30,538,171 in child support (Of this amount, \$29,768,120 benefited families that did not have an active Temporary Assistance case.)
- Tested 20 customers using a contracted genetic testing company that collects the DNA samples onsite at Family Court
- Processed 4,016 Family Court petitions

CHILD SUPPORT ACTIVITY	2019	2020
Child Support Cases Open	9,887	8,335
Children Open in Support Cases	8,287	7,529
Children Open Born Out of Wedlock	4,800	4,410
Children Open with Paternity Established	4,558	4,169
Children Open with Paternity Resolved	94.9%	94.5%
Children Needing Paternity Determination	260	256
Cases with Collections during Year (FFY 10/19 - 9/20)	5,752	5,843
Interstate Cases with Collections during Year	266	308
Cases Open Where Medical Support is Ordered	6,024	5,588
Cases with Arrears Due during Year (FFY 10/19 - 9/20)	6,886	6,452

From NYS OCSE DCFS-157 Report 12/20, Statistical Trends Report 12/20 and Child Support Monthly Report 12/20

CHILD SUPPORT COLLECTIONS	
Year	Amount Collected
2011	\$31,714,755
2012	\$31,366,315
2013	\$30,876,366
2014	\$30,415,090
2015	\$30,110,004
2016	\$30,149,458
2017	\$29,324,983
2018	\$29,490,300
2019	\$29,905,140
2020	\$30,538,171



COVID IMPACT

Due to the COVID pandemic, staffing fluctuated during the year. Initially our staff was not able to work from home. To reduce staff in the building, we modified our focus to essential tasks. Staff created new routines and processes, continuing to accept and forward petitions to Family Court. Their dedication and hard work resulted in our highest collection totals since 2013.



2020 Medicaid Services



Christine Nastasi
Social Welfare Manager II
Medicaid

Medicaid is a program for people who can't afford to pay for medical care. The Medicaid program provides services through membership in care plans as well as fee for service Medicaid. It is funded through federal, state and county appropriations. There are four plans to choose from in Dutchess County: MVP, Fidelis, Wellcare, and United Healthcare.

To qualify for the Medicaid program, applicants must meet income requirements and may have resource requirements depending on the program. Eligibility rules are based on the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). The gross household countable income of a client must not exceed the prescribed percentages of the FPL to be eligible.

Locally, we process applications for individuals over 65 years old, disabled adults with Medicare, and disabled children with the Children's Consolidated Waiver. We also serve consumers who receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI). All others must apply directly with the New York State Department of Health.

MEDICAID SERVICES

- Presented at the Dutchess County's 4th Annual ThinkDIFFERENTLY Collaboration of Services and Care Across the Life Span for People with Special Needs Conference (virtual)
- NYS Department of Health extended the recertification period for Medicaid ensuring there was no loss in coverage for existing Medicaid recipients.

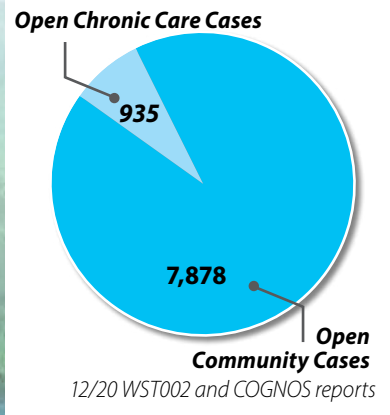
COVID IMPACT

Initially, the impact of COVID in terms of staffing was all consuming. Not set up to work remotely, it was so hard to have the tasks of the unit covered with only 6 staff members in the building. To accommodate our need, the Department of Health quickly provided many waivers and easements of verification; recertifications were extended, and no one lost coverage. Once we had added equipment for staff, we moved forward with teamwork and ingenuity.

