

Together We Make Things Happen

2005 ANNUAL REPORT

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

DUTCHESS COUNTY



Together We Make Things Happen



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

845-486-3000

William R. Steinhaus
County Executive



Dutchess County Legislature

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Suzanne Horn, Vice Chairman
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Marcus Molinaro
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Joel Tyner

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Maryanne Maruschak	Dutchess County Department of Social Services
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Mentoring participants, Keisha Ervin, and Lilah Petroccitto on the job at the Poughkeepsie Day Nursery.

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A Message From

THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE



Throughout the organization of Dutchess County government, there are multiple examples of community collaborations and relationships we have developed to deliver quality services to our residents. After all, government simply cannot do it alone.

This partnership approach to service delivery has been a guiding principle for us since I became County Executive. Certainly, the Department of Social Services with a myriad of programs is a case in point. Commissioner Allers and I value the community organizations and their staff who work with us, and we believe we are able to deliver a better product because of them.

This annual report highlights the many services and activities the department and our county staff sponsor. Please take some time to review it to get a better idea of all we are proud to do for the children and families of Dutchess County. At the same time, this report illustrates why I am extremely thankful for our "TEAM DSS" who all focus on serving the people of Dutchess County – Congratulations for an extremely difficult job done well!

With best wishes,

William R. Steinhaus
Dutchess County Executive

A Message From

THE COMMISSIONER OF SOCIAL SERVICES



Dear Staff and Colleagues:

As I review the year to prepare the annual report, the New York State legislature and the governor are in the midst of their annual budget discussions/disagreements. This year, how to spend TANF money or the FFFS is a center bull's-eye. What services to fund with this money is at the heart of that bull's-eye.

TANF started about the same time I became commissioner almost ten years ago. Service funding has been in our bull's-eye ever since then. We have quadrupled funding for day care, funded transportation services, education services, preventive and protective services for children, added an emergency foster care facility, early childhood services and we are especially proud of the services we are highlighting this year, our welfare to work services namely our mentoring service.

This was a first for "welfare" offices to combine a program that would help us while helping businesses. Our results are due to the hard work of our excellent staff and outstanding partners, business, chambers of commerce, and our residents who showed a "hand up" was all they wanted and needed.

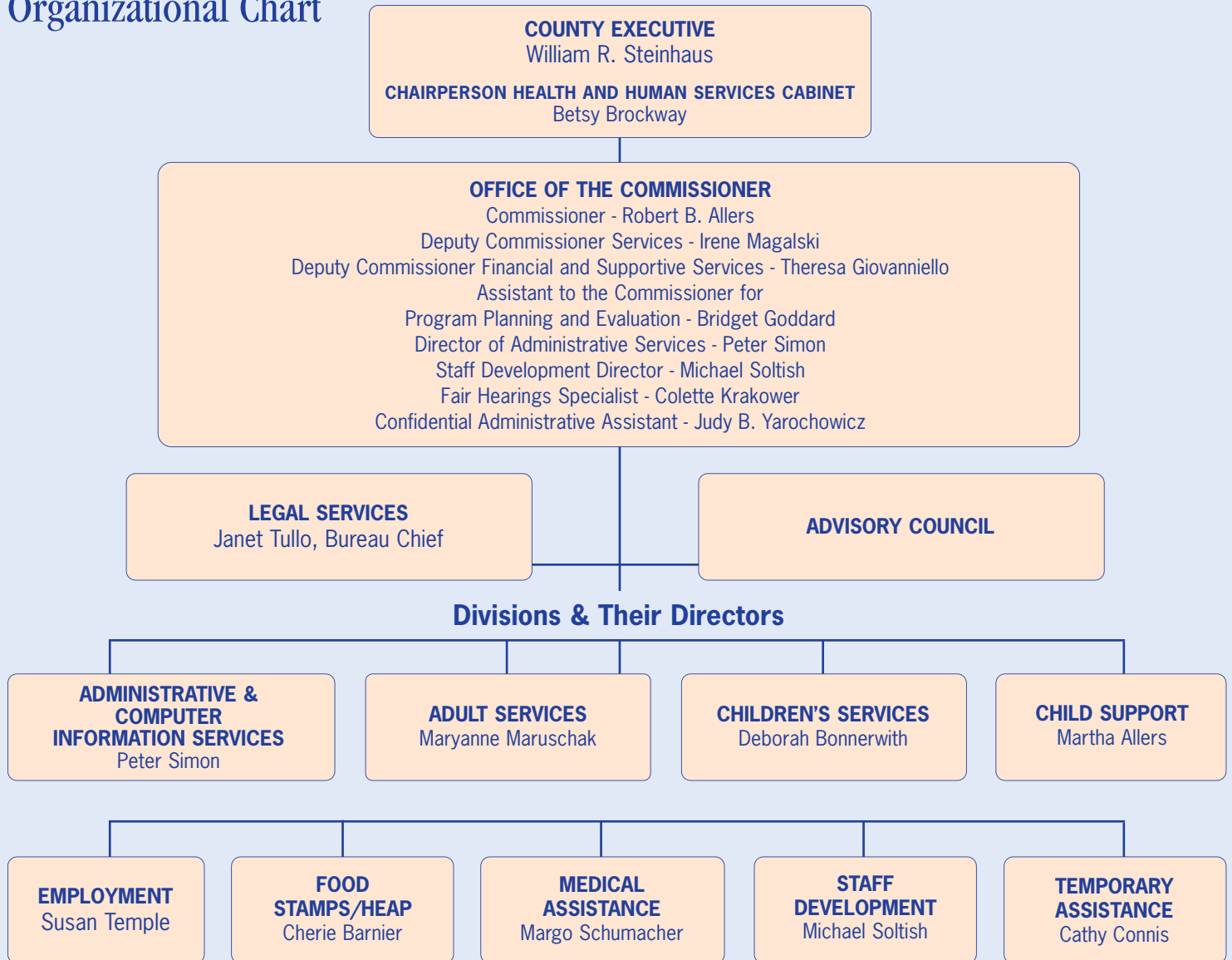
Please enjoy our report and feel free to comment on the contents.

Sincerely,

Robert B. Allers
Commissioner



Organizational Chart

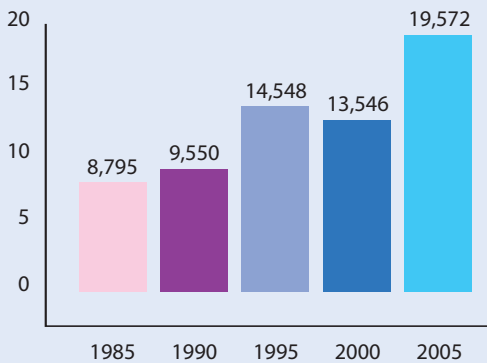


Our Mission

“ 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.”



Caseload Snapshot



Active Individuals 12/31/05

Ages	Numbers
0 – 4	4,288
5 – 12	5,021
13 – 16	2,463
17 – 18	1,071
19 – 22	1,457
23 – 30	2,696
31 – 40	3,087
41 – 50	3,366
51 – 55	1,357
56 – 60	1,133
61 – 64	774
Over 65	5,035

Active Cases by Zip Code 2005

Amenia	171	Pawling	314
Annandale	2	Pine Plains	244
Bangall	2	Pleasant Valley	424
Barrytown	11	Poughkeepsie	
Beacon	2,178	City	8,034
Billings	0	Town	2,314
Castle Point	2	Poughquag	223
Chelsea	14	Red Hook	454
Clinton Corners	127	Rhinebeck	771
Dover Plains	433	Rhinecliff	30
Fishkill	629	Salt Point	110
Glenham	30	Staatsburg	395
Holmes	108	Stanfordville	167
Hopewell Junction	728	Stormville	99
Hughsonville	21	Tivoli	142
Hyde Park	962	Verbank	70
Lagrangeville	244	Wappingers Falls	1,942
Milan	24	Wassaic	156
Millbrook	285	Wingdale	278
Millerton	233	Out of County	732
New Hamburg	7		

Top Vendors in-County

Medicaid payments to local businesses in Dutchess County serve as an economic stimulus and multiplier. Payments in 2005 included:

