

2003 Annual Report

Partnering for Success!



Department of
Social Services

Mission

“To meet the needs of the County’s dependent population, as provided by social services law, in a courteous, fair and efficient manner with the aim of restoring each beneficiary to maximum independence.”



Goals and Objectives

- I. *Provide assistance to eligible individuals and families while assisting clients to achieve their full potential.*
 - A. *Conduct thorough eligibility investigations;*
 - B. *Apply rules, regulations and local policies objectively, consistently and uniformly;*
 - C. *Provide clients with all of the benefits to which they are entitled;*
 - D. *Work cooperatively as divisions to meet the separate needs of clients while preserving the integrity of each individual;*
 - E. *Maintain professional standards in all contacts.*
- II. *Develop and make available to families and individuals services that will strengthen the family unit, encourage stability in living arrangements, and provide for specialized care.*
- III. *Provide protective services to children and adults at risk.*
- IV. *Provide adequate information to the general public regarding our programs and services and maintain adequate knowledge of community services to act as a referral source.*



Advisory Council

- Charlie Gatje** **Dutchess BOCES**
- Amy Horn Oclatis** **Community Member**
- Nancy Jacoby** **DC Chapter American Red Cross**
- Walter Joseph** **Childrens Home of Poughkeepsie**
- Irene Magalski** **DC Department of Social Services**
- Maryanne Maruschak** **DC Department of Social Services**
- Eileen Miccio** **DC Office for the Aging**
- Nancy Newall** **DC Interfaith Council**
- Sandra Noel** **DC Legislature**
- Brian Riddell** **Dutchess Outreach Inc.**
- Patricia Stumpf** **DC Department of Health**
- Jeanne Wagner** **Child Care Council of Dutchess, Inc.**
- Gail Webster** **Hudson River Housing**
- Steve White** **Planned Parenthood of Dutchess & Ulster**
- David Wright** **Westchester-Putnam Legal Services**



*Dutchess County Legislature
Family/Human Services Committee*

- Sandra Noel, Chairman**
- Marge Horton, Vice Chairman**
- Chris Biaino**
- Judith Bleakley-O’Neill**
- John Forman**
- Barbara Gutzler**
- Kristen Jemiolo**
- Frances Knapp**
- Marcus Molinaro**
- Robert Rolison**
- Mark Sheedy**

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Cover Photo

Photograph by Resource Parent William Robinson of his and Donna Robinson’s adopted daughter, Anna, at the Foster Care Picnic. Anna was a child in foster care before adoption.

A Message from the County Executive



William R. Steinhaus
Dutchess County Executive

As you review the Dutchess County Department of Social Service's 2003 Annual Report, their success in providing the appropriate supports for individuals and families striving for self-sufficiency are apparent. This is demonstrated through the department's dedication to an ever-changing range of services, professionalism and creative thinking that build upon people's strengths rather than weaknesses.

At a time when resources are tight, a professional staff under the direction of Commissioner Allers and Deputy Commissioner Magalski have worked diligently this year to forge relationships within the community. This allows the County to still offer optimum services by developing the right mix of community partnerships and shared resources. Dutchess County has many community partners strategically aligned to accomplish what government cannot do alone. As County Executive, I have worked tirelessly to foster these relationships with local governments, law enforcement, business and industry, not-for-profits, educators and the arts so we all benefit from a climate of sharing resources and working together.

The Department of Social Services (DSS) has many accomplishments to be proud of this year; they have seen record amounts of collections in their Child Support Collection Unit and furnished over 77 TANF eligible individuals with reliable used cars to get to work through a partnership with the Dutchess County BOCES. With help from the Poughkeepsie Children's Home, DSS secured more space for children in need so they are offered a clean, safe, home environment to go to when unfortunate circumstances arise. In addition to work on the Human Service side, DSS has also met great success in collaboration with the County's criminal justice system by assisting families in *Family Treatment Court* and *Permanency Court* so they may move toward a more successful future with their children.

Dedication to the highest quality of service is also bred by this professionalism, providing residents with goals toward success and a brighter future, full of integrity and free of dependency. From temporary assistance to foster care, to food stamps, to child support collection – the team of professionals employed at the Department of Social Services have focused on serving the people in Dutchess County by providing mission critical support services on an individual and personal basis. For that I extend my personal thanks and congratulations to our terrific staff for an extremely difficult job well done.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "William R. Steinhaus". The signature is written in a cursive style.

William R. Steinhaus
Dutchess County Executive

A Message from the Commissioner



*Robert B. Allers
Commissioner*

Dear Staff and Colleagues,

As I review and present our Annual Report, different emotions surge forth. Our successes and achievements renew our energies, instill new hope and reinforce our belief that we can and will make a positive impact on our community.

We piloted new programs that support our mission of protecting children, supporting families, and empowering people. One saves money on fuel oil for our HEAP recipients, one adds a District Attorney Investigator to our Child Advocacy Center and the third started an Emergency Foster Care Placement facility at Poughkeepsie Children's Home. All three initiatives will be renewed in 2004. We project an increase in buying power of \$219,000 for our HEAP project and a savings in distress, stress, pain, suffering and perhaps even lives with our new partnerships with the District Attorney and the Poughkeepsie Children's Home.

However, I mentioned mixed emotions. It seems at DSS we always have a crisis, we often see too much heartache and hear too many calls for help. One of our DSS talented staff wrote the following on her observations of our reception room.

In spite or perhaps because of this we continue to provide more and better services. In 2003, we provided more day care, we continue to sponsor the best transportation program in New York State, our clients continue to receive awards following graduation from our Dutchess BOCES programs, we continue to see our "graduates" in positive jobs, relationships, and community situations.

We are the human service emergency room and with the help of our staff and our partner agencies, we continue to make a positive difference. Again, thanks to all who provide the essential services to the citizens of our county.

Please enjoy our report and feel free to comment on its contents.

Sincerely,

Robert B. Allers
Commissioner

Within Reception Halls

*The building's full of whispers
From many who pass by
Some are full of sorrow
Some just want to cry*

*Others need much guidance
To forge the path ahead
So many are in desperate need
They don't even have a bed*

*The light of human dignity
Shines within the walls
Giving care with helping hands
When helpless angels fall*

*Children's tears and heartfelt cries
Still echo in the rooms
A rush of aid to broken hearts
Are healing painful wounds*

*The homeless and the sick are there
They line reception halls
Still the light of dignity
Never wavers, never falls*

*While others wander aimlessly
As mindful issues last
Feeling anguish life can bring
Depression fills them fast*

*For in the hearts of workers
Caring is the best
It cures the ills of weary men
It makes them past the test*

*So, while in Ivory Towers
As you make your way
Recall the fallen angels
That you have helped today*

Marlene Dale Woodason



Highlights of the Year

Children's Services Council Second Status Report

The partnership of the Children's Services Council, the Department of Social Services, the Youth Bureau, the United Way and Marist College published the Second Status Report in January. This report, first published in 2000, examines five key life areas and twenty-two rated measurements in those areas that reflect the well being of the children, youth and families of Dutchess County.

The purpose of the report was to determine current conditions and identify areas which are acceptable and where improvements need to be made so that we develop a common vision to improve the conditions and well being of all. The Status Report and data is available on line at www.dcchildrensservicescouncil.org.

Resource Parent Brunch



We thanked more than 50 local Resource Parents for their commitment to the lives of vulnerable children at the Annual Resource Parent Brunch held on May 16. The Resource Parents have been honored in this manner for at least twelve years and, for the fourth year, their FOCUS support group has taken this opportunity to recognize a Children's Services Employee.

This year's honoree was Lucille Coxen, a Foster Care Case Manager, recognized for her attentiveness to the concerns of foster parents and her prompt response to their calls. Awards were also presented to honor seven Resource Parents who have provided care for medically fragile children – John and Marilyn Darnell, Adam and Susan Sanchez, Tonya Strothers and Jeffery and Carol Underhill.

Staff put together the brunch featuring, bagels, fresh fruit, homemade coffee cakes, quiches and deviled eggs. Ted Starzyk, Principal Program Assistant, supplied the beautiful table bouquets, as door prizes.



Partnering for Success!

Many Hands Make Light Work Resource Parent Picnic

The Annual Picnic for Resource Parents and Foster Children was held on August 19, in Bowdoin Park. More than 20 County staff and more than 75 others including foster, adopted and birth children and County Executive, William Steinhaus, showed up for good food, good fellowship and a good time. Again, this year the weather cooperated and all enjoyed the day. Commissioner Allers, Joe Olah, Loida Morales, Sharon Rivera and Joe Matteo cooked, Resource Parent Elisa Perez's pulled pork, rice and beans made a hit for the second year and Donna Robinson, newly appointed Foster Parent Liaison, brought a fishing prop borrowed from the Poughkeepsie Church of the Nazarene to use for taking fun photos of the children.

Children's Services staff held a raffle and bake sale earlier in June to raise picnic funds. They enlisted local businesses to donate ice cream (Stewarts) and Italian ices (Café Aurora).

Russell Boris, Dutchess County Office for Aging, provided the entertainment sound system. Great Scott the Magician provided entertainment, producing M & M's for the children as his finale.

DSS employee Alan Lewis's performance as the day's emcee was terrific, and he and Ann Hazard's production of two skits, the Three Little Pigs using the children, and Old McDonald's Farm, using the adults were very entertaining. The younger children made animal masks to use in the performances and Ila Gupta, Betsy Kelly and Ann used their artistic talents to create the scenic backdrops.



They also enjoyed making frames for their photos and fishing in a small pool using poles and fish magnets made by Maria Riccobono, playing basketball and having their faces painted by volunteers Jessica Brink and Krista Esposito, and DSS's Anna May Duncan, and Marlene Woodason. Older children played badminton and volleyball.

Children's Services Council Hosts Conference

On November 20, the Dutchess County Children's Services Council sponsored its fourth annual one-day conference at Villa Borghese in Wappingers Falls. This year's theme was "Tomorrow's World ... Is in the Hands of Youth Today" and the day's events focused on youth empowerment.



The conference received support from the United Way of Dutchess County, New York State Office of Children and Family Services, and the Dutchess County Youth Bureau. The Junior League of Poughkeepsie provided youth attendees with "goodie bags."

DSS again assisted in planning the conference and provided funding for the keynote young motivational speaker, Josh Shipp, who was abandoned by his mother and raised by his grandmother until she was no longer able to provide for his care. Beginning at the age of 12, he spent several years in group homes and now he uses his triumph over personal tragedy as a neglected and abused child to inspire young people to live their lives to the fullest.

Mr. Shipp is a nationally recognized speaker who has spoken to crowd as large as 27,000 and shared the stage with Bill Cosby. He is one of the youngest members of the National Speakers Association, reaching over 200,000 teenagers per year. He is also the co-host of a teen motivational video series and has been contributing author in two motivational books.

Fifteen workshops and five separate community meetings covered topics on Marijuana and Drugs, Teen Violence, Today's World, Healthy Relationships and Effective Communications Between Adults & Youth. The meetings were facilitated by youth leaders and provided an opportunity for adults and youth to share together their thoughts and concerns on those topics.



The information gleaned will be used in future County planning initiatives.

Overall, evaluations were very positive and many found it valuable to have youth participate as equals and to see youth leadership in action.

After Hours and Off Site Recertification

Using the resource of the Office of Probation and Community Corrections, we continued for the third year the after hours Recertification Program for Public Assistance, Food Stamps and Medicaid cases.

This program accommodates the needs of working persons, permitting them to attend the requisite face-to-face interview during their non-working hours. The interviews scheduled for one day a month, are held on Thursday nights from 5 PM to 7 PM in the Poughkeepsie Probation office. An average of eight recipients/families per month recertify in this manner.

Our partnership with Dutchess County Community Action Agency continued by having the Food Stamp Unit schedule recertification interviews at its site in Dover Plains for 85 households who were unable to travel to Poughkeepsie.

A Day at the Farm and Seasonal Events

Using federal funds from the TANF Block Grant and support from the Catherine Street Community Center, Catholic Charities' Ministry to Seniors and the Intergenerational Sub-Committee of Dutchess Health 2000, we were able to provide two special days for grandparents and other relatives raising grandchildren.



On May 3, from 10 AM to 3 PM caretaker relatives and children spent a day at Sprout Creek Farm on the outskirts of Poughkeepsie. Activities for youngsters included baking bread, churning butter, making candles and cheese, petting the animals and planting seeds. Grandparents and other caretakers were encouraged to relax rocking on the porch, sharing with others and trying their hands at baking bread.

On December 13, we also sponsored the third Holiday Respite, allowing caretakers to take a rare break from childcare duties. Partnering with Catherine Street Community Center and Cornell Cooperative Extension's Nutrition Education Program we provided children aged 3 to 13 with a free breakfast and lunch, an opportunity to cook a holiday treat, exercise and craft opportunities.

Providing funds for summer camp continued our focus on the needs of individual caretaker relatives and children.

Highlights of the Year

Special Car Donation

Our partnership with Dutchess BOCES in the Community Solutions for Transportation Program continued to touch the lives of working county residents and was able to provide another special donated vehicle to a single mom with two sons. April came to the program in November with documentation that she had secured full time employment at a Millbrook business but had no transportation to the job site.