MEDICAID MMIS (MEDICAL MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM) – GROSS SHARES

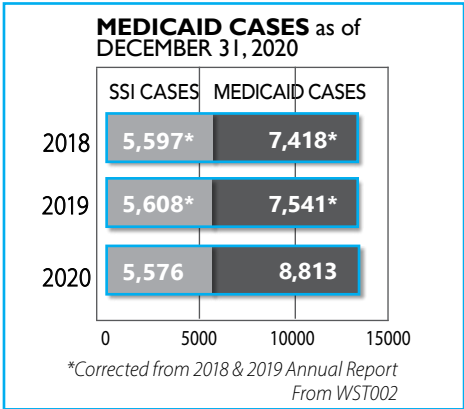
2011	\$383,206,274
2012	\$386,632,150
2013	\$429,748,115
2014	\$457,109,963
2015	\$508,395,860
2016	\$542,058,647
2017	\$567,472,254
2018	\$604,607,576
2019	\$636,438,529
2020	\$664,392,812

CASE TYPE COMPARISON



MEDICAID TRANSACTIONS	2019	2020
Applications Registered	4,559	3,589
Cases Opened/Reactivated/ Open-Closed	4,868	4,103
Cases Closed	4,718	2,965
Changes to Active/Closed Cases	18,499	24,267
Recertifications	5,749	1,591
Denied	1,715	1,336
Closed Case Maintenance/Forced Deletion	102	86
Total Transactions	35,651	34,348

From WMS WST003



MEDICAL EXPENDITURES BY PROVIDER* PROVIDER TYPE	2019	2020	%Change
Hospital Inpatient Services	\$24,841,487	\$25,630,729	3.2
Hospital Outpatient Services	\$4,197,356	\$4,025,853	-4.1
Skilled Nursing Facilities	\$72,294,455	\$78,314,564	8.3
Intermediate Care Facilities	\$16,059,549	\$17,624,432	9.7
Clinics	\$11,449,731	\$11,547,718	.9
Hospice	\$1,126,810	\$1,758,612	56.1
Physicians Services	\$2,286,837	\$2,022,238	-11.6
Dental Services	\$498,674	\$348,417	-30.1
Other Practitioners Services	\$3,006,291	\$2,798,776	-6.9
Child Care Institutional Medical Per Diem	\$1,880,844	\$1,367,071	-27.3
Personal Care Services	\$4,191,345	\$4,554,890	8.7
Home Health Services	\$558,370	\$263,750	-52.8
Assisted Living Services	\$7,489,445	\$7,742,471	3.4
Long-Term Home Health Care Waived Services	\$7,808,268	\$8,557,566	9.6
Home and Community Based Waived Services	\$102,724,247	\$110,677,977	7.7
Rehabilitation and Therapy	\$191,656	\$135,430	-29.3
Mental Hygiene Restorative Rehabilitation	\$8,891,691	\$8,237,645	-7.4
Drugs and Supplies	\$5,688,631	\$5,486,131	-3.6
Eye Appliances and Durable Medical Equipment	\$316,826	\$329,351	4.0
Prepaid Care	\$322,585,988	\$340,821,470	5.7
Case Management	\$9,458,544	\$10,196,372	7.8
Health Insurance Premiums	\$1,430,684	\$1,826,570	27.7
Medical Transportation	\$15,359,560	\$12,963,957	-15.6
Lab and X-Ray Services	\$498,163	\$464,318	-6.8
Other	\$4,024,824	\$434,135	-89.2
Total	\$628,860,276	\$658,130,444	4.7

From 12/2020 NYSDOH MARS MRP1010-R001



2020 SNAP/HEAP Services



Joanne Sinagra
Social Welfare Manager II
SNAP/HEAP

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) Services (Satellite offices are included in this division.)

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)

SNAP helps low-income working people, seniors and the disabled put healthy food on the table. SNAP benefits are issued electronically monthly. SNAP eligibility is based on household income, household size, and other factors.

For fast, easy and confidential service, which is available 24 hours a day, visit: www.mybenefits.ny.gov.

You can check to see if you are eligible, apply for SNAP/HEAP benefits and track your application. You can also apply at all Dutchess County Community Action and DCFS locations. Seniors may apply at Dutchess County Office for the Aging.