Top Non-Medicaid Vendors in-County

Children's Home of Poughkeepsie	\$ 2,813,060
Hudson River Housing	\$ 2,420,167
Astor Home for Children	\$ 1,749,006
Central Hudson	\$ 1,282,820
Grace Smith House	\$ 930,131
Abbott House	\$ 775,813
Community Housing	\$ 583,711
Family Services, Inc.	\$ 514,802
Community Family Development	\$ 480,501
Econo Lodge	\$ 368,726

Vassar Brothers Medical Center	\$ 12,361,615
St. Francis Hospital	\$ 10,714,340
Wellcare of New York	\$ 8,265,563
Rehab Inc.	\$ 7,972,524
River Valley Care Center	\$ 6,916,931
NYS ARC Dutchess County	\$ 6,794,537
Lutheran Center at Poughkeepsie	\$ 5,788,196
Ferncliff Nursing Home	\$ 5,552,146
Greystone	\$ 5,047,358
Eden Park Nursing Home	\$ 4,896,892



Facts at a Glance

MODIFIED BUDGET

Dutchess County Map



2005 Modified Budget

	Appropriations	Revenues
Administration		
(Salaries, fringe, materials, other)	\$ 19,544,398	\$ 13,408,457
Non-secure Detention	\$ 1,528,800	\$ 550,900
Day Care	\$ 5,324,000	\$ 5,554,500
Services for Recipients	\$ 5,412,392	\$ 2,844,565
Medicaid - Local payments	\$ 4,676,700	\$ 4,812,274
Medicaid - MMIS Payments	\$50,500,000	\$27,514,597
Adult Homes	\$ 0	\$ 0
Family Assistance	\$10,802,332	\$ 9,462,875
Foster Care	\$ 23,977,855	\$ 18,585,614
Juvenile Delinquents/PINS	\$ 415,100	\$ 684,000
State Training Schools	\$ 1,550,000	\$ 7,500
Safety Net	\$ 5,565,000	\$ 3,396,000
HEAP	\$ 2,400,000	\$ 1,986,500
Emergency Aid to Adults	\$ 122,000	\$ 63,500
Food Assistance	\$ 226,933	\$ 226,433
Total	\$132,045,510	\$89,097,715

Employees 350

Active Cases as of 12/31/05

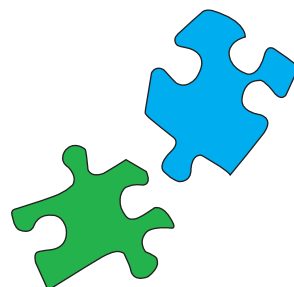
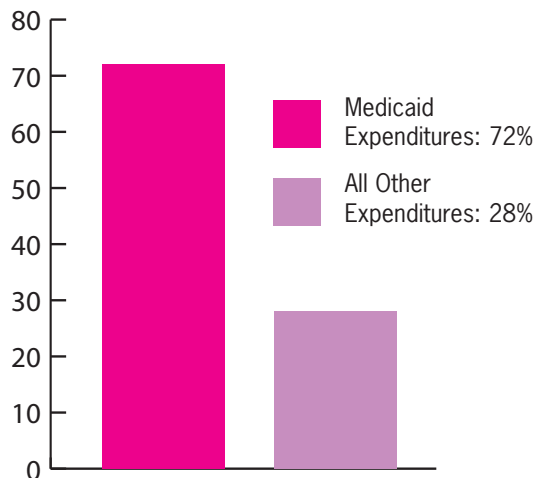
Food Stamps	4,691
HEAP	1,684
Medicaid	7,904
Medicaid SSI	4,853
Family Health Plus	1,563
Family Assistance	701
Safety Net Assistance	567
Services	1,435

Active Individuals as of 12/31/05

Males	13,266
Females	18,482
Unborn	348

2005 Planned Gross Expenditures

MEDICAID EXPENDITURES: \$319,702,500 **ALL OTHER EXPENDITURES:** \$119,044,454



Employee of the Month

The Employee Recognition Committee has been handing out the **Employee of the Month Recognition** Award to employees for the last 17 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 DSS golf shirt and a free parking space behind the building for one month.

★★★★★★ Employee of the Month Award Winners ★★★★★★

January

Carole Williams
Child Support Enforcement Unit



"Always has a smile and positive attitude."

February

Barbara Ingram
Adult Services



"Dedicated, compassionate and understanding."

March

Blythe Cashdollar Mitchell
Children Services



"Puts forth her best efforts for her clients."

April

June Weldon
Accounting



"Often catches things before a problem is created."

May

Nancy Hauser
File Room



"Always smiling and courteous."

June

Roberta DeCarlo
Child Support Enforcement Unit



"She goes out of her way without being asked."

July

Rosemary Evans
Finger Imaging



"Professional, kind, considerate."

August

Eileen Mahoney
Computer Information Systems



"A team player who always has a smile on her face."

September

Heather Stickle
Child Protective Services



"Uses a strength-based approach."

October

Yvonne Tomah
Managed Care



"Very cheerful and a pleasure to work with."

November

Lynn Martin
Medicaid



"Consciously displays graciousness and genuineness."

December

Catherine Schouten
Child Support Enforcement



"Willing to pick up the ball and run with it."



Job Mentoring Program

PARTNERSHIP TO SUCCESS

In 1996, a new commissioner was appointed to head the Dutchess County Department of Social Services. The commissioner's vision was to assist clients to obtain the necessary skills and receive supportive services to help them become self-sufficient; obtain a work history; to move up the career ladder; and to retain their jobs. While the commissioner was ever mindful of Welfare Reform and assisting clients off Temporary Assistance, he also wanted to give persons back their dignity and self-respect.

To begin this process, DSS started a dialogue with Chambers of Commerce, Economic Development Corporation, and the Division of Labor. The commissioner believed that if a link could be made with the business community, his vision could become a reality. In 1996, with the uti-

lization of Work Now monies and with the County Executive, William R. Steinhaus' support, Commissioner Allers was able to move forward with his plan.

Thus, the Job Mentoring Program was born and the partnership among Department of Social Services, Economic Development Corporation, and Department of Labor and the Chamber of Commerce was begun. Realizing the business community had an established relationship with the chambers of commerce, the idea to contract with the Poughkeepsie Chamber of Commerce and the Greater Southern Chamber became reality.

This year marks the 9th year of operation for the chamber's Job Mentoring Program, which provides mentoring to individuals in the workforce. Currently, the chamber employs two job mentors and a case manager, who provide

services to over 45 individuals and families for up to six months or longer if needed.

Naturally there are many factors that affect a person's success on the job, so our mentoring program assists people with a range of issues that may affect employment both inside and outside of work, such as securing stable childcare, housing, education and transportation. The Job Mentoring Program provides benefits for businesses too. The job mentors serve as a liaison to address employee-employer conflicts, creating a more professional and skilled employee. This year we would like to highlight several of our participants. Each of these motivated professionals has taken the necessary steps to being self-reliant and securing permanent employment locally.

The experience of one participant working with **Rasheen Downes** is notable.

“A Mentor is one who offers knowledge, insight, perspective or wisdom that another person values.”

— Rasheen Downes, Job Mentor





“Looking for employment was necessary, yet it turned out to be a lot of work,” says Kelly Hicks.

“With the assistance of my mentor, Rasheen Downes, I was able to research my options, set goals and secure permanent employment.” In 2004, Ms. Hicks was placed through a temporary agency. Her work was outstanding, so they hired her permanently and presently Ms. Hicks works as a voltage tester for Precision Pipeline in Nyack. She continues to reside locally with her three year-old daughter and she takes pride in her work, and was recently promoted to Team Leader.



Prudence Mollica has worked at the chamber since July of 2005 as a Job Mentor and has

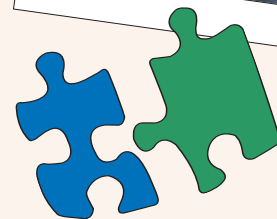
quickly established herself successfully with her clients and area employers. One of her clients entered the program without employment or housing for her family. The client quickly found full-time employment with Plaza LTC Services in an entry-level position and was promoted in November to a management position. While working with Prudence this year, she found a new apartment and has a very positive outlook for the future.