April had put her life back on track by completing the Dutchess BOCES Office Technology Program and diligently spending 20 hours per week on a Community Work Experience. Now, she was upset that she might not be able to keep her new job before she had even started her first day. As luck would have it, the Community Solutions for Transportation program received a 1993 Ford Taurus donated by Mr. and Mrs. Joe Olah. Joe is a DSS Accountant, was really pleased that his car was so quickly put into service and was thrilled to be present on the day April received her car.



Since that time, April not only was able to begin her new job, she is now following up on continuing her education until she fulfills her dream of becoming a Nurse Practitioner.

After School Programming Support

DSS continued using its TANF Services Block Grant to partially fund the extremely successful Mid-Hudson Civic Center's ***Kids on Ice Stay Out of Hot Water-Dreams of Gold Program***. This recreational skating program for TANF eligible youth ages 3 through 18 years operates at the McCann Ice Arena in Poughkeepsie.

The program allows youth, who would not otherwise be able to participate in the sport of ice-skating, one day a week for 1½ hours for four weeks. For those interested in recreational or competitive figure skating or ice hockey, there is a continuation for up to 36 more weeks. *Kids on Ice* provides youth with all of the requisite equipment and pays for the test/competition fees.

The program served 103 TANF eligible children in 2003, 13 of which continued their skating program beyond the initial period, with many enjoying their third year of skating. As in previous years, all the children who completed the four-week introductory program, passed a first level achievement test and several children moved up into more elite levels of programming.



A number of program participants skated in the Arena's Dreams of Gold Awards Ceremony exhibition in February. The

McCann Ice Arena Dreams of Gold Foundation awarded the *Kids on Ice* Skater of the Year to a male participant, for his role as an exemplary student and leader.

We continue to support the **Mid Hudson Children's Museum's, Junior Volunteer Program and the Museum's Youth Program**. The Junior Volunteer Program served 38 youth during the year, offering 12 to 17 year old's throughout the County, a structured on-going volunteer experience, involving them in museum programming and the community.

The **Museum's Youth Program** served youth aged 10 to 15 years, offering Poughkeepsie Middle School students the opportunity to learn a specific skill from artists or scientists in residence and the opportunity to then mentor younger children in the community. Sean Fagan, the instructor from Circus Minimus, taught the art of circus performing, juggling and balancing acts. These students then designed their own skits and performed in front of 150 Krieger Elementary School children.



The **Children's Media Project** came with their equipment to teach the students to film their created animation projects. Finally, youth spent time with an AmeriCorps volunteer from Scenic Hudson and Chris Bowser, Hudson River Clearwater Sloop Educator, who introduced a model of the Hudson River Watershed, taught about river topography, tides, the Aquatic Food Cycle and pollution. This project culminated in a Hudson River Program presented at the Poughkeepsie Middle School.

In September, the program was offered at the Children's Museum site, where students have shown improved attention spans and where the program can now relate the science exhibits to the themes presented i.e. the magic of science, which is demystified and students understand the underlying principles, just like magic.

New Partnerships to Improve Permanency for Children

The Children's Services division has been in the forefront of innovative programs designed to improve casework practice in the Child Welfare system. Under the leadership of Commissioner Allers and Deputy Commissioner Magalski and in cooperation with the Family Court, a Permanency Court presided over by Hearing Officer Adina Gilbert was established on April 4. The goal is to shorten the length of foster care placements.

This year we also worked very closely with a December 2002 established Family Treatment Court presided over by Honorable Peter Forman. This court process provides intensive supervision and support to families in which substance abuse has led to neglect of children and services are court ordered. The Children's Service's division in collaboration with our Legal Unit, work closely with other community service providers in this endeavor. By the end of the year, we were serving 15 families.

A Foster Parent Liaison position was created and begun on April 21. This position acts as a liaison between DSS and our Resource Parents, handling concerns as they pertain to foster parenting.

Staff Honored for Service

Awards for Service were presented by Commissioner Allers, at the May 22 Employee Appreciation Day to:



25 Years

David Barnier
Eric Deyo
Gloria Marshall
Joe Olah
Liz Piraino
Judy Yarochowicz

20 Years

Mary Bonner Crouch
Theresa Rosencranz

15 Years

Tammy Chenevert
Fran Dunfield
Shari Francis
Karen Hansen
Diane Malone
Antoinette McKenzie
Kathleen Robbins
Maria Riccobono
Pat Sheldon
Pat Weeks

Employee Appreciation Day



On May 22, Management and Administrative staff sponsored the 21st Annual Employee Appreciation Day. This year's fete, *Do Drop In*, had a western theme and featured wings, veggies and ranch dip, "cow chip" cookies, and root beer.



10 Years

Susan Alger-Moshier
Virginia Daby
Pat Donovan
Ellen Gander
Linda Giuliani
Pam Highbridge
Linda Linenbroker
Brenda Maeder
Irene Maiolo
Thomas McMann
Pauline Minyard
James Murphy
Margaret Rovere
Mary Southworth
Louise Sportello
Jamie Williams
Lorelle Wuerz

5 Years

Gail Carr Bertsche
Sherri Burns
Lynn Cockin
Fritz Cooper
Thomas Jones
Alan Lewis
Kimberly Olson
Suzanne Littlefield
Donna Robinson
Bonnie Ruf
Beverly Ward
Natasha West

EMPLOYEE of the MONTH

The Employee Recognition Committee has been handing out the **Employee of the Month Recognition Award** to employees for the last fifteen years. Every month, the Committee, whose members represent various divisions and units, meet to read over nominations and vote the following month's award recipient. Each recipient receives a plaque and a free parking space behind the building for one month.



January

Isabel Fuentes
Central File
"Always offers her assistance with a positive attitude."



February

Shari Francis
Medicaid
"Often targeted as the person to deal with new cases... Through all of this she comports herself in exemplary fashion"



March

Sheila Meisner
Medicaid
"Whatever she is asked to do, she always accepts with assurance, warmth and humor. She's the genuine article"



April

Robin Berthiaume
Accounting
"Very diligent and responsible . . . Never abuses her time, never tries to take advantage."



May

Donna Wood
Food Stamps
"Very knowledgeable... is ALWAYS very helpful"



June

Maria Riccobono
Children's Services
"Works long, hard hours and is one of the friendliest workers in Children's Services"



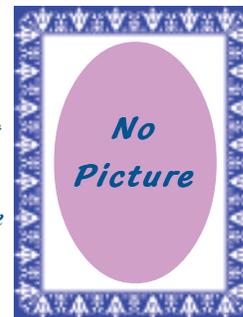
July

Carole Williams
Child Support
Accounting
"When we need something done or found, we go to Carol!"



August

Pat Janos
Medicaid
"Since she arrived at DSS around five years ago, she has been the sunshine we needed in our Medicaid family."



September

Sherri Burns
Accounting
"Rarely misses work and often spends her own time and money to decorate DSS festively in order to promote cheer!"



October

Karen Leonard
Administration
"Always thinks of the small things we don't have time to worry about."



November

Manny Holl
Adult Services
"An outstanding worker...makes sure all his clients' needs are met and is extremely thorough."



December

Lisa Collins
Adult Services
"Goes above and beyond her 'job' to bring true humanity to the people she assists!"

Department of Social Services Organizational Chart

COUNTY EXECUTIVE
William R. Steinhaus

OFFICE of the COMMISSIONER
Commissioner - Robert B. Allers
Deputy Commissioner - Irene Magalski
Assistant to the Commissioner for Program Planning and Evaluation - Bridget Goddard
Director of Administrative Services - Peter Simon
Staff Development Director - Michael Soltish
Fair Hearings Specialist - Colette Krakower
Confidential Administrative Assistant - Judy Yarochowicz

LEGAL SERVICES
Janet Tullo, Bureau Chief
Clerical Support

ADVISORY COUNCIL
(See Page Three)

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES
Peter Simon, Director
Accounting
Central File
Finger Imaging
Fleet Control, Purchasing
Reception
Revenue
Special Investigations

ADULT SERVICES
Maryann Maruschak, Director
Adult Protective
Domestic Violence
Housing
Placement Services
TASA
Clerical Support

CHILD SUPPORT
Martha Allers, Director
Accounting
Enforcement
Establishment
Clerical Support

CHILDREN'S SERVICES
Deborah Bonnerwith, Director
Adoption / Homefinders
Child Protective Services
Foster Care
Non Secure Detention
Preventive Services
Secure Detention
Clerical Support

Computer Information Services
BICS
Data Entry
LAN
System Support
Welfare Management System

FOOD STAMPS / HEAP
Cherie Barnier, Director
Eligibility
Food Assistance Program
HEAP
Clerical Support

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE
Margo Schumacher, Director
Disability Determination
Eligibility
Nursing Home Intake
Managed Care
Clerical Support

STAFF DEVELOPMENT
Michael Soltish, Director
Personnel
Payroll

EMPLOYMENT
Susan Temple, Director
Drug/Alcohol Services
Employment Services
Family Assistance Undercare
Job Mentors
Safety Net Undercare

TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE
Cathy Connis, Director
Day Care
Intake
Clerical Support

Facts at a Glance

2003 Modified Budget

	<i>Appropriations</i>	<i>Revenues</i>
Administration (Salaries, fringe, materials, other)	\$17,993,141	\$11,815,214
Non-secure Detention	993,000	468,500
Day Care	5,102,000	5,476,000
Services for Recipients	3,622,665	2,587,481
Medicaid - Local Payments	3,985,000	5,476,481
Medicaid - MMIS Payments	43,000,000	0
Adult Homes	500	500
Family Assistance	9,558,332	8,733,631
Foster Care	23,072,016	17,084,294
Juvenile Delinquents/PINS	525,000	685,000
State Training Schools	1,300,000	13,000
Safety Net	4,323,983	1,884,500
HEAP	1,865,000	2,722,500
Emergency Aid to Adults	136,000	46,500
Food Assistance	306,257	304,757
TOTAL	\$115,527,894	\$56,799,127

Active Cases

as of 12/31/03

Food Stamps	3,321
HEAP	1,793
Medicaid	7,052
Medicaid SSI	4,766
Family Health Plus	1,244
Family Assistance	749
Safety Net Assistance	486
Services	1,761

Active Individuals

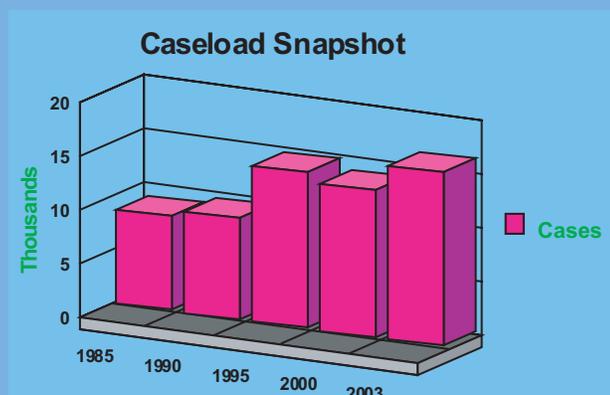
as of 12/31/03

Males	11,495
Females	15,950
Unborn	400

Active Individuals

as of 12/31/03

Ages	Numbers
0 – 4	4,043
5 – 12	5,230
13 – 16	2,339
17 – 18	875
19 – 22	1,330
23 – 30	2,318
31 – 40	2,924
41 – 50	2,808
51 – 55	1,024
56 – 60	847
61 – 64	634
Over 65	4,115



Facts at a Glance

Active Cases by Zip Code

Amenia	151
Annandale	3
Bangall	1
Barrytown	10
Beacon	1,941
Billings	1
Castle Point	3
Chelsea	1
Clinton Corners	114
Dover Plains	430
Fishkill	506
Glenham	23
Holmes	93
Hopewell Junction	665
Hughsonville	15
Hyde Park	774
Lagrangeville	204
Milan	17
Millbrook	254
Millerton	226
New Hamburg	1
Pawling	269
Pine Plains	187
Pleasant Valley	391
Poughkeepsie	
City	7,242
Town	1,888
Poughquag	153
Red Hook	414
Rhinebeck	617
Rhinecliff	32
Salt Point	95
Staatsburg	351
Stanfordville	188
Stormville	82
Tivoli	113
Verbank	41
Wappingers Falls	1,608
Wassaic	100
Wingdale	264
Out of County	905

Employees - 351

Top Vendors in County

Medicaid payments to local businesses in Dutchess County serve as an economic stimulus and multiplier. Payments in 2003 included:

St. Francis Hospital	\$14,079,775
Vassar Brothers Medical Center	\$13,113,237
Wellcare of New York	\$ 7,060,692
NYS ARC in Dutchess	\$ 5,741,159
Fishkill Health Related Center	\$ 5,638,797
Lutheran Center at Poughkeepsie	\$ 5,554,342
Dutchess County Mental Hygiene	\$ 5,457,652
Eden Park Nursing Home	\$ 5,285,496
Ferncliff Nursing Home	\$ 5,022,580
Dutchess County ARC	\$ 4,920,741
Rehab, Inc.	\$ 4,773,045
River Valley Care Center	\$ 4,744,806
Dutchess County Department of Health	\$ 2,991,688

Top Non-Medicaid Vendors in County

Children's Home of Poughkeepsie	\$2,159,358
Hudson River Housing	\$1,262,900
Central Hudson	\$1,017,165
Community Housing	\$ 676,550
Community Family Development	\$ 522,751
Econo Lodge	\$ 421,002



The Children's Home of Poughkeepsie Emergency Foster Care Program

Background

Early in 2003 the Department of Social Services, faced with an increasing shortage of safe, reliable emergency foster care beds, began discussions with Walter Joseph, Executive Director of the Children's Home of Poughkeepsie, to craft a solution to this serious problem. Within a very short time, DSS and the Children's Home agreed to enter into a new partnership to reserve six emergency foster care beds for Dutchess County's use. We began placing children in these beds in June and by the end of the year, over 100 children had passed through the program's doors.