- Merged SNAP Intake and SNAP In-care into one division, requiring movement of staff and office spaces.
- Implemented a LEAN project to improve our imaging process, making it more efficient to support staff working from home during the pandemic and eliminate much copying, using excessive paper, and sending additional emails.
- Began using a mobile app called NYDocSubmit developed by OTDA for easily uploading documents from a mobile device. This new and convenient technology proved to be very beneficial.
- The use of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program's (SNAP) Electronic Benefit Transfer cards (EBT) for food purchases was expanded statewide to include online purchases.
- NYS oversight issued waivers extending the recertification period for SNAP.

SNAP TRANSACTIONS	2019	2020
Applications Registered	7,243	9,331
Cases Opened/Reactivated/Open-Closed	6,033	6,330
Changes to Active/Closed Cases	33,013	98,955
Recertifications	5,019	4,634
Denied	2,586	3,740
Closed Case	6,007	6,046
Closed Case Maintenance	129	92
Total Transactions	52,787	119,857

From WMS WST003

SNAP CASES AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2020			
2011	10,926	2016	11,146
2012	12,802	2017	10,680
2013	13,087	2018	10,353
2014	12,892	2019	10,385
2015	12,142	2020	10,221

From WMS WST002

COVID IMPACT

The impact on our process was made more difficult by the effects of the pandemic such as reducing the number of staff in the office, maintaining social distancing, quarantining, and unfortunately staff and their families falling ill to the virus. We underwent a completely new and foreign way of working - *work from home*. There was a huge learning curve as we deployed equipment, signed agreements, and set people up to work remotely.



HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (HEAP)

HEAP assists low income people pay the cost of heating their homes. Eligibility is based on household income. Program components include: Regular, Emergency, Heating Equipment Repair and Replacement, Heating Equipment Clean and Tune, and Cooling Component.

Through a contract with the Community Action Partnership of Dutchess County, DCFS continued to fund a full-time HEAP Packager. The Packager helps identify and work with low-income, energy vulnerable families who would benefit from weatherization and other energy-related services.

FUEL DEPOT

Dutchess County Community Action Partnership is our contractor that administers the Emergency Fuel Program. Households accessing the emergency fuel depot are required to apply for HEAP benefits. The emergency fuel depots are located throughout Dutchess County and operate after 5:00 PM Monday – Friday and weekends through HEAP season.



SATELLITE OFFICES
EASTERN DUTCHESS GOVERNMENT CENTER

The EDGC satellite office is located at the 131 County House Road - 3rd Floor, Millbrook, NY 12545.

It accepts all financial program applications (Temporary Assistance, SNAP, Medicaid, and HEAP). The eligibility worker is responsible for determining eligibility and then maintains the case for ongoing services.

Due to the size and staffing of this office, the EDGC office operates on an appointment only schedule. This location is not equipped to take care of housing emergencies. If an individual or family find themselves needing this type of service, they are referred to the main office in Poughkeepsie.

Eastern Dutchess Government Center (EDGC)



Beacon Center



BEACON CENTER

The Beacon Center satellite office is located in the Southern County Office Building, 223 Main Street, Beacon, NY 12508.

This office services SNAP and HEAP customers. If consumers need to relay or submit information to a different DCFS office, they may utilize the Beacon site to drop off their documents.

- Expanded from 3 to 7 staff
- Moved into a larger, newly renovated space on the second floor of the Beacon County Office Building
- Added a kiosk in reception area to assist SNAP/HEAP customers with uploading documents and retrieving specific case information

ACCOMPLISHMENTS & YEARLY STATISTICS 2020

2020 Temporary Assistance Services



Christian Jones
Social Welfare Manager II
Temporary Assistance

Temporary Assistance Intake determines eligibility and screens all applicants for domestic violence, drug and alcohol abuse, and any other physical or psychological barriers to employment. The Temporary Assistance unit works with employable individuals, persons with barriers and child-only cases focusing on employment as a priority while promoting self-sufficiency and personal responsibility.