One of our most experienced mentors, **Sharone Wellington-Deanda**, began a new program in 2001

called the Responsible Parent Initiative (RPI) program. Since its inception, the program has had great success helping individuals find the right supportive service for themselves and their family. Participants are able to find or to continue their employment while coping with a variety of substantial hurdles. This year, the RPI program helped K.M., who was unemployed, with undiagnosed physical disabilities, and involved in a serious domestic violence dispute. K.M. is now fully employed, and received support from Ms. Wellington during court proceedings, and was connected with the appropriate supportive services regarding her disability.

The success of our mentoring program gives credit to the tremendous commitment and collaboration that continues to be practiced with this department’s wonderful partners.



“The job mentors serve as a liaison to address employee-employer conflicts, creating a more professional and skilled employee.”

**— Audra Barton, Exec. Vice President
Poughkeepsie Area Chamber of Commerce**



Mentoring Success Stories

PARTNERSHIP TO SUCCESS

KEISHA ERVIN



Keisha Ervin started working at the Poughkeepsie Day Nursery when Christopher Myers, DSS Employment Worker, assigned her there as part of her Work Experience Program.

Through her assignment, Keisha was able to show the quality work that she could do and, in June 2005, she was hired as a Teacher's Assistant. Keisha started with Mentor Sharone Wellington, and now works with Prudence Mollica. They meet a minimum of once every two weeks. They discuss everything from work issues to housing and transportation. Keisha said Prudence has been a great help and has even attended school meetings during the day for her children so Keisha didn't have to miss work.

Keisha says, *"The mentoring program has been very helpful to me in many ways in both my personal and professional life. The program has helped*

with topics such as housing, jobs, and education. The mentors are great, they are always there when you need them the most."

LILAH PETROCCITTO



Lilah Petroccitto started working as a part-time chef at the Poughkeepsie Day Nursery in June 2005. Lilah describes her work life, prior to having a job mentor, as a series of part-time jobs that left her physically exhausted after working many hours for limited income.

Her typical day started at a café working from 6:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. She then went to the Poughkeepsie Day Nursery from 2:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

and then worked some nights at a local smoke shop until 8:00 p.m. Her long work day concerned her as it also meant spending less time with her daughter, Ayla.

It was Patti Habersaat, the Executive Director of the Poughkeepsie Day Nursery that put Lilah in touch with the Mentoring Program at the Poughkeepsie Area Chamber of Commerce. Lilah worked with mentors Sharone Wellington and Prudence Mollica towards her goal of obtaining one full-time job with regular hours.

In October of 2005, the Office Manager position opened up at the Poughkeepsie Day Nursery and Lilah was hired as a full-time employee. Lilah's daughter, Ayla, is also a student at the Poughkeepsie Day Nursery and that gives Lilah the opportunity to see her during the work day.

Lilah credits her mentors with turning

"Prudence even helped me get my first business suit so that I could dress appropriately for my new job."

— Lilah Petroccitto



her work life into such a great opportunity. Lilah said, *"Prudence even helped me get my first business suit so that I could dress appropriately for my new job."* She goes on to say, *"The Chamber of Commerce and the mentoring program have been helpful but more enlightening than anything. They helped me with certain areas of my life that needed to change. They helped build the confidence that I needed to take charge of my own life and not be discouraged when things go wrong, and to keep trying and educating myself until I've become everything I only dreamt of before."*

Lilah also recently completed her first college course in accounting at Dutchess Community College where she plans on working towards her degree.

SHAMEKA CARPENTER



Shameka Carpenter has been employed at the Astor Home for Children in Rhinebeck, New York since August 16, 2005. She is a single mother of a two-year old son

named Isaiah.

Shameka is a child care worker on the Setonites Unit and is responsible for 11 residential females between the ages of 9 and 13. Her usual work hours are from Noon to 9:00 p.m. Thursday through Monday. Her responsibilities include providing lunch, planning daily activities, assisting with homework, supervising field trips and crisis intervention.

Shameka receives a child care subsidy from Dutchess County Department of Social Services and mentoring services from Rasheen Downes through the Poughkeepsie Area Chamber of Commerce.

Shameka wants single mothers to know *"they can do it,"* *"Life presents little detours, but it doesn't have to stop you."* She tells everyone, *"Go to the Chamber and get yourself a mentor."*

"The mentoring program has made an immeasurable impact in my life. I have worked with several mentors over the past few months. All of which have contributed to where I am today.

Most recently, I worked with Rasheen Downes. Rasheen has taught me so much from parenting to on-the-job success. With realistic goals in place, I accomplished the ultimate. I have a



great job, a car, and an apartment. Recently I received confirmation that I have been accepted into Johnson & Wales College in Rhode Island and plan to pursue a degree in Fashion Merchandising and Marketing in the fall. This is possible because I had a dedicated and thoughtful mentor that helped me to overcome barriers, see my strengths, set goals, and achieve them. The mentoring program has rejuvenated my self-reliance and helped me to succeed."



Highlights of the Year

DSS EMPLOYEE TRAINING PROGRAM

This year marked the 17th year that Social Services' employees have been able to further their education through a local district contract with Dutchess Community College.

The contract pays for tuition, fees, and books for DSS employees, while they work toward a degree in an approved program area. The contract also supports a program counselor/ coordinator who meets with students/ employees at their worksite, to discuss their future educational and career plans, and to register them for classes for the upcoming semester.

Each year DSS holds a graduation ceremony to celebrate all participants' accomplishments, and to congratulate those who have completed their degree requirements.

The following story, taken from the DSS Employee Training Program Newsletter highlights one of our 2005 graduates.



A DAY IN THE LIFE...

Every day stories of not so every day students.

By Mary Dohrenwend,
DSS Employee Training

Program Coordinator

Marsha Thomas, like many of you, is working hard to complete her degree while juggling many different responsibilities. Above, you see her as you might on any work day over the last two and a half years, working hard at her desk as an Account Clerk at Dutchess County Department of Social Services. Like many of you, she has children, two to be exact. In the evenings she takes classes toward her

Accounting Degree with her daughter, Amanda. On Saturday mornings, she cleans the Rhinebeck Dance Center to pay for gymnastic classes for her daughter, Rachel.

I don't know about you, but I'm tired already just thinking about that! But Marsha goes farther. On Sunday morning she takes her girls to church and aids the Sunday school teachers by helping the kids prepare a meal or snack that relates to the reading of the day, animal shaped cookies from Noah's Arc, for example. Then, of course, there are every day duties like laundry and homework, cleaning and holidays to prepare for. Marsha graduated from DCC in the Spring of 2005 as a result of her work with the DSS Employee Training Program.



HIRED SECOND DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

In October, Dutchess County Department of Social Services hired a second Deputy

Commissioner. Theresa Giovannello joined the DSS team to lead the Division of Financial and Supportive Services. This team consists of our Food Stamps/HEAP, Medicaid, and Temporary Assistance/Employment Divisions. Theresa has a Masters in Social Work and has experience in Child Protective Services, Staff Development, and the County Executive's Office in Putnam County. Mrs. Giovannello's first duties included coordination of a study of her divisions by the Center for Governmental Research (CGR). DSS welcomes Theresa to our team.

CHILD SUPPORT COLLECTIONS IN DUTCHESS BREAKS RECORD

Dutchess County Executive, William R. Steinhaus announces two milestone achievements by the Dutchess County Department of Social Services Child Support Division. Dutchess County Child Support collected 84 percent of the total dollars owed for current

support. This is well above the statewide rate of 70 percent. In addition, in March 2005, the Child Support Division collected and dispersed \$2,904,063, the highest monthly total ever.

THE ELIZABETH ANN KARLSON FOOD BANK ISSUES ITS FIRST ANNUAL REPORT

During 2005 there were many contributions to the Elizabeth Ann Karlson Food Bank; as part of this year's Employee Appreciation Day, employees were asked to make a non-perishable contribution to the Elizabeth Ann Karlson Food Bank.