The Children's Home of Poughkeepsie

The Children's Home is a small childcare agency established in 1847 and located in a suburban area of Poughkeepsie in easy walking distance of bus service. Presently the agency serves an average of 60 children in various levels of care. The main facility is a 25 acre property with a large main structure, three cottages which house the children, a staff cottage, gymnasium, a Nature Center and several developed and equipped playground and picnic areas.

"When our Foster Home Finders call the Children's Home of Poughkeepsie, staff there know each child individually and are able to give us information which helps us to find appropriate foster care placements."

*Theresa Rosencranz
Case Supervisor*



Emergency Foster Care Program Services

The Emergency Foster Care Program at the Children's Home of Poughkeepsie provides DSS with a safe, immediately available placement option in cases where removal of children from their homes is necessary to protect them from imminent danger. This option is available on a 24 hour a day, 365 days a year basis. The program generally serves children age 5 to 15 at admission but in some circumstances children either above or below these age limits are served, for example, sibling groups or short-term placement of infants.

The program employs a Social Worker that is responsible for coordinating all aspects of the placement, diagnostic assessments (if required) and discharge planning with the DSS Case Planner. This worker also coordinates family/child visitation, making provision for transportation and supervision as necessary.

We have found the program's diagnostic component especially useful. The diagnostic evaluation includes a child and family assessment (psychosocial), a psychological and/or psychiatric evaluation, and an assessment of educational needs. This service has allowed our staff to make more informed intervention decisions or to evaluate the necessity for placement of children in therapeutic options such as agency operated boarding homes, group homes or residential treatment facilities.



Stays in the program are short and in most cases, stays do not exceed 30 days although stays of up to 90 days are allowed. An additional 90 days may be authorized when children are accepted at an appropriate facility and are awaiting placement.

Children admitted to the program either continue in their current school placement or are provided with education support. In conjunction with DSS, Children’s Home staff determines the appropriateness and advisability of having a child attend his/her school of origin.

This may not always be the plan of choice, and, even when it is the most desirable option, may not be possible due to logistical factors. In the event continued attendance at school is not possible, Children’s Home staff in consultation with school personnel make every effort to secure study and homework assignments for the child.

The program follows a structured routine for the day. Meals and snacks are provided on a regular schedule and are taken either at the program site or in the main dining room. The meal program is under the supervision of a registered dietician and staff makes every effort to accommodate individual needs. A Recreation Worker provides recreation activities in conjunction with the Children’s Home Child Care staff appropriate to the child’s remedial needs and abilities.

DSS Child Protective Service’s staff is very grateful to have this new resource. One worker said “I no longer have to worry about sitting at the side of the road at night calling one foster care home after the other to find a place for the children in the car – now, it’s one call, one placement.” Another stated, “children who are traumatized are now placed with professionals who can address their needs in a homelike environment starting on the **first** night away from home, and children who have special medical needs now have nursing services available 24 hours per day.”



Commissioner's Office

Staff in the Commissioner's Office includes the Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, Assistant to the Commissioner for Program Planning and Evaluation, the Fair Hearing Specialist, the Commissioner's Administrative Assistant, the Staff Development Director and the Director of Administrative Services. The Commissioner's Office oversees the programs and operations.



Contracts, Policy and Planning

The Assistant to the Commissioner for Program Planning and Evaluation is responsible for:

- Developing all Social Service Departmental plans
- Preparing funding applications for special programs
- Overseeing the contracts
- Preparing and/or responding to requests for proposals
- Producing the Department's Annual Report

Contract Activity

2003

Assisted Living / Adult Foster Care Services	5
Day Care	23
Detention/Foster Care Institutions	47
Domestic Violence Services	3
Employment Services	11
Nutrition Education/HEAP	3
Genetic Testing	2
Homeless Prevention	2
Interpreter Services	1
Legal Services	2
Managed Care	2
Medical Exams	3
Memoranda of Agreement	67
Personal Care Related Services/Respite	16
Other Inter-Agency Service Agreements	7
Preventive Services/TASA	15
Resource Parents	139
Service Agreements	6
Totals	354

Fair Hearings

Fair Hearings can be requested on a denial, discontinuance or reduction of benefits or services, on matters of State policy, employability status, method of payment of benefits or a failure of DSS to act on an application or request. Hearings are held at DSS, and are presided over by a NYS Administrative Law Judge.

At the hearing, DSS must justify the action it has taken. Clients can have representatives at the hearing and they can present evidence or bring witnesses. Hearings are usually held about one month after they are requested and decisions are rendered within six weeks after the hearing. The Fair Hearing Specialist reports directly to Deputy Commissioner Magalski.

The Fair Hearings Specialist:

- Represents DSS in administrative reviews requested by applicants or recipients
- Serves as liaison to the public utility companies and the American Red Cross

Fair Hearing Activity

	2002	2003
Fair Hearings Scheduled	454	528
Administrative Disqualification Hearings	49	20
Appellant Defaults	125	115
Appellant Withdrawals	73	138
Cases Resolved at or Before Hearing	38	30
Agency Decisions Upheld	244	270
Agency Decisions Reversed	36	5
Inter-jurisdictional Hearings	17	11

Personnel & Staff Development

Personnel and Staff Development includes the following training, personnel, and payroll functions:

- Acting as a liaison with the Dutchess County Personnel, Finance Department and the County Attorney’s Office regarding the hire of new employees, transfers, promotions, payroll issues, exit interviews, civil service procedures and other related actions.
- Handling the personnel related matters, recruiting qualified applicants through newspaper advertisements, obtaining certified Civil Service lists, interviewing qualified candidates and making hiring decisions.
- Maintaining the personnel files, daily payroll records, coordination of the performance appraisal process, updating of job specifications and title specific tasks and standards.
- Providing employees with information on benefits, leaves of absence, and applications for retirement as well as makes referrals to the County’s Risk Management Office for disability benefits and insurance related issues.
- Conducting orientation for all new staff and schedules staff members for any training or education, deemed necessary for completion of job duties.
- Compiling and submit a Training Needs Assessment and Annual Local Training Plan to the State.



Partnering for Success!

Any time you see this bullet in an accomplishment area, it represents a partnership we have with that agency.



Commissioner's Accomplishments for 2003



Served as First Vice-President of the New York Public Welfare Association's Board of Director's and Chair of the Association's Legislative Committee:

- Successfully lobbied New York State into lifting the cap on State reimbursement for preventive services for children making 65% of all funds spent in this area eligible for State reimbursement.
- Actively supported the position that the Governor, Assembly and Senate must join together on a plan to address the local fiscal burden of Medicaid.
- Secured \$270,713 in funding from the New York State Department of Labor for the Wheels to Work Transportation program.



Participated in the County Executive's Human Services Review Task Force with six other County Departments.

- It issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a consultant to assist with a comprehensive analysis of its Human Services Department.
- The review goal is to determine as a unified system, the efficiency and effectiveness without diminishing the quality of services provided, with recommendations based on research and knowledge of the services targeted.
- The Task Force selected CGR as the consultant and work began in August with the report due in 2004.



Conducted several public presentations for not-for-profit agencies, educational institutions and the Legislature concerning Welfare Reform Initiatives and Children's Services issues.



Appeared on various radio and television talk shows.



Served on the New York State Department of Health's Advisory Committee on Local Social Services, providing the State with a local Commissioner's perspective on emerging public policy issues.



Served on the Dutchess County Community Development Advisory Committee that acts in an advisory capacity to the County Executive for the Urban County Consortium Community Development and Housing Programs.



Served on the Board of the Family Partnership Center.



Served on the Workforce Investment Board.



Provided an Employment Unit worker daily, at the Dutchess County One Stop Center, to conduct client employment orientation and to answer questions.



Sponsored a Transitional Benefits Forum in May for not-for-profit agencies where Division Directors described the benefits available to those transitioning off assistance and the process involved in obtaining these benefits. Attendees gave us a lot of positive feedback.



Continued to support the Family Development Credentialing Program with seven employees earning their credential.



Participated in the County Executive's Support for Veterans Forum in April.



As a member of the Dutchess County Workforce Investment Board's Youth Council, participated in the allocation of summer funds and monitored programs that help youth ages 14 - 21 with school completion, job training and placement.



Directed \$70,000 in TANF funding to Hudson River Housing to provide case management services for their Follow-Through Program.



Participated in the planning and provided keynote speaker funding for the Children's Services Council's Annual Conference.



Served on the Criminal Justice Council and its Prevention, and Sanctions sub-committees.



Participated in PINS Diversion Task Force to assist in the reorganization of the Persons In Need of Supervision diversion process for youth up to age 18.



Expanded the DSS/Adelphi University Education Program that allows Children's Services staff to work towards their MSW using available Amy Watkins and Consortium funding. Field placements are allowed at DSS while receiving their regular pay. Dutchess County is also paying the salary of the Field Supervisor.

- ★ Prepared contracts totaling over \$30,000,000 for services, excluding the value of Resource Parent and Medicaid funded contracts.
- ★ Developed plans for the use of over \$1,368,767 in funds awarded by New York State.
- ★ Expedited a contract amendment totaling \$11,593 with Adelphi University to pay for additional graduate-level courses leading to a Masters in Social Work degree for Children's Services staff.
- ★ Won 98.2 percent of fair hearings held.
- ★ Conducted 121 job interviews.
- ★ Hired 82 new employees.
- ★ Coordinated and processed 49 promotions, 14 lateral transfers and 24 leaves of absence.
- ★ Coordinated the Dutchess Community College Project through which 40 employees took courses and worked towards a degree in an approved area.
- ★ Coordinated the Annual Employee Appreciation Day celebration and served as the Chair of the Employee of the Month committee.



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 included: Accounting, Central File, Reception, Purchasing, Special Investigations, Welfare Management System, and Computer Information Services.

Accounting

- Audits, processes and accounts for all payments made to or for recipients of assistance or for services
- Prepares and tracks reimbursement claims made to New York State.
- Receives and disburses income for individuals for whom DSS is the representative payee or guardian.
- Discovers, records and pursues third party health insurance to reduce Medicaid expenditures.
- Serves as liaison with medical providers for billing and implement the Medicaid restriction program for clients who over-utilize Medicaid services.
- Issues temporary benefit cards.
- Maintains the Cash Management System of the Welfare Management System (WMS) that accounts for all repayments and recoupments of benefits for clients who were overpaid.

Computer Information Services



- Installs, maintains and administers non-Welfare Management System personal computers, servers and systems including the Local Area Network.
- Develops and maintains local software applications.
- Provides local PC Help Desk support.
- Serves as liaison with the State, and trains workers for State PC-based systems like Connections in Children's Services and the Electronic Eligibility Decision Support System in Medicaid.
- Does website development, administration and network integration with NYS services.



Central File

- Maintains all closed case records and retrieves files as needed.
- Handles record retention and annual purges of records in accordance with NYS Regulations.
- Issues case numbers for new applicants.
- Completes all case filing for the Temporary Assistance and Child Support Divisions.
- Processes all voter registration forms and manages the mailroom.

Purchasing, Fleet Control, Revenue

- Purchases supplies and equipment, orders State and local forms, and maintains the stock room.
- Maintains the petty cash account and pays all administrative bills.
- Coordinates the purchase and maintenance of a fleet of 43 cars and vans with the County Auto Center.
- Reconciles monthly State and Federal revenues and reports the income to the County Finance Dept.
- Serves as the liaison with the Public Works Dept. for building repairs, maintenance and cleaning.



Reception



- Screen all visitors and directs them to the appropriate unit or location.
- Distributes applications for assistance, reviews for completeness, and routes to the appropriate division.
- Accepts and routes to staff, documentation submitted by applicants or recipients.

Welfare Management System Unit

- Performs entry of data from an application or authorization into the State Welfare Management System (WMS).
- Makes minor repairs to WMS equipment and reports problems to the State.
- Provides systems training to new workers.
- Coordinates the implementation of any changes or enhancements to the system.

<i>WMS Data Entry/BICS</i>		
	2002	2003
Data Entry Transactions	106,679	94,724

Dear Sir:

Recently I encountered a misfortune in my family, which caused me to seek assistance from the Social Services Department. I had never had occasion to use such services in the past and was totally unfamiliar with any procedures involved.