INCLUDES SNAP INTAKE (transitioned to SNAP unit during 2020), EMPLOYMENT & CHILD CARE SUBSIDY PROGRAMS

Due to the pandemic, NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) waived the requirement to hold face-to-face interviews with Temporary Assistance applicants, allowing us to conduct telephone interviews instead.

FAMILY ASSISTANCE

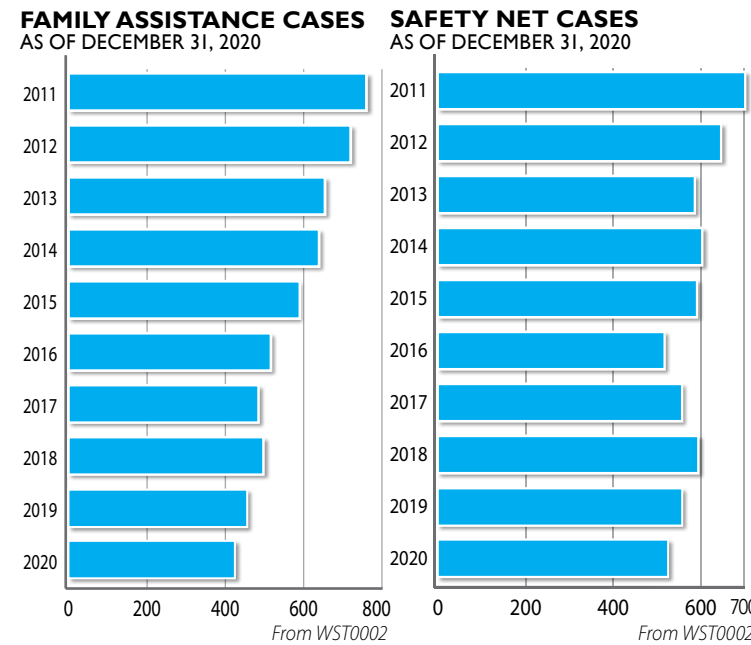
Family Assistance provides benefits for families with children. Cash benefits are limited to five years in a recipient's lifetime. After five years, a Family Assistance case may continue to receive benefits if an adult is disabled and cannot work, or by applying for assistance through Safety Net.

SAFETY NET ASSISTANCE

Safety Net Assistance provides benefits for basic living expenses for single adults and childless couples or families who have used up their 5-year limit of Family Assistance. Cash benefits are limited to two years including any cash benefits received through Family Assistance. After two years, the non-cash Safety Net assistance voucher system provides benefits.

TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE TRANSACTIONS	2019	2020
Applications Registered	5,912	4,300
Cases Opened/Reactivated/ Open-Closed	2,432	2,270
Cases Closed	1,721	1,507
Changes to Active/Closed Cases	8,140	12,857
Recertifications	1,209	1,001
Denied	3,613	2,590
Closed Case Maintenance	155	178
Total Transactions	17,270	20,403

From WST0003



EMPLOYMENT UNIT

The Employment unit assists able-bodied clients attain self-sufficiency and helps those who are incapacitated obtain necessary treatment and rehabilitation services. Staff conduct an assessment with each individual and work with them to develop an individualized employment plan.

- Through our partnership with the Dutchess County Regional Chamber of Commerce: 82 TANF and/or Safety Net recipients participated in the Workforce Connections Program; 12 became employed.
- Through our partnership with Dutchess County BOCES: 188 individuals completed the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) intake assessment; 78 were enrolled in Adult Basic Education (ABE) classes and/or the High School Equivalency program; 18 individuals enrolled in other training programs such as Certified Nurse's Assistant (CNA) and Heating, Ventilation & Air Conditioning (HVAC) and 16 completed their training.
- Through our partnership with Exodus Transitional Community, a re-entry program serving formerly incarcerated individuals, involving comprehensive job seeking, job retention, job training and career planning, 28 participants became employed at an average of 33 hours per week and an average hourly wage of \$14.40.