In the past year, we have given out the following food: 800 pounds of chicken; 225 pounds of hot dogs; 300 pounds of chop meat; 78 dozen bagels; 500 pounds of pasta; 400 macaroni and cheese dinners; 675 cans of vegetables; 225 jars of sauce; 400 cans of soup; 800 noodle cups; 300 loaves of bread; 100 packages of hot dog rolls; and 100 cans of tuna fish. We also have given out baby food and formula. We keep cat food in stock for people that are concerned about their pets. We have given out over 100 bottles of shampoo and other personal hygiene products.

The food bank has three microwaves that we lend to clients who don't have cooking facilities. We have also given away ten crock pots and many pots, pans and dishes. We have been able to give food every time it is requested. Although adult services and children's services divisions are our main target group, we have had requests from most units.

We thank everyone who has contributed to the food bank. We hope that the next year will be as successful.

EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION DAY

On Monday, November 21, 2005, management staff sponsored the 23rd Annual





Employee Appreciation Day. This year's theme was "A Harvest Party" and units were asked to create a harvest centerpiece, which was judged for originality

and overall appearance. The two units whose centerpieces were judged as "Best of Show" received a monetary contribution toward their holiday luncheon.

The "DSS Harvest Bowl" was also held during which teams competed in a punt, pass and match book football game. Complete with cheerleaders and pom-poms, the teams showed their unit spirit in rooting their teams on to victory. Adult Services and Accounting came in first and second respectively.

All employees received a "DSS hip pouch" and were treated to ice cream, apple crisp, pastries, apple cider and soda.

CHILDREN SERVICES EVENTS

Foster/Adoptive Family Brunch:

On May 26, 2005, the department hosted a brunch as a special way to say thank you to foster/adoptive parents. Special recognition was given to foster parents who open their homes for emergency foster care placements.

Renovation of Visitation Rooms:

During 2005, the Children Services Division of the Department of Social Services initiated a fundraiser to help refurbish our Foster Care Family Visitation Rooms located on the third floor. These rooms host visits between birth parents and children in foster care. The hope is to create a family-friendly atmosphere, and provide toys and games that encourage learning and family interaction.

Through the fundraiser with Discovery Toys, DSS received almost \$1,000 worth of toys, books and funds to be used toward the renovation. Through additional fundraisers and

grants, DSS hopes to see the refurbishment work begin sometime in 2006. Special thanks goes to DSS staff members, community supporters and Mary Mele of **Discovery Toys and More Store** in Hopewell Junction, who donated toys and books for the visitation rooms.

Foster/Adoptive Family Picnic:

This event was held at Bowdoin Park on August 17, 2005. During the day, the children were entertained by ventriloquist, Janelle Hoffman and her sidekick dog, "Cheerio," and BeBe the Clown. They had their faces painted by artist Marlene Woodason with beautiful and unique designs. Everyone enjoyed a delicious barbeque lunch prepared by Child Welfare, Child Protective, and Administrative staff from the Department of Social Services, as well as foster parent Elise Perez's famous pulled pork and rice.

Heart Gallery: In October and November Dutchess County Department of Social Services collaborated with Orange County, Westchester County, and Rockland County to produce the first Heart Gallery of the Mid-Hudson. A Heart Gallery is a traveling portrait exhibit of children who are available for adoption. This gallery is a way to raise awareness of the children who are freed for adoption and hoping for a "forever home." We wish to express special thanks to the **Galleria Mall in Poughkeepsie** for allowing the Dutchess County segment of the Heart Gallery of the Mid-Hudson to be held in Center Court.

Adoption Dinner: On November 16, 2005, Dutchess County Department of Social Services held a dinner to celebrate the 43 adoptions that took place during the year. The dinner was held in the second floor lounge at DSS. The event was well attended and all were treated to a catered meal from the **Café Primevera**.

Dutchess County Family Court Judges Peter Forman and Valentino Sammarco were in attendance. One of the highlights of the evening was a reading done by Judge Forman. He chose a selection from a book about adoption entitled, *The Mulberry Bird*.

Season's Reading Holiday Book Drive:

During November and December, **Barnes and Noble** selected DSS' children in foster care as recipients of their Season's Reading Holiday Book Drive for the second year in a row. Each child in foster care received a new book that was donated by a Barnes and Noble customer in our community. This program reinforces so many of our values: encouraging literacy and a child's interest in reading; collaboration with our community on behalf of children in care; and demonstrating to our children that they are important.

Stanfordville Christmas Party: On

December 13, 2005, foster families in the Stanfordville area attended a Christmas party hosted by the **Stanfordville Grange**. All children in attendance were treated to a great dinner and the highlight of the party was a visit from Santa Claus, complete with presents for all.

Mitten Christmas Tree: The Dutchess Community College Nurses' Club donated gloves, mittens, hats, and scarves for children in foster care. Staff throughout the DSS offices also contributed to the Mitten Christmas Tree. Candis Stickle (Heather Stickle's mother) personally hand-knitted over 15 sets of scarves, hats, and mittens that were distributed to children in foster care.

Holiday Gifts: The staff at the Lagrange and Fishkill offices of **Houlihan/Lawrence Real Estate** contributed lots of toys, clothes, and other gifts for all the members of five families who would not have been able to give holiday gifts to their children otherwise.



Employee Generosity

During 2005 the Department of Social Services Employees not only continued to show their support and generosity to their fellow Dutchess County residents but expanded their generosity to the national level.

Employees in various units coordinated a collection to help the victims of Hurricane Katrina. A total of \$680 was collected. A contribution of \$500 was made to the American Red Cross, and \$180 was given to the Salvation Army.

Janet Tullo Esq., Bureau Chief for the **DSS Legal Unit** continued her work as enforcer of contributions to the “Bad Word Bank.” Armed with a new “Large Glass Cow Bank” (a gift from **Joyce Duffy** – 2005 retiree from Children Services), Janet made sure we “paid up” for “slip ups.” Each year a contribution is made to Heifer International, a project which provides live-stock, ducks, chickens, rabbits, bees, or trees to communities in need around the world. They also provide education and instruction on how to raise, propagate, and care for what they received.

The idea is that each group or family that receives a contribution will in turn give to another family or group the amount they received “plus one” so that the project can continue and hopefully help the economic situation of the selected area.

The **Special Investigations Unit (SIU)** held a lunch time barbeque (prepared by Chef Steven Ackermann of Gentleman Jim’s restaurant) and raffle raising a total of \$2,218.50 to benefit the Leukemia/ Lymphoma Society. Bake sales and raffles also allowed SIU to raise \$536 to help make Christmas a little brighter for two Dutchess County families.

Ted Starzyk, from the **Staff Development/ Personnel Unit**, was once again the co-chair

of the Dutchess County government’s efforts in the United Way Campaign. Ted also chaired the DSS Campaign, which contributed \$12,083 towards the Dutchess County Government’s goal of \$101,000.

The **Medicaid Unit** adopted a family for the Christmas holiday, and they also adopted the Hillcrest Shelter. Coordinated by **Jamie Williams**, the Medicaid staff held raffles and bake sales to help stock the shelter with necessary items like pajamas, socks, slippers, work clothes and towels.

The **Child Support Unit** activity volunteered its

time and money by: having a hat and mitten tree for Grace Smith House, saving \$210 in loose change throughout the year and donating it to the Food Bank of the Hudson Valley, and adopting a family for the holidays, providing clothing, toys, bedding and a grocery store gift card.

Kris Bride (Child Support) and **Janice Arico (Special Investigations Unit)** continued their dedication to the Toys for Tots Campaign and co-chaired the DSS efforts again in 2005. They collected six extra large boxes of toys to help make the holidays better for some area children.