I would like to extend my thanks to all the ladies at the processing windows. They were friendly, polite, cooperative, and extremely helpful and concerned. They made me feel comfortable in what was to me an extremely uncomfortable situation. I went there with trepidation as to how I would be viewed but that feeling was quickly dispelled.

I want to especially thank Caseworker Mrs. Blankenberg for all her assistance and her advice to seek legal guardianship for my grandchildren. I did this immediately, that day in fact, and today I have permanent legal guardianship of the children. Since then, I have had numerous occasions when I had to produce these legal documents and it has been a definite asset to me and the children. I must also state that the people I encountered in the court were also extremely helpful and concerned.

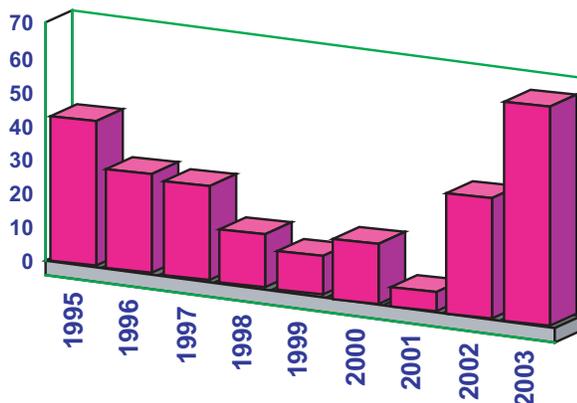
Thanks to all of the people who have assisted me in a difficult time. I really appreciate them all.

*Sincerely,
B. G.*

Special Investigations Unit Activity

	2002	2003
Completed Investigations	555	380
Confessions of Judgment	123	97
Number of Repayment Agreements Signed	43	19
Value of Repayment Agreements Signed	\$45,745	\$11,377
Food Stamp Disqualifications	49	9
Value of Food Stamp Disqualifications	\$27,200	\$6,800
Public Assistance Disqualification	44	6
Value of Public Assistance Disqualifications	\$70,779	\$7,903
Fraud Cases Referred for Prosecution	27	4
Convictions Obtained	22	9

Cases Closed Due to Fraud



Number of Burials

2000	119
2001	108
2002	123
2003	117

Special Investigations Unit

- Researches, secures and recovers appropriate assets from assistance recipients, including taking mortgages on real estate, placing liens on lawsuits, and filing claims against estates.
- Processes retroactive Supplemental Security Income benefits received and determines what can be retained as repayment of assistance.
- Arranges and pays for indigent burials.
- Determines and recovers overpayments from assistance recipients.
- Investigates any instance of fraud identified through the Automated Finger Imaging System (AFIS), which utilizes the latest technology to establish positive identification of adults seeking assistance. The system captures demographic data, client photo, and electronic finger images of the left and right index fingers. It is the largest and most sophisticated of any Social Services Finger-Imaging System in the nation and serves as a model for other states.
- Refers appropriate cases to the District Attorney or for disqualification.
- Reviews the results of computer file matches done by New York State including:
 - An interstate match of individuals receiving assistance in the five contiguous states as well as Florida, Virginia, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia to ensure that recipients are not receiving assistance in two or more jurisdictions
 - SSI matches to identify cases that may no longer reside in NYS as well as the US
 - Monthly matches with the Department of Correctional Services and the Division of Criminal Justice to identify incarcerated individuals who are in receipt of assistance
 - Matches with Criminal Justice Services to disclose Temporary Assistance clients who are fugitive felons, parole violators or probation violators. Such individuals are not eligible for assistance.

Front End Detection is a federally mandated process that relies on “indicators” (such as working off the books) to target applicants for Temporary Assistance for an intensive review during the eligibility determination process before a case is opened and benefits are provided.

The unit:

- Makes collateral contacts, performs computer reporting systems checks and makes field visits to assist workers in determining eligibility.
- Conducts fraud investigations on all cases referred by staff, and reports from the public, of recipients fraudulently receiving benefits. The investigation may include field visits, obtaining collateral verification, reviewing computerized records, and interviews to determine if fraud was committed.

Resource and Recovery Unit Activity

	2002	2003
Bank & Estate Recoveries from Deceased Clients	\$14,501	\$8,626
Medicaid Property Liens & Mortgages	\$88,817	\$23,160
Claims Against Estates	\$246,247	\$161,238
Lawsuit Settlements	\$811,011	\$416,310
Life Insurance Assignments	\$4,023	\$0
Public Assistance Mortgages	\$30,043	\$48,661
Safety Net Repayments from SSI	\$291,610	\$277,574
Medicaid Reimbursement	\$121,152	\$340,594
Nursing Home Personal Accounts & Other Recoveries	\$96,089	\$109,889
Income Executions	N/A	\$110,729
Total	\$1,703,493	\$1,496,781



Collection Activity

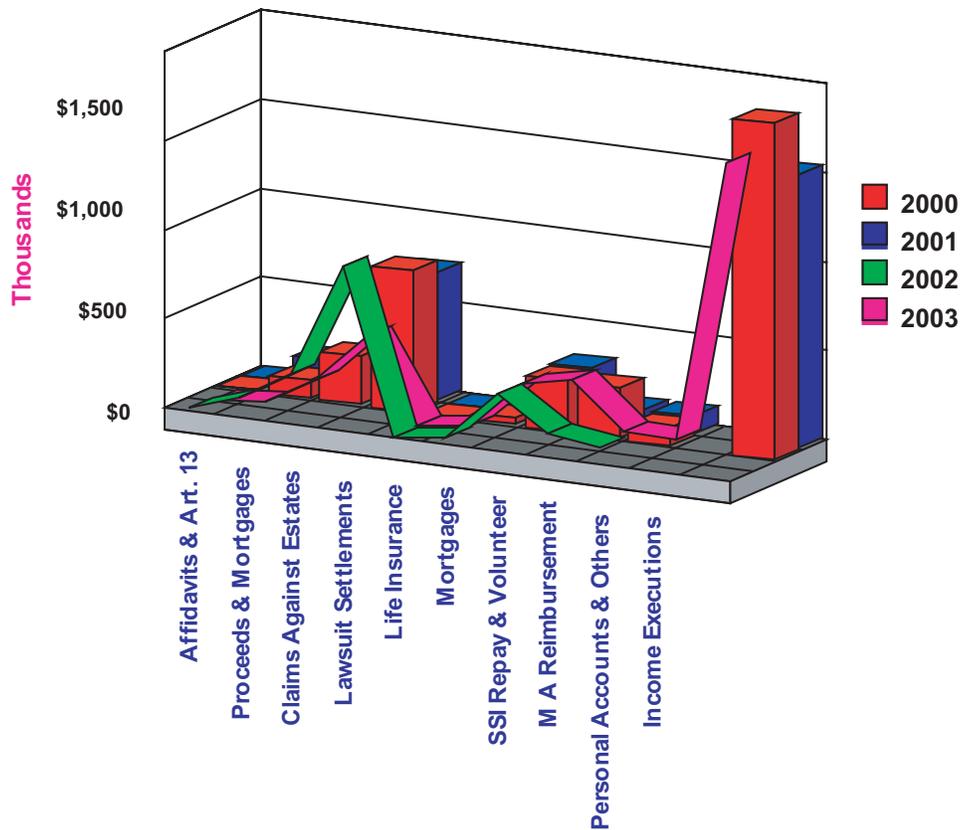
	2002	2003
Lottery Intercepts	\$33,484	\$16,973
Food Stamp Tax Intercepts *	\$0	\$0
Fees **	\$16,694	\$35,465
Cash collections ***	\$2,029,756	\$1,931,747
Total	\$2,079,934	\$1,984,185

* Court Injunction

** Parking, guardian, adoption home study, phone, postage, copies, confessions of judgment, subpoenas

*** TANF, SN, MA, Services FS, SN-SSI Repayments

Funds Recovered By Type



Administration Accomplishments for 2003

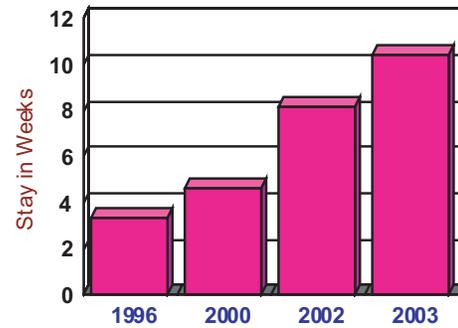
- ★ Purchased and installed an additional server, which handles the corporate anti-virus program and acts as our DHCP server and expanded the backbone of our computer network by adding six additional switches.
- ★ Installed 11 new computers, eight obtained from a grant, and installed an additional 25 surplus NYS computers.
- ★ Increased from 60 to 137 the number of DSS users of NYS Attachmate, which we proudly and successfully piloted last year. Workers access the WMS, a legacy system, on state-of-the-art computers and print on high-speed laser printers throughout the building.
- ★ Worked with other counties on the Centraport pilot, which provided workers with access to NYS Attachmate, and is now being used in all the NYS Counties.
- ★ Used the Welchia virus event to evaluate our strengths and weaknesses regarding virus protection and, as a result, we were able to convince the State to give us a networked, hands-off virus protection solution, costing us nothing.
- ★ Made presentations at both the winter and summer New York Public Welfare Association conferences.
- ★ Through the Connections project upgraded 49 computers in Children's Services.
- ★ Printed and distributed over 100,000 authorizations and 18,000 checks.
- ★ Established a centralized computer help desk which handled 1,824 system problem calls and had a positive impact on our ability to respond to problems quickly, communicate and track issues.
- ★ The number of new case numbers issued was 5,021, the most ever, and the file room received over 225 closed cases per day to file.
- ★ Reorganized more than 12,800 Child Protective Services unfounded reports of abuse / neglect, which must be retained for 10 years from the report date.
- ★ Processed over 742 requests to obtain records from retention.
- ★ Processed 6,523 Voter Registration forms.
- ★ Received 16,705 pounds of mail.
- ★ Handled 30,410 State Data Exchange reports
- ★ Filed over 408,592 Child Support Enforcement Unit documents & created or repaired 7,500 case record folders.
- ★ Spent 394 hours translating for clients, up from 346 in 2002.
- ★ The Resource Consultant collected/assigned proceeds of \$1,496,782.
- ★ The fraud section collected funds and/or received Confessions of Judgments totaling 238,467.
- ★ The FEDS section for State fiscal year 2002/2003 achieved a gross cost avoidance of \$4,248,127 of which \$1,465,604 was the County's share.
- ★ Reception staff handled 12,773 individuals filing applications for Public Assistance, Medical Assistance and Food Stamps.

Adult Services

Protective Services for Adults

- Identifies and assists individuals over the age of 18 who, because of physical or mental impairments, can no longer provide for their own needs or protect themselves from neglect or abuse, and have no one willing and able to help in a responsible manner.
- Provides services designed to prevent or remedy neglect, exploitation or abuse and to strengthen clients' capacity to function and their ability to be self-directing.
- Services may include counseling, locating adequate shelter and clothing, arranging transportation, shopping for the homebound and assisting the client in obtaining other benefits like Medicaid, Social Security Disability / Retirement, SSI & Food Stamps.
- The primary objective of staff is to help clients to remain in the community.
- Provides services to individuals without regard to income or resources.
- Pursues legal interventions when necessary including assisting clients in obtaining orders of protection, securing admission to a Psychiatric facility or Developmental Center or having the DSS become protective payee of the clients' funds.
- Pursues guardianship under Article 81 of the Mental Hygiene Law for protective clients who do not have decision-making capacity.
- Works with the Elder Abuse Task Force to provide education to the community about elder abuse, which is often unreported.

Temporary Shelter Stays



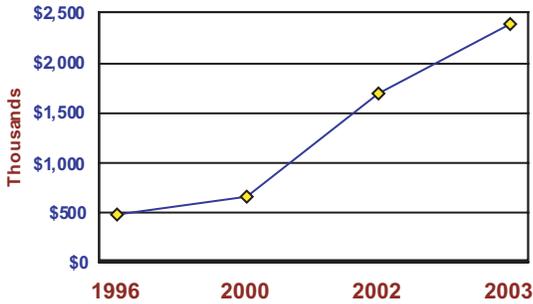
Adult Title XX Services/Housing

- Assists Protective Service clients in addressing issues that will help them function at an improved level and thus eliminate the need for future protective services. Issues may include health, finances, education, and family planning.
- Services are provided upon client request and if they cooperate with staff.
- Attempts to locate housing for Temporary Assistance clients faced with an eviction or who are temporarily residing in motels or shelters.
- Arranges for transportation of homeless children to & from school while in temporary shelter & arranges for moving and storage of clients' belongings.
- Works with the Dutchess County Housing Consortium to address the housing crisis in the County.
- Contracts with YWCA of Dutchess County to run the YWCA Teen Parent Program, which provides mandated comprehensive case management for pregnant & parenting teenagers under the age of 18.