- Through a partnership with DCWIB, the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) engaged 150 eligible youth including homeless, low income and foster care youth, with 5 receiving Temporary Assistance.
- The "Way to Work" program, (formerly Community Solutions for Transportation) administered by the Workforce Investment Board for DCFS, assists low-income families. 77 eligible Dutchess County residents were assessed for transportation needs and offered instruction in financial literacy, 7 participants were eligible for previously owned cars and 3 of these cars were provided in December 2020. Additionally, 3 individuals received their learner's permit and are working toward obtaining their NYS driver's license.

CHILD CARE SUBSIDY PROGRAM

The Child Care Subsidy program is designed to help low-income families meet their child care needs. Eligibility is based on income. The Child Care Subsidy unit processes applications, monthly payments to providers and works with the Child Care Council of Dutchess and Putnam Counties, which is contracted to provide inspection of child care providers and assist clients in locating a child care provider.

- Provided services to 719 families and 1,243 children.
- The Department was granted a NYS waiver to provide additional benefits under the Child Care Assistance Program due to COVID-19. The waiver expanded the income eligibility standards to serve families with incomes up to 85% of the State Median Income and allowed the family share to be waived for those families impacted by COVID-19.

From CCTA system

COVID IMPACT

Many staff and their families were personally affected by this virus. As a team, constant communication through a variety of platforms was key to continue assisting our community. More than half of the staff were set up to work from home. Determining eligibility and opening cases using newly established procedures was demanding. It was all new but exhilarating to know that it could be done in unconventional ways while establishing a consistent practice. We've evolved at DCFS through unprecedented times.



Dear Mr. Bixby, Please let Ms. Abdo know we love her and she's doing a great job. She makes you feel like you aren't bothering her when you call. ~ MG & JK

Mr. Matthew Starzyk is the best and always answers questions thoroughly. ~ CB

I am writing this with profound gratitude to Holly Abdo and Nichole Dahowski for their tremendous outreach to me. ~ HD

2020 Special Investigations Unit



Christopher Corman
Supervisor of
Special Investigations

Special Investigations unit is responsible for public assistance program integrity and investigates possible welfare fraud, assists with eligibility determination, and recovers overpayments/repayment of assistance where appropriate.

COST AVOIDANCE FOR PROGRAM INTEGRITY		Number of Application Denials, Case Closings or Grant Reductions	Estimated Cost Avoidance
Initiatives	Description		
Front End Detection System (FEDS)	Detecting fraud at application	52	\$473,148
Intentional Program Violations (IPV)	Disqualification sanctions for those found guilty	12	\$26,046

From 2019/2020 NYS OTDA Cost Avoidance Program Calculations

SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS UNIT ACTIVITY	2019	2020
Completed Investigations	762	636
Confessions of Judgment	79	140
Value of Repayment Agreements Signed	\$250,975	\$255,005
SNAP Disqualifications	14	9
Value of SNAP Disqualifications	\$35,101	\$13,018
Temporary Assistance Disqualifications	5	3
Value of Temporary Assistance Disqualifications	\$8,253	\$13,027
Duplicate Case Reviews	314	252
Incarcerated Case Reviews	66	35

From 2019/2020 PARIS and Prison Match Reports

COLLECTION ACTIVITY	2019	2020
Lottery Intercepts	\$12,545	\$19,057
Fees (parking, guardian, adoption, home study, phone, postage, confessions of judgment, copies and subpoenas)	\$22,292	\$8,737
Cash Collections (TANF, SN, MA, Services, SNAP, SN-SSI and CSE Repayments)	\$6,668,280	\$6,979,649

From Cash Management System

COVID IMPACT

Safety precautions due to COVID-19 removed Special Investigations Unit's ability to conduct face-to-face interviews both in the office and in the field. All Front End Detection interviews were suspended for six months. The SIU investigators were reassigned to assist the SNAP and Temporary Assistance Units which were inundated with increased demand. The staff's ability to help where needed was highly valued.



2020 Legal Services



Susan Flynn
Bureau Chief

The Legal unit at DCFS handles cases involving adult protection, child abuse and /or neglect, foster care, and termination of parental right. It also prosecutes support collection cases and offers legal advice to the various divisions and represents DCFS in Family Court cases and in related matters in other court and legal forums.