Staff Honored For Service

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

35 YEARS

Bridget C. Goddard

30 YEARS

Robert B. Allers
Sheila S. Meisner
Martha L. Allers
Carole A. Williams
Joyce Duffy
Yvonne Tomah

25 YEARS

Rena Lake
Regina Duncan
Sharon Tornatore
Richard LaVoie
Maryann Loiacono

20 YEARS

Janet Cottingham
Joan Makely
Jean M. Casa-Rinaldi
Elizabeth A. Moloney
Gloria J. Matranga
Kathy A. Finn
Patricia I. Malinski
Kathleen A. Daly

15 YEARS

Lynn M. Martin
Melissa A. Robinson
Beverly A. Thomas
Amber A. Collins
Helen K. Hanlon
Colleen A. Mahoney
Joseph J. Matteo
Lance D. Bixby
Blythe A. Mitchell
Dianne C. Mitchell
James E. Olshan
Stacy A. Lembesis
Betty Westover
Pamela A. Sherman
Linda S. Height
Susan Humet
Dora Navarro
Olivia C. Revillon
Maria-Elena Biasotti
Eileen M. Mahoney

10 YEARS

Jessie E. Normil
Ann Roberts
Gregory Charter
Linda L. Tait
Stephanie K. Moshier
Cathy M. Colt
Mary E. Blankenburg
Melissa J. Jabkowski
Kim M. Blauvelt
Padma Soma
Barbara J. Swanson
Rosemary H. Evans
Mark J. Cashman
Judith A. Weeks
Roberta E. DeCarlo
Isabel Fuentes
Josephine Ruscitti

5 YEARS

David Garcia
Jacqueline E. Bartley
Donna M. Wood
Doris R. Waddington
Marie A. Snowden-Albano
Kathleen A. DiGiorgio
Barbara A. Ogden
Mary B. Smith
Mark J. VanDetta
Patricia A. Paterson
David C. Tervenski
Loida Morales
Jeannine M. Guerra
Christine J. Kimble
Patricia M. Evans
Lucille M. Coxen



Commissioner's Office



Staff in the Commissioner's Office

includes the Commissioner, Deputy Commissioners, Assistant to the Commissioner for Program Planning and Evaluation, the Fair Hearing Specialist, the Commissioner's Administrative Assistant, the Staff Development Director and the

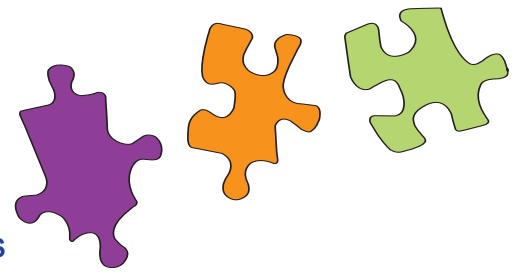
Director of Administrative Services. The Commissioner's Office oversees the programs and operations of the Department.



CONTRACTS, POLICY AND PLANNING

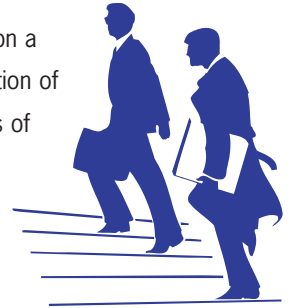
The Assistant to the Commissioner for Program Planning and Evaluation is responsible for:

- developing all Social Service Departmental plans,
- preparing funding applications for special programs,
- overseeing the contracts, and
- preparing and/or responding to requests for proposals
- producing the Department's annual report.



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, and
- serves as liaison to the public utility companies and the American Red Cross.

Contract Activity 2005

Assisted Living /Adult Foster Care Services	6	Legal Services	3
Day Care	19	Managed Care	5
Detention/Foster Care Institutions	45	Medical Exams	2
Domestic Violence Services	4	Memoranda of Agreement	71
Employment Services	9	Personal Care Related Services/Respite	15
Nutrition Education/HEAP	3	Other Inter-Agency Service Agreements	6
Genetic Testing	2	Preventive Services/TASA	22
Homeless Prevention	2	Resource Parents	141
Integrated Planning	1	Service Agreements	5
Interpreter Services	1	Totals	362

Fair Hearing Activity

	2004	2005
Fair Hearings Scheduled	592	604
Administrative Disqualification Hearings	19	10
Appellant Defaults	145	137
Appellant Withdrawals	193	94
Cases Resolved at or Before Hearing	27	16
Agency Decisions Upheld	258	174
Agency Decisions Reversed	15	32
Inter-jurisdictional Hearings	8	3



PERSONNEL & STAFF DEVELOPMENT



includes the training, personnel, and payroll functions. Staff:

Acts as a liaison with the Dutchess County Personnel and

Finance Department and the County Attorney's Office regarding the hire of new employees, transfers, promotions, payroll issues, exit interviews, civil service procedures (Employee Grievances, disciplinary proceedings and other related actions).

- Handles the personnel related matters, recruiting qualified applicants

through newspaper advertisements, obtaining certified Civil Service lists, interviewing qualified candidates and making hiring decisions.

- Maintains the personnel files, daily payroll records, coordination of the performance appraisal process, updating of job specifications and title specific tasks and standards.
- Provides 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, leaves of absence, FMLA and



insurance related issues.

- Conducts orientation for all new staff.
- Coordinates staff attendance at State and local training, meetings and conferences.
- Coordinates and arranges for speakers for in-service training sessions.

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, determining what can be retained as repayment of assistance.
- Arranges and pays for indigent burials.
- Determines and recovers overpayments from assistance recipients.

Front End Detection is a federally mandated process that relies on "indicators" (such as working off the books) to target applicants for Temporary Assistance, Medicaid

and Day Care 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 verifica-

tion, reviewing computerized records, and interviews to determine if fraud was committed.

- Investigates any instance of fraud identified through the Automated Finger Imaging System (AFIS), which

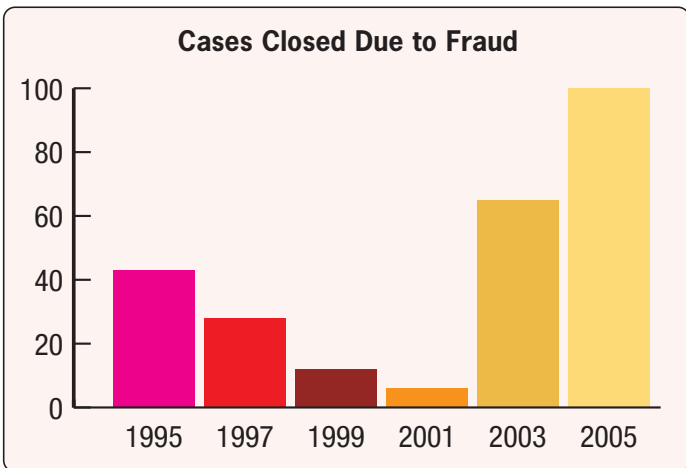
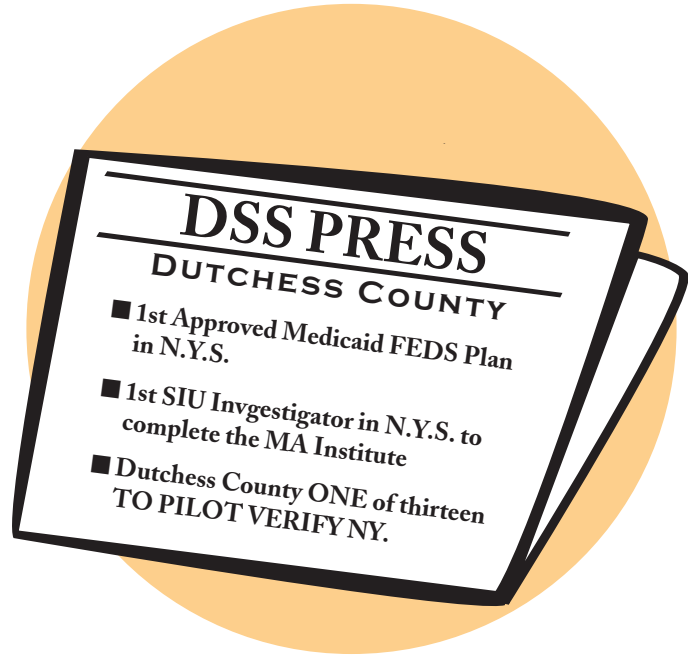
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Special Investigations Unit Activity	2004	2005
Completed Investigations	746	778
Confessions of Judgment	312	262
Number of Repayment Agreements Signed	65	62
Value of Repayment Agreements Signed	\$60,493	\$69,101
Food Stamp Disqualifications	10	10
Value of Food Stamp Disqualifications	\$2,593	\$4,187
Public Assistance Disqualification	13	11
Value of Public Assistance Disqualifications	\$16,617	\$3,283
Medicaid Fraud	N/A	\$414,894
Fraud Cases Referred for Prosecution	6	10
Convictions Obtained	8	7



SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS UNIT

...Continued from page 14



Number of Burials

2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
108	123	117	109	110

Collection Activity	2004	2005
Lottery Intercepts	\$5,776	\$35,198
Food Stamp Tax Intercepts (Court Injunction)	\$0	\$0
Fees (Parking, guardian, adoption home study, phone, postage, confessions of judgment, copies, subpoenas)	\$31,127	\$24,910
Cash collections (TANF, SN, MA, Services FS, SN-SSI Repayments)	\$2,313,210	\$3,618,545
Total	\$2,350,114	\$3,876,653

Funds Recovered by Type

	2003	2004	2005
Affidavits & Art.13	\$8,626	\$10,892	\$4,583
Proceeds & Mortgages	\$23,160	\$301,991	\$40,576
Claims Against Estates	\$161,238	\$357,279	\$221,292
Lawsuit Settlements	\$416,310	\$472,729	\$1,269,509
Life Insurance	\$0	\$0	\$0
Mortgages	\$48,661	\$52,356	\$52,491
SSI Repay & Volunteer	\$277,574	\$337,994	\$417,055
MA Reimbursement	\$340,594	\$57,481	\$80,138
Personal Accounts & Others	109,889	\$84,859	\$77,380
Income Executions	\$110,729	\$92,840	\$69,182
Totals	\$1,496,782	\$1,768,421	\$2,232,206



SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS UNIT

...Continued from page 14

utilizes the latest technology to establish positive identification adults seeking assistance. The system capture 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.

- Review 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 New York

State as well as the United States,

- 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.

Commissioners Office Accomplishments for 2005

- ✓ Served as past president of the New York Public Welfare Association's Board of Directors.
- ✓ Continues to serve as chair of the Dutchess County Community Development Advisory Committee.
- ✓ Continues to serve as committee member of Dutchess County's Zero to Three partnership.
- ✓ Served on the joint County/State board to construct and implement the "Commissioners' Dashboard," a management/information tool for local DSS Commissioners.
- ✓ Adoption incentive award (\$66,535)
- ✓ Attended conference in Chemung County to define new ways to provide medical services.
- ✓ One of the pilot counties to contract for "Verify NY," an anti-Medicaid fraud initiative.
- ✓ Initiated a printing of forms by copiers vs. printers.
- ✓ New York Public Welfare Association redesigned forums under direction of Commissioner Allers. There will be a new forum to address cross issues for various departments.
- ✓ Increased funding for Hudson River Housing for homeless.

This assured beds for all homeless persons in the winter of 2005.

- ✓ Dutchess employment staff presented at New York State OTDA's Employment symposium.
- ✓ Developed protocol for the medical component of the Child Advocacy Center.
- ✓ Served on the Criminal Justice Council and its Prevention, and Sanctions, Victims and Women in the Criminal Justice System sub-committees.
- ✓ Prepared contracts totaling over \$37,000,000 for services, excluding the value of resource parent contracts and Medicaid funded contracts.
- ✓ Developed plans for the use of over \$1,151,169 in funds awarded by New York State.
- ✓ Expedited a joint RFB with the Department of Health for Personal Emergency Response Services.
- ✓ Served as chairperson of the Children's Services Council Integrated County Planning Workgroup.
- ✓ Won 96.3 percent of fair hearings held.

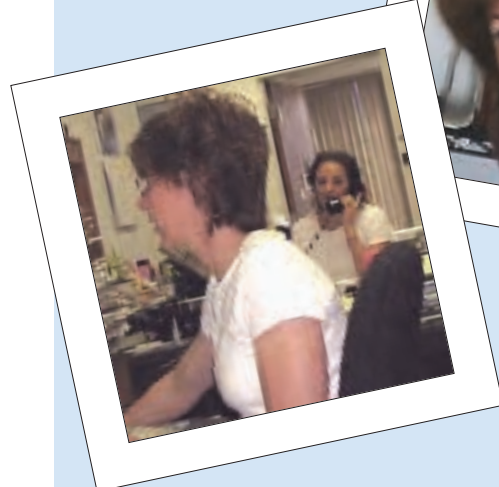
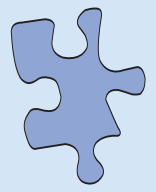
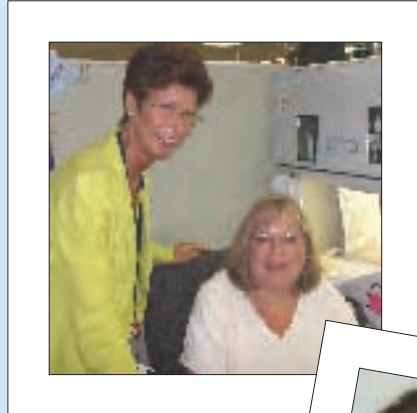
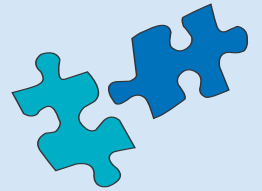
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Accomplishments for 2005

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- ✓ Served on the New York State Staff Development Advisory Council and on the Temporary Assistance Sub-Committee of the Council.
- ✓ Served on the Staff Development Institute Planning Committee.
- ✓ Hired 50 new employees.
- ✓ Coordinated and processed 22 promotions, 6 lateral transfers and 29 leaves of absence.
- ✓ Coordinated the Dutchess Community College Project through which 24 employees took courses and worked towards a degree in an approved area.
- ✓ Coordinated the Adelphi University MSW Program through which 9 Children's Service's staff members are working towards completion of their MSW's using Amy Watkins, Consortium and County funding. Participating staff are now able to do their initial field placement at DSS by being supervised in alternative job assignments three days per week.
- ✓ Coordinated the annual Employee Appreciation Day celebration and served as the Chair of the Employee of the Month committee.
- ✓ Educated staff about new statewide computer and web-based trainings that uses TrainingSpaces.Org and LearnLinc as their delivery system. This allows staff to attend synchronous and asynchronous training sessions at their desk or in the Computer Lab.
- ✓ The Resource Consultant collected/assigned proceeds of \$2,232,206 in 2005.
- ✓ The fraud section collected funds and/or received Confessions of Judgments in the amount of \$11,566,120.
- ✓ The FEDS section achieved a gross cost avoidance of \$8,304,090. Of this amount, \$4,227,594 represented Medicaid cost avoidance.



Administrative Services



The Director of Administrative Services helps develop and present the annual budget, and is responsible for the supervision

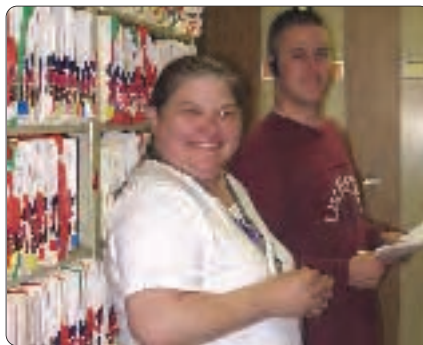
and coordination of the fiscal and operating functions. The following units are included: Accounting, Central File, Reception, Purchasing, Welfare Management System, and Computer Information Services.

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) which accounts for all repayments and recoupments of benefits for clients who were overpaid.

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.
- Does all the case filing for the Temporary Assistance and Child Support Divisions.
- Processes all voter registration forms and manages the mailroom.



COMPUTER INFORMATION SERVICES



- Installs, maintains and administers computers, servers and systems including the Local Area Network.
- Develops and maintains local applications.
- Provide 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 and administration and network integration with New York State services.
- 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.

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.