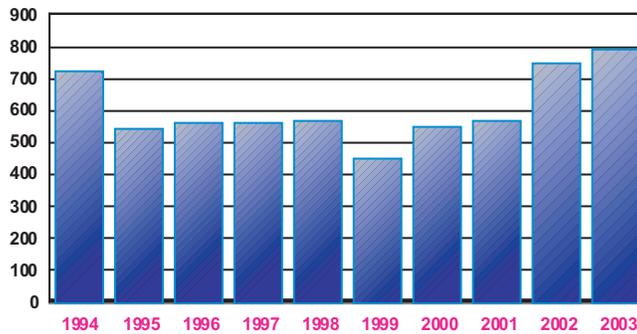
Adult Services

	2002	2003
Adult Services Cases Open at End of Year	432	387
Temporary Housing Placements	328	386
Families	189	175
Singles	142	211
Domestic Violence Screenings	110	99

Temporary Shelter Expenditures



Number of Persons Placed



Domestic Violence

- DSS employs a Domestic Violence Liaison, who:
 - Screens all Temporary Assistance applicants/recipients who self-disclose issues of domestic violence in order to assure that all victims have a safety plan in place
 - Provides information about resources to assist victims and completes an assessment of their ability to safely comply with social service's rules
 - Networks with the domestic violence service providers on a regular basis.
- Provides information and referral for domestic violence residential and non-residential services.
- Funds both non-residential and residential domestic violence services under Title XX.
- Contracts with Grace Smith House & the YWCA of Dutchess County to provide shelter and non-residential services including advocacy, community education, hotline services, legal services and counseling.

Dear Ms. Cole,

There are times when an employee will go above and beyond the call of duty and their hard work and efforts are overlooked. We wanted to take this opportunity to let you know how valuable Ms. Leslie Clinton was in the welfare of our sister, P.

Drug addiction stole "our P." from us many years ago making a relationship with her an impossibility. P. had many Caseworkers along the way and proved to be too much of a challenge for most of them. When Ms. Clinton stepped into the picture, we were able to breathe a sigh of relief. She made herself available to P. and to us whenever a concern would arise, offering patience and guidance, and for P. usually a much need push.

P. never made it easy for anyone but Ms. Clinton never gave up. She made sure that P. was receiving medial care, was safe, sheltered, and fed. She also kept us informed every step of the way. Most importantly, Ms. Clinton gave herself, her time, generosity and patience far beyond her job description.

We are grateful for all that Ms. Clinton did for P. and for the solace she afforded us by doing so. We hope that her caring and dedication is not overlooked, as it is our opinion that she is a treasure to your department, a value to Dutchess County and an angel to those she helps.

*Sincerely,
L. and J.*

Adult Services Accomplishments for 2003

-  Maintained Hudson River Housing's Follow-Through Case Management program and the Shelter Maintenance Program including a \$20,000 increase for cash security deposits and short-term (less than 4 months) rentals.
-  Continued funding Hudson River Housing to defray the costs of placing individuals in motels who were turned away from the overnight shelter during inclement weather. The amount increased to \$12,000 this year.
-  Continued to enhance our contract with Grace Smith House, for non-residential domestic violence services to include a Latina Caseworker to provide outreach and community education services to the Latina community.
-  Continued to fund an Intensive Case Manager employed by the YWCA of Dutchess County.
-  Paid \$ 413,925 to the Grace Smith House and YWCA for additional services to victims of domestic violence (payments for residential shelter costs are included in public assistance payments). Services include a *pro bono* legal program, whose purpose is to develop a network of *pro bono* attorneys to represent poor and low income battered women in the Supreme Court of Dutchess County and Family Court and Divorce Representation projects. These legal programs have been sub-contracted to Westchester/Putnam Legal Services.
- ★ A new Director, Maryanne Maruschak, took over responsibility for managing the division.
- ★ Certified five family type homes for adults to house veterans. NYS now requires that the homes for veterans meet the same certification requirements that other family type homes for adults must meet. We now have 13 homes that are certified including six for veterans.
- ★ Served as guardian for 23 individuals.
- ★ Served as protective payee for 115 individuals.



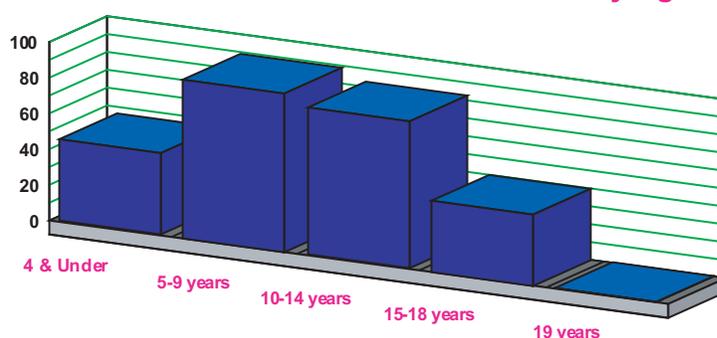
Children's Services

Child Protective Services

- Investigates allegations of abuse and/or neglect of children under 18 years of age. Staff is available seven days a week, 24 hours per day to investigate reports received through the State Central Register for Child Abuse (1-800-342-3720).
- Seeks from Family Court orders of protection, court-ordered services for the family, and/or authority to place a child in foster care.
- Participates in the Dutchess County Child Sexual Abuse Team, conducting joint sexual abuse investigations with police departments and the District Attorney. The Sex Abuse Team operates out of the Child Advocacy Center (CAC) in the Child Abuse Prevention Center's offices in Poughkeepsie.
- Contracts with the Child Abuse Prevention Center to partially fund the operation of the Center and for a Parent Empowerment Program, community education and information and referral services.
- Contracts with Family Services, Inc. to treat sex abuse perpetrators.
- Contracts with the Astor Home for Children for a treatment team for sexually abused children and for juveniles who have committed sexual offenses. The team provides training in child sexual abuse and treatment modalities for both victims and offenders.



Children in Sexual Abuse Cases By Age



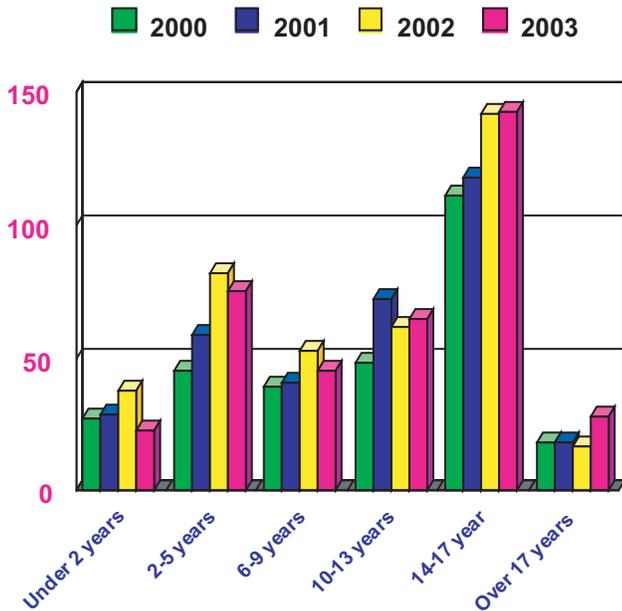
Preventive Services

- Provides some counseling and intensive in-home services to connect families with community agencies who can provide long-term services, preventing the need for foster care. Staff usually receives referrals from the Child Protective Services Unit or from other community agencies.
- Provides transportation assistance, day care and homemaking services.
- Approves relative foster homes and supervises placements made by other states.
- Contracts with The Astor Home for Children and Abbot House, for home-based case management services for families at risk of placing their children in foster care and with Astor for a Coordinated Children's Services Initiative (CCSI) and a Community Aftercare and Services Program. CCSI is a tiered inter-agency project designed to create a comprehensive system of care in Dutchess County. It provides coordination of services to children with emotional or behavioral concerns that put them at risk of out-of-home placement.
- Contracts with the Dutchess County Office of Probation and Community Corrections for a PINS Diversion program.
- Contracts with the Youth Bureau for mandated preventive case management services for youth leaving facilities and for youth who have school related problems, or drug or alcohol use, due to the increased risk for out-of-home placement.
- Contracts with the Dutchess County Community Action Agency for case management services to families who live in the Harlem Valley or Southern Dutchess and qualify for mandated preventive services.

Foster Care

Children are placed either by Child Protective Services, Family Court or by caretakers unable or unwilling to care for their children. A child may be surrendered for adoption at any age before 14 (if it is in the child's best interest to be adopted). Some children are placed with relatives as foster parents.

Children in Foster Care By Age



This unit:

- Directly supervises children in foster family homes and provides case management to children placed in childcare facilities such as residential treatment or group homes.
- Counsels birth parents of children about their need for treatment for drug or alcohol addiction, sexual abuse, emotional disturbance, physical, mental, housing, employment problems and lack of knowledge of child development and parenting techniques.
- Develops child and family service plans and regularly appears in Family Court. The goal for each child is safe, nurturing temporary care with return to family if possible, or adoption, if the family cannot be reunited. If neither is possible, preparation for independent living or discharge is done.



There are currently 139 certified foster homes available for Dutchess County children and Social Services continually recruits and needs more foster parents. We also utilize group homes run by the foster care institutions with which we contract. In addition, the Therapeutic Foster Home Program with Abbott House enables us to keep severely disturbed children from placement in institutions.

Dear Ann,

I've been a foster parent for many years and I still love it. I did want to say something to you about a Caseworker, Ashley Tilton, whom I've been working – because I felt you really needed to hear this. She is wonderful! She keeps me informed – cares so much – about the kids and even me! She seems to go over and above what is expected. Just wanted you to know.

K. P.

Children in Care*

Types of Placement	2002	2003
Foster Homes	175	128
Institutions	146	165
Group Homes	14	19
Agency Operated Boarding Homes	6	4
Adoptive Homes	19	31
Approved Relative Foster Homes	29	30
Other	8	5
Total	397	382

* From CCRS Monthly Summary Characteristics Report for 12/31/03

Adoption/Home Finding

Children available for adoption may be surrendered by their parents for adoption or may be freed for adoption through a Family Court decision to terminate parental rights due to the failure of parents to provide a safe return home for their child in foster care. Most children available for adoption have been in foster care and are eligible for an adoption subsidy that is a monthly check similar in amount to Foster Care board checks.



Foster parents are encouraged to adopt children in their homes and many foster parents become adoptive parents; others provide temporary care. There is a great need for more foster homes and more adoptive applicants for school age children.

This unit:

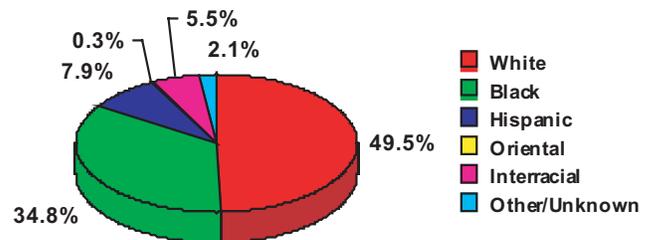
- Recruits, conducts home studies, provides training and certifies both foster homes and adoptive applicants.
- Supervises adoptive placements until the adoption is final and counsels children and adoptive parents.
- Offers post-adoption services.

Secure and Non-Secure Detention

The Family Court remands boys and girls ages 7 to 16 in detention settings to await hearings in Family Court on petitions of Juvenile Delinquency (JD) or Persons in Need of Supervision (PINS). Often the children are placed on an emergency basis directly from court. This unit:

- Works with the police to secure placements at night and on weekends.
- Supervises the placements, transports children to court hearings and monitors non-secure detention centers and ensures that children’s medical needs are met.
- Contracts with the City of Poughkeepsie for secure detention and with Pius XII and Berkshire Farm for non-secure detention beds.
- Contracts with Pius XII for secure detention coordination services.