This unit is active with these innovative programs:

- Permanency Hearing Part; Domestic Violence Part for Article 10 Abuse and Neglect cases; Regularly scheduled pre-trial conferences and discovery; Dutchess County Child Advocacy Center, and Dutchess County Court Improvement Project for Abused and Neglected Children. DCFS, with the Legal unit, continues to participate in collaborative systems:
- Weekly CPS review of cases with attorney/s
- Weekly court case conferences with attorney/s
- Weekly foster care case review with Foster Care unit
- Bi-weekly Child Advocacy Center meetings
- Child Advocacy Center with concomitant interaction among the District Attorney's Office, County Attorney's Office, Child Protective Services, Office of Probation and Community Corrections, law enforcement, mental health agencies, victim services and medical service providers.

LEGAL STATISTICS	2020
Child Protective Reports	2,100
Support Cases	8,335
Private Support Referrals	15
Fair Hearings	
Medicaid	39
Child Welfare	50
Collection and Resource Cases	66
Adult Protective Cases	52

LEGAL DISPOSITIONS	2019	2020
Child Abuse Petitions	44	13
Child Neglect Petitions	518	213
Termination of Parental Rights	119	48
IVD Paternity	149	97
IVD Support	4,744	3,054
IVD Interstate Support (UIFSA)	130	94
Permanency Hearings	377	182



COVID IMPACT

The COVID pandemic affected the DCFS Legal unit in several ways. We responded to an unprecedented closure and limited re-opening of the Courts. The Courts imposed both virtual and limited in-person protocols for the management of our cases. The Legal Unit learned to utilize various virtual platforms to continue necessary communications. We made a shift to partial work from home status. For many of us, it was old dogs learning new tricks – and learning them fast!

Community

Needless to say, gathering in 2020 was challenging! Many community outreach events were held virtually due to the pandemic but pictured below are a few that were held in-person.

With careful planning and COVID precautions in place, our Children's Services team organized a real outdoor Foster Family Picnic. There were games for the children and individual picnic lunches for everyone.



Outreach!

In keeping with social distancing protocols, ThinkDIFFERENTLY creatively switched their annual picnic to the 2020 ThinkDIFFERENTLY Drive-Thru Picnic held at Dutchess County Fairgrounds.

TD also offered a fun farm-based event in conjunction with Cornell Cooperative Extension. DCFS participated in two Child Passenger Seat Check events; pictured here is one at Fairview Fire District.





Dutchess County Department of Community and Family Services
60 Market Street, Poughkeepsie, New York 12601
www.dutchessny.gov
DCFSinfo@dutchessny.gov
phone: 845.486.3000 fax: 845.486.3090

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND FAMILY SERVICES SATELLITE LOCATIONS

Beacon Center
223 Main Street
Beacon, NY 12508
845.838.4800

Child Advocacy Center
35 Van Wagner Road
Poughkeepsie, New York 12603
845.486.5112

Eastern Dutchess Government Center
131 County House Road
Milbrook, New York 12545
845.677.5532

SPECIAL CONNECTIONS

Dutchess County
www.dutchessny.gov

Dutchess One Stop Career Center
www.dutchessonestop.org
845.473.9000

Health Plan Marketplace
www.nystateofhealth.ny.gov

Apply for/track TA, SNAP,
and HEAP benefits.
www.mybenefits.ny.gov

NYDocSubmit
(mobile app to submit documents)

New York State Office of Temporary
and Disability Assistance
www.otda.state.ny.us
518.473.1090

New York State Office of Children
and Family Services
www.ocfs.state.ny.us
518.473.7793

HOTLINE NUMBERS

Report alleged child abuse or neglect
Main Hotline 800 342 3720
Mandated Reporter Hotline
800.635.1522

Report Fraud
Medicaid 800.424.9121
Welfare 800.367.4448

Report alleged adult abuse or neglect
844.697.3505
Rape Crisis/Crime Victim
845.452.7272