WMS Data Entry/BICS Data Entry Transactions

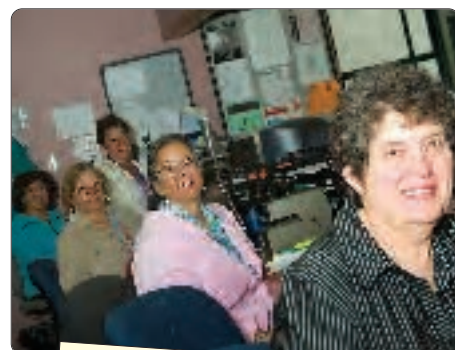
2004	113,207*
2005	117,084*

* Includes automated NYS mass re-budgetings

- 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 Department.
- Serves as the liaison with the Public Works Department for repairs, maintenance and cleaning of the building.

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 other staff documentation submitted by applicants or recipients.



Reception
 Mr. Allers:
 My name is V VL. I'm writing you from downstairs as I wait for my appointment to be seen.
 I first would like you to know that this is the first time I have ever been in a position to need help and I find the whole situation degrading and humiliating.
 Your people, however, have presented themselves with kindness, understanding with a level of professionalism that surpassed my expectation I had.
 I simply thought that instead of the usual complaints, you should be made aware of the fine job your people are doing.
 Sincerely, VVL



Administrative Services Accomplishments for 2005



• A physical connection to the Dutchess County wide area network or WAN, was established in 2005. The Dutchess County intranet is now available

on all computers in our agency and numerous agencies outside of DSS can access the NYeNET through our facility completing this highly anticipated and vital two way street.

- Approximately 100 computer workstations were received for installation this year. This is a major push to equip all non-computerized offices with modern information system tools much to the approval of our Social Workers. This project was complemented with in-house computer training, developed by CIS, aimed at helping workers transition from dumb terminals to the Human Services Enterprise Network, or HSEN, using client server technology. HSEN governs statewide application access and network security policies across New York State. Case Workers can now interact with state applications via HSEN using World Wide Web browsing technology.
- The CIS Unit is committed to Verify New York. Verify New York is a planned project aimed at profiling and identifying the misappropriation of Medicaid benefits. New York States Medicaid data warehouse, eMedNY and a program for verifying Medicaid

claims status called ePACES, which were instituted in 2004, will be used by CIS to drive this highly visible initiative.

- Plans to pilot the Drafted Imaging System were pushed to 2005 and are awaiting approval from New York State's Office for Technology.
- Attachmate is now delivered to more than 300 desktops in Social Services. The balance of non-computerized offices will be upgraded next year. Attachmate connects computer workstations to Legacy Systems and WMS.
- CIS's pilot project mining operation has unearthed another large nugget by getting a "nod of approval" from OFT to develop and pilot the WMS printing solution. Submitting multi-layered forms such 3209's and APPTAD's etc., to a laser printer has challenged optimists and stymied hardware advancement for many years. Our unit was chosen to manage this important project that focuses on creating laser printer compatible forms that will eventually eliminate the need for DEC LA-424 line printers.
- Nine high performance Canon copier/print centers are scheduled to be installed this year. These copiers are a crucial component in the aforementioned WMS print solution pilot program proposal.
- Dragon Speak voice recognition soft-

ware will be installed onto the workstations this year. This allows caseworkers the ability to record voice case notes, and transcribe them to the computer via microphone.

- A plan to rollout 18 new computers and 4 new laser printers for Welfare to Work was planned this year and the beginning of 2006.
- Printed and distributed over 67,500 authorizations and 16,623 checks.
- The number of new case numbers issued was 4,650.
- Completed a computerized master number card file containing a complete list of all applicants back to the 1960's. This file now contains 132,824 records and applicants can be located by name, social security number or case number
- Processed 460 Voter Registration forms.
- Received over 16,000 pounds of mail.
- Sent out 189,439 pieces of mail.
- Handled over 35,000 State Data Exchange reports and, for the Child Support Enforcement Unit, filed over 566,106 documents.
- Provided 627 hours of Spanish language translation services.
- Reception staff handled 17,432 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 and 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 hav-

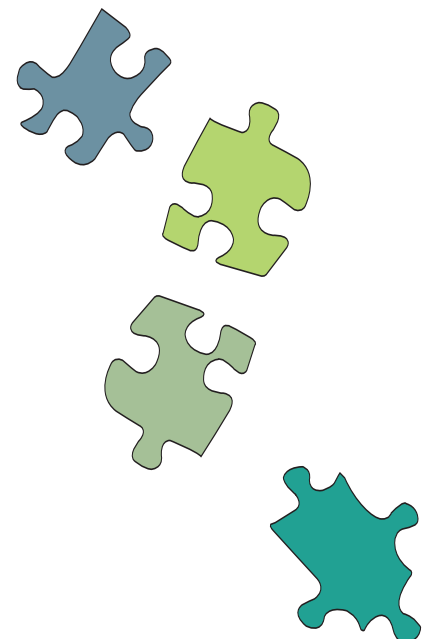
ing the DSS become protective payee of the clients' funds.

- Pursues guardianship under Article 81 of the Mental Hygiene Law for protective clients who do not have decision-making capacity.

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. These services are provided if the client requests the service and cooperates with staff.
- Attempts to locate housing for Temporary Assistance clients who are faced with an eviction or who are temporarily residing in motels or shelters.
- Arranges for transportation of homeless children to and from school while in temporary shelter and arranges for moving and storage of clients' belongings.
- Works with the Dutchess County Housing Consortium to address the housing crisis in Dutchess County.
- Contracts with Family Services, Inc. to run the Teen Parent Program, which provides mandated comprehensive case management for pregnant and parenting teenagers under the age of 18.

Adult Services	2004	2005
Adult Services Cases Open at End of Year	373	342
Temporary Housing Placements	385	355
Families	182	147
Singles	203	208
Domestic Violence Screenings	115	116
Temporary Shelter Stays in Weeks	10.4	11.0
Temporary Shelter Expenditures	\$2,914,832	\$2,877,692
Number of Persons Placed	774	672



Adult Services Accomplishments for 2005

- Maintained Hudson River Housing's Follow-Through Case Management program and the shelter maintenance program including \$21,000 for cash security deposits and short-term (less than 4 months) rental.
- Continued to provide Hudson River Housing with funding to defray the cost of placing individuals who were turned away from the overnight shelter in motels during inclement weather. The amount was \$60,000 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 Grace Smith House.
- Paid \$1,306,007 to the Grace Smith House, Family Services, Inc. and the Office of Community Corrections and Probation for additional services to victims of domestic violence (payments for residential shelter costs are included in public assistance payments). Legal programs sub-contracted to Legal Services of Dutchess County 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 a Divorce Representation project. We also fund Probation

a staff person in the Victims Services Unit who ensures that victims have a voice in the criminal justice process.

- Continued a case review team in order to allow staff to discuss difficult cases.
- Division staff all received training on the use of the computers received last year in anticipation of implementation of an Adult Services Automated Program.
- Our Domestic Violence Liaison and Grace Smith House staff jointly conducted domestic violence training for our staff.
- Served as guardian for 26 individuals
- Served as protective payee for 149 individuals.

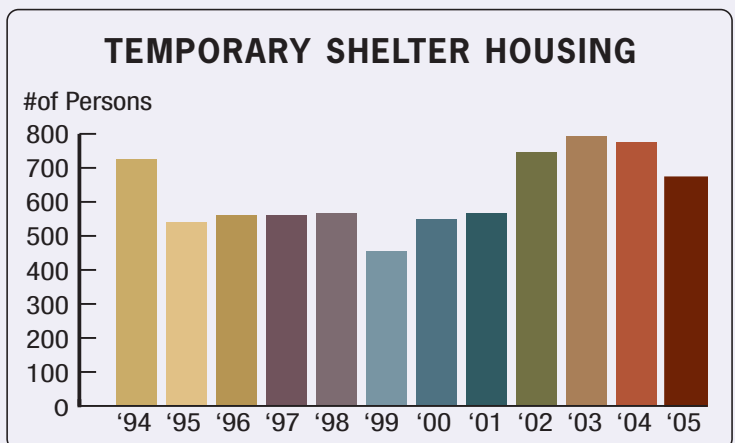
	Amount	Average Stay in Weeks
1996	\$481,804	3.4
1997	\$517,379	3.4
1998	\$624,272	4.3
1999	\$559,950	4.5
2000	\$672,796	4.7
2001	\$752,159	6.2
2002	\$1,697,789	8.2
2003	\$2,381,235	10.4
2004	\$2,914,832	11.0
2005	\$2,881,353	10.0

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, and
- 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 Family Services, Inc. and Grace Smith House to provide shelter and non-residential services including advocacy, community education, hotline services, legal services and counseling.