Children in Foster Care By Ethnicity



<i>Juvenile Placements*</i>	2002	2003
Persons in Need of Supervision (PINS)	58	27
Juvenile Delinquents	34	31

*From Intake Log

<i>CPS Case Summary</i>	2002	2003
Reports of Abuse and Neglect made to State Central Register	2499	2456
Abuse Petitions Filed in Family Court	100	76
Termination of parental rights	59	88
Surrender Petitions Filed in Family Court	38	63
Foster Care Placement Petitions Filed in Family Court	12	6
Foster Care Review Petitions filed in Family Court	65	107
Sex Abuse Investigations	210	202
Substantiated	42	35
Unfounded	164	152
Determinations Pending	4	15

Childrens Services Accomplishments for 2003

-  Began a campaign to recruit, train and certify qualified foster parents to provide quality care. This included many forms of advertisement and outreach, including radio and TV spots by County Executive William Steinhaus and County Legislator, Marc Molinaro. Fifteen new homes were certified.
-  Participated in numerous community events to recruit new resource parents: Kids Expo, Spirit of Beacon Day, the Chamber of Commerce Showcase of Champions, Wappingers Community Day and Kids First.
-  Planned for a new Domestic Violence Liaison to join Children's Services. Jointly supervised by CPS and Grace Smith House, they will work with Children's Services to ensure the best services and outcomes for families who have experienced domestic violence.
-  As an alternative to out of home placement, funded two community optional preventive services programs – PINS and Juvenile Delinquency Diversion services through the Office of Probation and the Youth Bureau's PINS/Truancy program.
-  Made plans for a District Attorney Investigator to join the Child Advocacy Center's Sex Abuse Investigation Team, which now includes law enforcement, Child Protective Services and Child Abuse Prevention Center staff.
-  "Brown Bag" luncheons were held monthly at DSS, for members of Children's Services and Domestic Violence Service Providers. These provide an ongoing informal setting to collaborate and discuss issues of mutual concern.
- ★ A new Director, Deb Bonnerwith, took over management and restructured units and services with many new collaborative projects begun.
- ★ Throughout the year, all Children's Services units including Child Welfare and Child Protection Services continued to participate in a Services Process Review with NYS OCFS Contractor Cornell University. This year the focus was on improving case practice and supervision of caseworkers.
- ★ Provided planned respite services for foster families totaling \$14,039.
- ★ Completed 16 adoptions.
- ★ Authorized adoption subsidy payments totaling \$2,909,810.
- ★ One 12-hour "Mini MAPP" session trained 11 relative foster parents.
- ★ Eight foster children with a goal of independent living attended college, and three attended vocational schools.
- ★ Authorized Independent Living stipends to youth totaling \$7,202 and paid out \$1,416 for independent living skills training.
- ★ Held a 50/50 raffle in June to raise money to defray expenses of the Foster Care Picnic.
- ★ Held an adoption party in November for families who have adopted children through DSS. Judge Peter Forman and Hearing Office Adina Gilbert represented the Family Court and assisted in honoring these individuals.
- ★ Provided hats, mittens and gloves for children in foster care during Christmas and the holiday season.

*Preventive/Foster Care/Adoption Summary**

	2002	2003
Children Open to Mandated Preventive Services at Year End	351	311
Children Freed for Adoption & Adoption is Goal	33	51
Children Discharged to Adoption	26	16
Children in Care with Goal of Adoption at Year End	68	83

* From CCRS Monthly Summary Characteristics Report for 12/31/03



Partnering for Success!

Child Support Enforcement

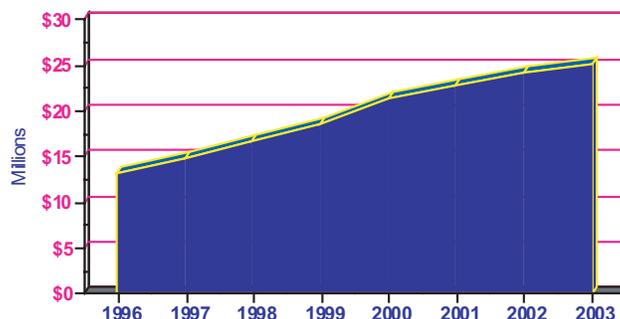
The NYS Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) within the NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance is the agency responsible for administering the Child Support Program through all the Social Services Districts.

Legislation provides automatic cost of living increases in child support orders, to keep pace with inflation and allow families to stay off welfare. The legislation also allows administrative liens on property of debtors; increased access to records of financial institutions, government agencies and private entities such as utilities; and suspension of driver's, recreational and professional licenses for failure to pay child support.

This unit provides the following services free of charge to custodial parents and minors under 21 who request our services:

- Location of absent parents through multiple computer matches available within state and federal systems.
- Establishment of paternity by filing petitions on behalf of children receiving Family or Safety Net Assistance, Foster Care, Residential Care and in Division for Youth facilities. Medicaid recipients / applicants are also required to cooperate with child support to establish paternity and obtain medical support.
- Support establishment for child and or child support combined with espousal support.
- Upward modification for change in circumstances, and cost of living adjustment of court orders, are payable through the Support Collection Unit.
- Support collection and monitoring of payments. Once support orders are established, the collection and disbursement of monies associated with that order, becomes the responsibility of the NYS Central Collection Agency.
- Enforcement of a court order.
- Provides income execution aided by NYS's Expedited New Hire Reporting Program, which locates current employers of child support debtors, keeps income executions in place and enables new executions to begin.
- Collection of arrears from Federal and State tax refunds, OTB, lottery winnings, and bank accounts.
- Provides referrals to the NYS Department of Taxation and Finance's program for collection and seizure of assets that targets individuals over four months in arrears in child support payments.
- Medical benefits execution to require enrollment of dependents in third party health insurance.
- Suspension or denial of NYS driver's or professional licenses
- Initiates violation proceedings in Family Court, which may result in a jail term of up to six months, for willful non-payment of child support.
- Takes liens against property and motor vehicles.
- Conducts financial investigations.
- Makes professional legal services available through contracted private Attorneys who charge \$90 per hour. Family, Medical and Safety Net minor recipients are not charged fees for legal representation.

Child Support Collections



Child Support Enforcement Accomplishments for 2003

-  Continued to contract for genetic testing in Family Court. This enabled support orders to be obtained almost three to four weeks faster on 43 cases.
-  Was again invited to speak at the local Father's Rights Association of NYS Forum in February, one of the highest attended, and in August. Their goal is to educate non-custodial parents, dispel incorrect information about child support, and to provide a forum for defusing some of the non-custodial parents' frustrations. We joined with the Association at the Dutchess County Correctional facility presentation in April.
-  Served on the Father's Day Parade Committee for the first official Father's Day Parade in New York State. It was well attended and a huge success.
-  Invited the new Dutchess County Family Court Chief Clerk, Peter Palladino, and the new Deputy Chief Clerk, Anna Kosovych, to speak at the Annual Division Meeting.
- ★ Collected \$25,187,954 in child support from absent parents. This is an increase of 3.92 percent over 2002. Of the total collected and distributed, \$24,260,760 was for the benefit of families who were not in receipt of public assistance.
- ★ Prepared for the court 5,567-support and paternity establishment petitions.
- ★ Received from NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance Commissioner Robert Doar, a Certificate of achievement for *Most Improved Paternity Establishment Program Performance Measure for Group 2 Districts*. The County in 2003 has increased to 87% of cases having paternity established.
- ★ Continued to perform well on the State's new performance measure - Family Court Orders with Health Insurance Included. Dutchess County with 80 percent was again ranked 1st for our county size, and ranked 11th overall in the State for performance.
- ★ Exceeded by 7.4 percent, NYS's goal of establishing paternity in 80 percent of the cases.

Child Support Activity*

	2002	2003
Child Support Cases Open at EOY	10,478	10,640
Children Open in Support Cases at EOY	12,003	12,049
Children Open Born Out of Wedlock at EOY	5,756	5,895
Children Open with Paternity Established at EOY	4,853	5,153
Percentage of Children Open with Paternity Resolved	92%	93%
Children Needing Paternity Determination	933	771
Cases with Collections During Year	5,528	5,571
Interstate Cases with Collections During Year	307	292
Cases Open Where Medical Support is Ordered	6,918	7,149
Cases with Arrears Due During Year	7,141	7,252

* EOY = End of Year, from NYS OCSE DSS-157 Report

Food Stamps

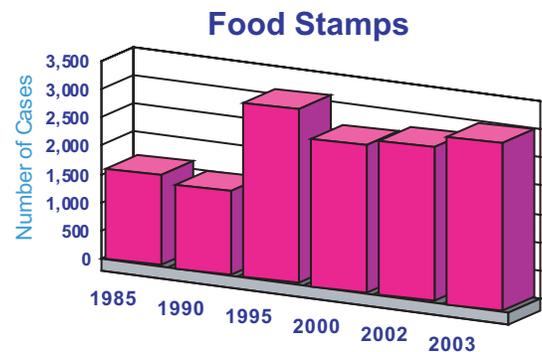


The program’s purpose is to help low-income households purchase food needed for good nutrition and health. Clients who are eligible for Food Stamps, access benefits electronically by using a benefit card and a PIN at authorized grocery stores. Benefits may be used for food products or seeds to grow food that a household can eat. This unit:

- Determines eligibility for and provides Food Stamp benefits to individuals, families, elderly, disabled, Certified Group Home, Alcohol/Drug Facility residents and households containing a mix of Temporary Assistance (TA) and non-TA recipients. Pure TA households receive food stamps through their TA case.
- Contracts with the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Dutchess County, to run the Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program now known as EAT SMART NEW YORK (ESNY). A representative is in the reception area, the second to the last Tuesday morning of each month. Project activities are conducted for the benefit of the Food Stamp eligible population and address food security, food safety, and dietary quality.

<i>Food Stamp Assistance Case Activity *</i>		
	2002	2003
Applications Registered	2,997	3,353
Cases Opened/Reactivated/Open-Closed	2,503	3,111
Withdrawn	312	261
Denied	800	816
Cases Closed	2,265	2,734
Recertifications	2,859	3,133
Changes to Active/Closed Cases	5,921	7,296
Totals - All Case Activity	14,660	17,351

* From WMS WST003 (4/02 statistics Not available but estimated)



Food Stamp Accomplishments for 2003



Continued to provide an alternate site for recertification interviews at Dutchess County Community Action’s office in Dover Plains, for people unable to travel to Poughkeepsie, with 85 households recertifying.

- ★ Provided Food Stamps Benefits valued at \$7,394,320 to over 3,300 households, including 800 employed individuals.
- ★ Participated in the after hours recertification program, servicing over 50 employed individuals who are unable to take time off from work or school during the day.
- ★ Obtained another waiver from the Federal time limit of three months of receipt of Food Stamps, for Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD’s) who resided in the City of Poughkeepsie due to the City’s unemployment rate exceeding the national rate.
- ★ Continued the Transitional Food Stamp Benefit Alternative. With the welfare to work focus, this program has become increasingly important to clients as they leave Temporary Assistance. Transitional Benefit Alternative (TBA) allows qualified TA recipients to continue to receive the same Food Stamp benefits for an established period after the TA case closes. These cases are opened by the TA Undercare/Family Assistance unit through a Separate Determination Process, and maintained by the Food Stamp Unit.

Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)

The Home Energy Assistance Program assists individuals with the cost of heat and energy related expenses. Eligibility is based on income received by the household during the month in which they apply.

Regular benefits assist eligible households with the cost of heat. The emergency component of the HEAP program meets emergency heating needs for eligible applicants as well as providing for furnace repair or replacement for client owned homes.

This unit:

- Determines eligibility and provides HEAP services to eligible applicants.
- Contracts with the Dutchess County Office for the Aging as an alternate certifier and for outreach to the elderly, and with the Dutchess County Community Action Agency for an emergency fuel depot, a heating equipment crisis program, a weatherization referral and packaging program



HEAP Accomplishments for 2003

 The Fuel Buyers Club, partially funded through a contract the Dutchess County Community Action Agency, continued to provide group purchasing power for County income eligible recipients, in order to make better use of their income and stretch their HEAP dollars. The program also encourages the reduction of participant fuel usage by requiring energy conservation measures and weatherization.

 Through a contract with the Dutchess County Community Action Agency, 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, other energy related services, a heating equipment crisis program and the system of emergency fuel depots throughout the County.

- ★ Experienced a 27% increase in applications for HEAP and provided HEAP benefits valued at \$972,595 to 3,692 County resident households during the 2002-2003 season.
- ★ In the 2002-2003 season, 508 households received emergency benefits for heat or heat-related utilities valued at \$215,080.
- ★ Paid for \$148,482 for 62 furnace replacements, three times the number we had in the past.
- ★ Selected as a pilot to implement an Electronic HEAP Application (HEAP E-App). It is available at www.otda.state.ny.us.

<i>HEAP Assistance Case Activity</i>	2002	2003
Applications Registered	896	958
Cases Opened/Reactivated/Open-Closed	638	688
Withdrawn	10	20
Denied	223	203
Cases Closed	742	448
Recertifications	0	0
Changes to Active/Closed Cases	<u>997</u>	<u>1,097</u>
Totals - All Case Activity	2,610	2,456

* From WMS WST003 (4/02 statistics Not available but estimated)

Legal Unit

The Legal Unit is comprised of a Bureau Chief and five Senior and Assistant County Attorneys assigned to us by the County Attorney. A secretarial staff assists the Attorneys. This unit:

- Provides legal advice to the various divisions and represents DSS in Family Court cases and in related matters in other court and legal forums.
- Handles cases involving adult protection, child abuse and/or neglect, foster care and severance of parental rights
- Prosecutes support collection cases.



<i>Legal Dispositions</i>		
	2002	2003
Child Abuse Petitions	105	69
Child Neglect Petitions	966	671
Termination of Parental Rights	61	88
Foster Care Place/Ext Petitions	73	244
Surrender of Child Petitions	37	63
IVD Paternity	1,058	979
IVD Support	3,912	3,645

Legal Services Accomplishments for 2003

- ★ DSS Attorneys in Family Court provided legal counsel for over 1,245 Child Welfare case actions, 5,567 support filings, 157 Interstate support filings, and 143 private support cases.
- ★ Handled 111 State Central Register Report expungement hearings.
- ★ Provided legal counsel for 113 Estate / Collection cases.
- ★ Represented 18 adult protective court actions.
- ★ Assisted the Child Support Collection Unit in increasing support collections by 3.92 percent over 2002.

Medical Assistance (Medicaid)

Medicaid provides services to the medically indigent making payments directly to providers of medical care, such as hospitals, doctors, pharmacists, etc. Funding is through federal, state and county appropriations with a local cost of approximately 17 cents for each dollar spent. To qualify for the Medicaid, applicants must meet prescribed income and resource requirements. Medicaid also has several specialized programs, including:

The Family Planning Benefit Program - An expansion of the family planning benefits for both men and women of childbearing age with income at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

The Breast & Cervical Cancer Program - Provides full Medicaid coverage to individuals screened by Healthy Women's Partnership, that are in need of treatment for breast or cervical cancer and whose income is under 250% of the Federal Poverty Level.

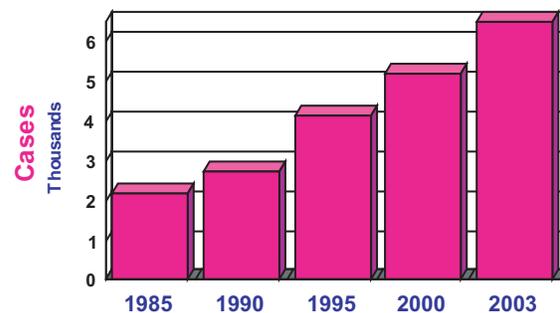
Family Health Plus (FHP) - Medicaid for those individuals aged 19 to 64. It offers HMO type benefits but with no co-pays and only prospective coverage, so therefore cannot go back and pay prior bills. The income eligibility current level is 150 percent of the Federal Poverty Level for individuals with children, a higher level than Medicaid.

For adults with no children, it remains at 100 percent of the Federal Poverty level. There is no resource test and individuals cannot be covered by other health insurance or Medicare. The program has a cost that ranges from \$235 to \$498 per month per person, with pregnant women costing an additional \$4,526 upon enrollment.



Medicaid Buy-In for Working People with Disabilities - Medicaid for working individuals who have disability that meets the medical criteria for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) established by the Social Security Administration but have too much income to qualify for SSI, who are between 16-64, have less than \$10,000 in assets, and have net income below 250% of the Federal Poverty Level.

Medicaid



Medical Assistance Case Activity

	2002	2003
Applications Registered	6,857	7,141
Cases Opened/Reactivated/Open-Closed	6,741	6,571
Withdrawn	541	557
Denied	1,805	1,801
Cases Closed	5,196	5,651
Recertifications	4,097	4,366
Changes to Active/Closed Cases	<u>25,201</u>	<u>28,627</u>
Totals - All Case Activity	43,581	47,573

* From WMS WST003 (4/02 statistics Not available but estimated)

Medicaid Eligibility

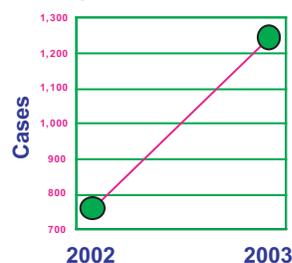
- Handles eligibility determinations, recertifications for chronic care cases (mostly nursing homes), general Medicaid cases (persons in the community) as well as the SSI Medicaid cases.
- Contracts with other agencies to take Medicaid applications for children, families with children, applications for single individuals and forwards them to DSS staff for processing through a process called Facilitated Enrollment.
- Contracts with the Office for the Aging for a Community Alternatives Systems Agency (CASA), a program that services frail, ill, elderly and disabled individuals to enable them to remain at home. Workers evaluate Medicaid-eligible individuals for the personal care and the long-term home health care programs and determine the most appropriate level of care. CASA also takes applications for Medicaid for the Medicare Savings Plan Program for the 60+ population.

- CASA staff provide information and referral to persons in need of long term care, case management for private duty nursing services, care at home program, as well as assessments and case management at several shared aid sites. They also approve entry into the assisted living program and the consumer-directed personal assistant program.

Medicaid Managed Care

- Coordinates the enrollment and dis-enrollment of clients in receipt of Medicaid into the Managed Care Programs.
- Acts as a liaison with the Medicaid provider community, as well as a managed care client advocate.

Family Health Plus Cases



Medicaid Expenditures by Provider*

Provider Type	2001	2002	2003	Change
Hospital Inpatient Services	26,215,448	29,799,503	34,619,871	16.2%
Hospital Outpatient Services	7,828,242	8,030,898	6,980,577	-13.1%
Skilled Nursing Facilities	64,200,786	69,039,391	73,505,408	6.5%
Intermediate Care Facility Services	9,836,417	9,613,452	9,067,393	-5.7%
Clinics	15,177,643	14,807,314	16,886,743	14.0%
Hospice	608,199	858,351	1,647,071	91.9%
Physicians Services	3,395,910	4,172,497	3,834,692	-8.1%
Dental Services	409,310	763,636	1,236,694	61.9%
Other Practitioners Services	2,502,798	2,774,067	2,586,738	-6.8%
Child Care Institutional Medical Per Diem	969,744	1,029,461	1,283,309	24.7%
Personal Care Services	5,657,780	5,901,757	6,529,217	10.6%
Home Health Services	1,363,057	1,417,558	1,541,977	8.8%
Assisted Living Program	1,661,587	1,805,751	2,072,192	14.8%
Long Term Home Health Care Waived Services	500,751	537,033	565,932	5.4%
Home & Community Based Waived Services	14,194,433	17,711,702	22,886,444	29.2%
Rehabilitation & Therapy	341,018	393,452	431,745	9.7%
Office of Mental Hygiene Restorative Rehabilitation	5,420,788	5,444,361	6,664,876	22.4%
Drugs & Supplies	21,855,509	26,440,614	30,981,654	17.2%
Eye Appliances & Durable Medical Equipment	780,260	818,198	999,510	22.2%
Prepaid Care	5,105,512	7,825,481	11,778,582	50.5%
Prepaid Mental Health	700,106	195,337	1,690,447	765.4%
Medical Transportation	529,020	656,850	667,573	1.6%
Lab & X-Ray Services	524,341	623,470	1,182,919	89.7%
Other	2,243	2,150	1,537	-28.5%
Total	\$189,780,902	210,662,284	239,643,103	13.8%

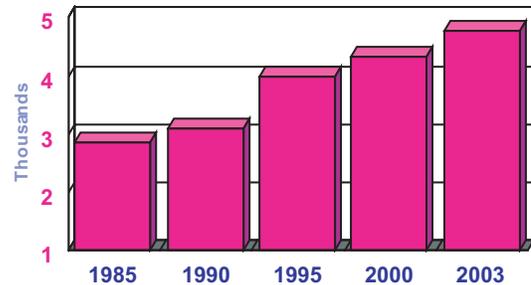
* From NYSDOH MARS MR-0-03



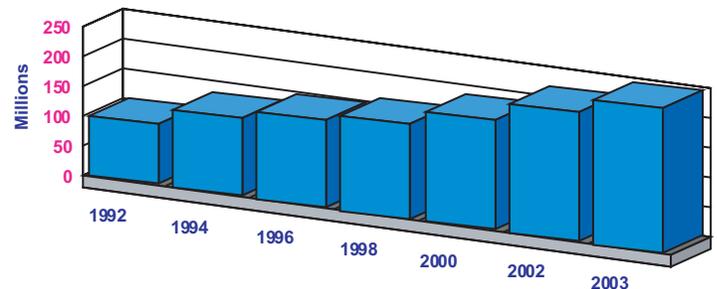
Medical Assistance Accomplishments for 2003

- ★ Authorized Medical Assistance Benefits for Dutchess County residents equal to \$7.81 per second, \$469 a minute and \$674,832 a day, amounting to a gross cost of \$246,313,605 and a net cost of \$41,092,048 to the County.
- ★ Medicaid costs continued to rise in 2003. Influenced by a 16% increase in the Medicaid caseload, much of it driven by the Family Health Plus program that began in October 2001 with 22 individuals and increased to 3,175 by the end of 2003. In addition, large increases in payments for prescription drugs, hospital inpatient, nursing home, long term home health care waived services for disabled children, an aging population, continued nationwide increases in the costs of health therapies and costs of health care over the rate of inflation.
- ★ Implemented the Medicaid Buy-In for the Working Disabled program in July.
- ★ Contracted with Hudson Health Plan, a second managed care plan, to provide services to Medicaid recipients.
- ★ Prepared 253 Disability Reviews.
- ★ Processed 952 Pre-Natal Care and Assistance Program (PCAP) applications.
- ★ Using Wellcare and Hudson Health Plan as providers for 2,611 enrolled individuals.

MA / SSI



MMIS Medicaid Gross Shares



Dear Mrs. Lake:

On behalf of the students and faculty of the Poughkeepsie Institute, I am writing to thank you for your participation in the Poughkeepsie Institute's Spring 2003 Course on Aging. Your ability to share pertinent information and your extraordinary capacity for original thinking has increased the students as well as the faculty's knowledge and understanding of the Medicaid program.

As you know, the Institute intends to present its findings in a written report and a video. It is our hope that the report will generate greater awareness and consequently contribute to appropriate discussions that will lead to direct actions to enhance the quality of life of the older adults in our community.

We are deeply grateful for your skill, expertise and selfless-participation in our class. We are equally grateful for the materials you provided and the style in which you made your presentation and answered our questions.

Appreciatively,

*Sabrina Jaar Marzouka, JD, MPH
Poughkeepsie Institute Spring 2003 Head Teacher*

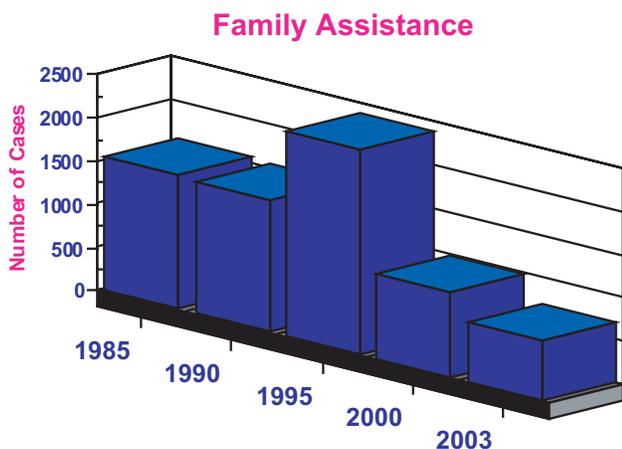
Temporary Assistance & Employment

The Temporary Assistance and Employment Division include four units: Intake, Undercare, Employment and Day Care. Together they work to promote self-sufficiency, personal responsibility and “work first” (the expectation that adult applicants and recipients will consider work their first priority and will view work as their primary goal, regardless of how many barriers the individual or family may have to overcome). The division handles four major programs: Family Assistance, Safety Net Assistance, Employment & Training, and Day Care.

Family Assistance

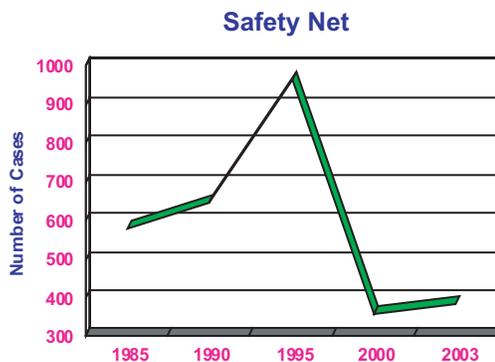
Family Assistance is only provided to a family that includes a minor child living with a caretaker relative, or to a pregnant woman. Adults and minor heads of households receiving assistance are subject to a lifetime limit of 60 months after which the individual becomes ineligible for cash assistance unless he or she meets very strict exemption criteria.

The Family Assistance program fosters recipient self-sufficiency. Recipients undergo an assessment of their employability skills, training needs, and unless exempted, must participate in assigned work activities. Employed recipients are now able to have 51 percent of their gross earnings disregarded when determining their need for assistance and level of benefit.



Safety Net Assistance

Safety Net Assistance (SNA) is a Temporary Assistance program that is funded jointly by New York State and counties. Individuals and families who are ineligible for Family Assistance or other federally reimbursed TA programs receive assistance. Most SNA recipients are single individuals and childless couples. They must engage in assigned work activities to receive assistance, unless exempted by a physical or mental disability.



Safety Net Assistance consists of two components - cash and non-cash. In the non-cash component food, shelter, fuel and utility allowances are issued directly to the vendor leaving the recipient with only a small personal needs allowance. SNA is provided as cash unless the household falls into one of the four categories, which must receive non-cash. These categories are:

- Households with an adult who has reached the 24-month lifetime limit on cash assistance.
- Households with an adult or head of household who is unable to work because of substance abuse.
- Households with an adult or head of household who has refused to participate in drug/alcohol screening, assessment, or treatment.
- Families that have reached the five-year limit on Family Assistance.

Cash SNA recipients are limited to a 24-month lifetime limit of cash assistance, with months counted since the August 1997 start of the SNA program. After the 24th month, assistance must be provided as non-cash SNA, unless the adult head of the household is exempt due to disability or an HIV positive status.



Temporary Assistance Case Activity

	2002	2003
Applications Registered	6,704	6,683
Cases Opened/Reactivated/Open-Closed	3,079	2,670
Withdrawn	263	308
Denied	3,975	3,726
Cases Closed	1,655	1,344
Recertifications	1,507	1,468
Changes to Active/Closed Cases	<u>7,388</u>	<u>7,551</u>
Totals - All Case Activity	17,867	17,067

* From WMS WST003 (4/02 statistics Not available but estimated)

Temporary Assistance Eligibility

This unit:

- Determines eligibility for the various TA programs.
- Screens all applicants for domestic violence, drug and/or alcohol abuse, any other physical or psychological barriers to employment and refers individuals to the on site, Domestic Violence Liaison, Certified Alcohol and Substance Abuse Counselor, or Family Development Worker from Community Action.
- Refers potentially employable individuals to the Employment Unit for an assessment.
- Refers individuals to the Child Support Unit to assist in establishing paternity and/or obtaining support.
- Authorizes payments including one-time payments such as emergency payments to prevent eviction or utility shut-off or supportive services such as car insurance, car repairs, clothing allowance, or fees for licenses, etc.
- Opens Food Stamp cases and does separate determinations for Medicaid for those not eligible for cash assistance.
- Makes referrals for childcare and to other agencies in the community as appropriate.
- Maintains the active Family Assistance and Safety Net cases that include individuals/families who need more than a one-time payment to reach self-sufficiency.



Employment

This unit:

- Assists able-bodied clients to attain self-sufficiency and helps those who are temporarily or permanently incapacitated to obtain necessary treatment and rehabilitation services.
- Conducts employment assessments, and helps clients to identify skills, interests and talents.
- Develops employment plans and makes recommendations for and referrals to various DSS or community operated employment and training programs. Programs include:
 - **Supervised Job Search** - A State mandated program for employable Safety Net applicants & recipients and TANF recipients. Clients must contact five potential employers a week for six weeks. Staff supervises this activity as well as contracted staff at the NYS Department of Labor's Community Service Center.
 - **Work Experience** - A program for clients that evaluates their skills and interests and assigns them to appropriate employers. We have developed over 200 work experience positions in 70 different public or not-for profit agencies.
- Authorizes payment for supportive services such as transportation, licenses, and work clothing each client needs, in order to obtain a job or participate in programs.
- Contracts with several local agencies:
 - **Greater Southern Dutchess Chamber of Commerce and Poughkeepsie Area Chamber of Commerce** – Both Mentoring Programs employ mentors who work with individuals to assist them in transitioning to work. They help clients find solutions for employment issues, and teach them how to manage personal and family issues related to work.
 - **The New York State Department of Labor** - provides the services of two Labor Service Representatives who conduct job readiness training using the KARLI Program. Training provides counseling, motivation and direction to skilled clients. Workers provide job development and supervise clients' job search efforts.
 - **Dutchess BOCES** - provides vocational educational training for those who have no marketable skills. Services provided include:
 - ◆ Academic training for individuals requiring English as a Second Language and/or remediation and further development of reading, writing, computational and related communication skills.
 - ◆ Job readiness training to enhance actual job related skills or increase clients' employability by building good work habits (showing up when scheduled, being on time, displaying business-like attitude, dressing appropriately, grooming).
 - ◆ Supervised work experience placements.



- ◆ Action for Personal Choice workshops - a pre-employment curriculum for hard to serve clients, designed to help them become aware, understand, accept and ultimately change unproductive behaviors.
- ◆ Life Skills program conducted at local employers work sites, selected because they express willingness to hire the participants.
- ◆ Continued provision of Information Dissemination projects that include the design and publication of our Annual Report and other brochures and tools for use in the community and with welfare to work clients.
- **Dutchess County Community College - PACE** Program provides academic advisement, counseling, tutoring, and assistance in obtaining financial aid to recipients of Family Assistance who are attending the college in either Certificate or Associate Degree curricula approved by DSS.



Employment Unit Activity

	2002	2003
Clients Assessed	767	658
Employment Development Plans Developed	501	488
Referrals to Employment	1,129	789
Number of Clients Placed in Employment by Staff	289	78
Number of Clients Obtaining Employment	375	62
Clients Who Entered Training	27	13
Current TA Clients Who Completed Training	13	19
200% Clients Who Completed Training	30	62
TANF Clients Assigned to Work Experience	357	414
TANF Clients Completed Work Experience	176	202
SN Assigned to Work Experience	300	364
SN Completed Work Experience	152	150
Clients Assigned Job Club	180	130
Clients Attended Job Club	58	52
Number of TANF Sanctions Commenced	137	344
Number of SN Sanctioned Commenced	65	314

Day Care

The Day Care program is designed to help low-income families meet their childcare needs. Low Income Day Care is granted to any applicant who provides all requested documentation and has a gross income below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level. Currently no interview

is required and there is no waiting list. There is, however, a parent fee that must be paid based on the parent's income.

This unit:

- Processes applications for day care subsidies for teen parents, low-income working parents and transitional day care services for those individuals whose public assistance cases are closing.



- Monitors legally exempt providers, reviews all enrollment forms to ensure that the provider and the home meet all health and safety requirements and that there are no reported criminal convictions.
- Monitors the number of children that each provider cares for, as this is limited for exempt providers.
- Contracts with the Child Care Council of Dutchess, Inc. to provide recruitment, registration and inspection of child care providers and to assist clients in locating childcare.
- Meets with the Child Care Council to review the DSS process, to answer any provider questions, and to assist providers in the billing process.
- Works with the Child Care Council to provide information and supplies to providers.

Temporary Assistance & Employment Accomplishments for 2003

 Mentored clients worked at 64 different companies with most positions in office work, health services or production. Over 85 percent were full time positions.

 Mentors continued to do community outreach to increase awareness of the mentoring services available to people with gross income at or below 200 percent of the poverty level.

 This year, five of the eight Job Club sessions included one or more employer presentations. Since 1997, 380 individuals have completed Job Club training.

 The Community Solutions for Transportation program touched the lives of 798 families, reporting the following successes:

- Gave away 77 vehicles.
 - Sixty-seven vehicles were purchased by the program on behalf of participants.
 - Private individuals donated four vehicles. Contracted shops repaired three and the other by the Auto Mechanics class at Dutchess BOCES, Career & Technical Institute.
 - Seventy-seven individuals obtained a NYS Learners Permit.
 - One hundred ninety-three individuals participated in Driver Experience training
 - One hundred ten individuals completed the five-hour Pre-licensing class.
 - Eighty-nine individuals obtained driver's licenses after passing their NYS Road Test.
 - One hundred twenty individuals completed a Defensive Driving course.
 - Paid for 132 car registrations on behalf of program participants.
 - One hundred eight people received a minimum deposit for car insurance.
 - Provided 104 bus passes to transport people to work or work-related activities provided.
 - Paid eighteen, one-way taxi trips to carry people to work or work-related activities.
 - Approved 97 vehicle repairs on behalf of program participants.
- ★ Provided \$10,815,439 in public assistance payments to or on behalf of clients, a 9% percent increase from 2002.
 - ★ Provided \$4,595,724 in day care assistance on behalf of County residents.
 - ★ For the third year in a row, our Day Care program operated without a waiting list for subsidy. Anyone who needed childcare to get or keep a job received an immediate opportunity for subsidy.
 - ★ Reorganized the Temporary Assistance Unit resulting in a combination of functions. Eligibility workers now handle initial eligibility determinations, recertifications and the responsibility for making changes to Undercare Family Assistance and Safety Net cases.
 - ★ Forty-three Division staff completed a 10-week "Mindset for Success" Training program presented by Skip Weisman of Weisman Success Resources, Inc. This training helped staff develop a more professional approach in dealing with both clients and coworkers. This training, in conjunction with the Family Development Credentialing, has taught staff better ways to deal with very difficult individuals while not allowing the situation to reach a high stress level. As a result of this training, the staff now meet for 1 1/2 hours weekly to review procedures or to discuss changes and is quite helpful in keeping staff apprised of all changes and reviewing areas of weakness.
 - ★ Eligibility staff screened 2,128 clients for drug or alcohol abuse and referred 1,115 to the contracted Assessor for evaluation, who then mandated 675 to attend substance abuse treatment programs.
 - ★ As of December 2003, approximately 30 individuals were active in our joint Welfare to Work programs.
 - ★ Time limits for federal eligibility (60 month limit) has kicked in for only 14% of adults on our public assistance caseload as of the end of 2003.
 - ★ Provided \$490 in Grants of Assistance for Guide Dogs.

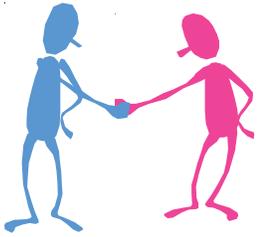
-  Purchased \$931,000 in case management and employment related services from Dutchess BOCES, Dutchess County Community Action Agency, and Dutchess Community College.
-  Purchased \$318,670 in employment related and mentoring services for clients from the NYS Department of Labor, the Greater Southern Dutchess and Poughkeepsie Area Chambers of Commerce's.
-  Continued to locate every day, a DSS Employment Worker at the One Stop Center who conducts an orientation to the Department of Labor /One Stop Center.
-  The Employment Mentoring Program had 86 participants, administered by the Chambers of Commerce. Since the programs began, 362 have participated with 257 successful completions.
-  Thirty-eight individuals successfully graduated from the Mentored Employment Program after at least three months of mentored employment. The employment retention rate over the life of the program has remained at 90 percent.

Dear Ms. Glover,

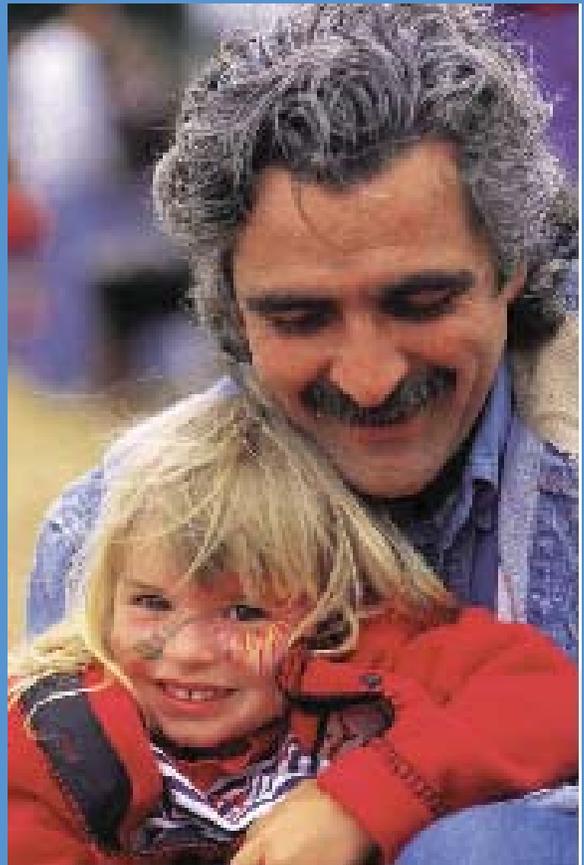
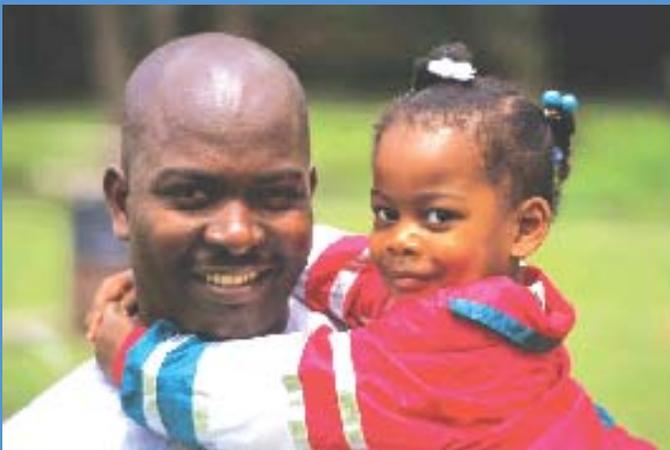
I just wanted to thank you for making my client's trip to DSS a pleasurable experience. As you can imagine, an interview at Public Assistance is not always easy for a victim of domestic violence. However, you make my client feel comfortable and respected. I also was pleased to notice your background knowledge of domestic violence.

Thanks again,
Kathleen McIntyre
Adult Counselor, Grace Smith House





*Fill One of Our
Greatest Needs . . .
Become a
Foster Parent!*



*Open Your Heart
Open Your Home &
Make a Difference!*

- ♥ *Provide Temporary Safe Care for Children*
- ♥ *Be Part of a Team*
- ♥ *Receive Training and Support Services*
- ♥ *Stipends and Payment for Day Care Available*

Call 845.486.3069 or 845.486.3071



Dutchess County
Department of Social Services
60 Market Street
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601



William R. Steinhaus
County Executive