Children's Services

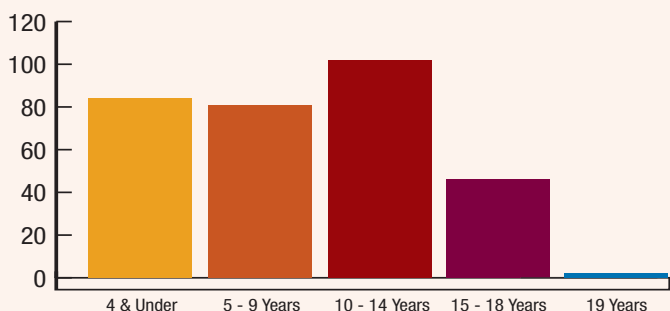
CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES



- Investigates allegations of abuse and/or neglect of children under 18 years of age. Case managers are available seven days a week, 24 hours per day to investigate reports received through the State Central Register for Child Abuse and Maltreatment (1-800-342-3720).

- Assesses safety of and risks to children due to abuse or neglect and provides intervention when needed.
- Arranges ongoing case management for families through the Preventive Services Unit and other community services providers when service is necessary.
- Files neglect and abuse petitions to seek from Family Court orders of protection, court-ordered services for the families and/or authority to place children 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 treatment modalities for both victims and offenders.

CHILDREN IN SEXUAL ABUSE ALLEGATIONS BY AGE



- Contracts with Grace Smith House to fund a Domestic Violence Liaison who works with CPS case managers when domestic violence has contributed to child maltreatment.

PREVENTIVE SERVICES

- Provides counseling and in-home services and connects families with community agencies who can provide long-term services, preventing the need for foster care. Referrals are received from the Child Protective Services Unit or from other community agencies.
- Arranges for intervention to address issues which contribute to child neglect and abuse and/or create a risk of foster care placement. Services are provided to address substance abuse, mental illness, developmental disabilities, medical care, counseling, and other needs.
- Provides transportation assistance, day care and home-making services.
- Provides services which have been ordered through Dutchess County Family Court.
- Monitors clients' compliance, reports to court and files petitions when needed.
- 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). 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 Dutchess County Office of Probation and Community Corrections for PINS and JD Diversion and Supervision Programs.
- Contracts with the Youth Bureau for mandated preventive case management services for youth leaving facilities, who are at risk of returning to placement, and for youth who have school related problems, drug or alcohol use, which creates or increases the 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.



Children in Foster Care by Age*

Under 2 years	31
2 – 5 years	45
6 – 9 years	46
10 – 13 years	44
14 – 17 years	108
Over 17	13

*From CCRS Monthly Summary Characteristics Report for 12/31/05

FOSTER CARE

- Directly supervises children in foster family homes and provides case management to children placed in childcare facilities such as residential treatment or group homes.
- Ensures that foster children receive the medical, developmental, educational and mental health services they require.
- Supervises Article 10 placements of children with relatives.
- Counsels birth parents of children about their need for treatment for drug or alcohol addiction, sexual abuse, emotional disturbance, physical, mental, housing and employment problems and lack of knowledge of child development and parenting techniques.
- Develops child and family service plans, permanency reports, files court petitions 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, or, if neither is possible, then preparation for independent living or discharge to another appropriate resource.
- Supervises placements made by other states and counties.
- Contracts with the Poughkeepsie Children’s Home to provide a 12 bed emergency foster care placement cottage which includes diagnostic evaluations when children need them.

Children are placed in foster care either by Child Protective Services, Family Court or by caretakers unwilling or unable to care for them. Some children are placed with relatives as foster parents.

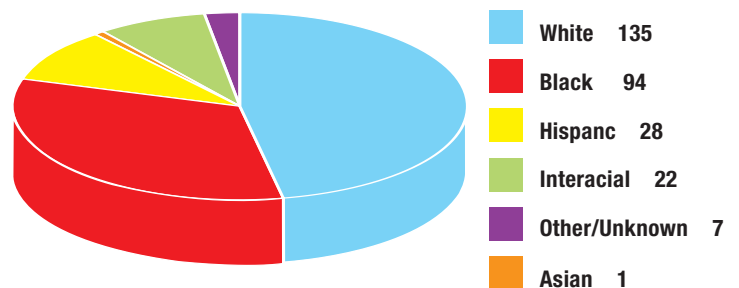


Children Services
 Blythe Cashdollar Mitchell
 Dear Sir:
 My name is TS and I wanted to bring to your attention the great work Blythe Cashdollar has done with my family. I am a single mother with a three year old son and Mrs. Cashdollar has helped me through a lot of the downfalls in my life by being a strong support to my son and myself therefore I would like you to know that I think she is a valued asset to the people.
 Yours truly, TS

There are currently 141 certified foster homes available for Dutchess County children. There is a great need for more foster and adoptive homes and we continually recruit and train applicants. We

also utilize group homes and foster care institutions with which we contract. In addition, the Therapeutic Foster Home Programs with Abbott House and Astor Home for Children enable us to keep emotionally disturbed and conduct disordered children from placement in institutions.

CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE BY ETHNICITY*



*From CCRS Monthly Summary Characteristics Report for 12/31/05



ADOPTION/HOME FINDING

- Recruits, conducts home studies, provides training and certifies both foster and adoptive home applicants.
- Certifies and trains relative foster home applicants.
- Maintains foster home records and completes annual recertification process for all active foster parents.
- Supervises adoptive placements until the adoption is final and counsels children and adoptive parents.
- Completes private adoption home studies.
- Offers post-adoption services.

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 failure of the parents to provide a safe return home for their child in foster care. A child may be surrendered for adoption at any age prior to 14 if it is in the child's best interest to be adopted. 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 until children are discharged to more permanent living situations.

Juvenile Placements with Social Services*	2004	2005
Persons in Need of Supervision (PINS)	26	17
Juvenile Delinquents	25	36

*From Intake Log

SECURE AND NON-SECURE DETENTION

- Supervises non-secure detention placements, transports children to court hearings and monitors non-secure detention centers and ensures that children's medical and mental health needs are met.
- Contracts with the City of Poughkeepsie for secure detention and with Astor Home for Children and Berkshire Farm for non-secure detention beds.
- Contracts with Astor Home for Children for secure detention coordination services.

The Family Court remands boys and girls ages 7 to 16 to detention settings to await hearings in Family Court or foster care placement 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.

Children in Care*		
Types of Placement	2004	2005
Foster Homes	126	100
Institutions	124	99
Group Homes	10	16
Agency Operated Boarding Homes	3	11
Adoptive Homes	26	36
Approved Relative Foster Homes	19	21
Other	3	4
Total	311	287

*From CCRS Monthly Summary Characteristics Report for 12/31/05

Preventive /Foster Care/ Adoption Summary*		
	2004	2005
Children Open to Mandated Preventive Services at Year End	262	242
Children Discharged to Adoption	43	42
Children in Care with Goal of Adoption at Year End	80	87

*From CCRS Monthly Summary Characteristics Report for 12/31/05

CPS Case Summary	2004	2005
Reports of Abuse and Neglect made to State Central Register	2451	2304
Abuse Petitions Filed in Family Court	76	33
Neglect Petitions	837	852
Termination of parental rights	83	69
Surrender Petitions Filed in Family Court	37	49
Foster Care Placement Petitions Filed in Family Court	12	3
Foster Care Review Petitions filed in Family Court	141	176
Sex Abuse Investigations	137	125
Substantiated	34	20
Indicated for Other Allegation	N/A	11
Unfounded	7	3



Children Services Accomplishments for 2005

- Children's Services staff implemented the Strengthening Families Program. This is a group experience for parents and children to improve communication and family dynamics, and teach teens and preteens to make good choices. Sessions were offered in spring and fall of 2005, and have been well received by attendees. The program will continue in 2006.
- In collaboration with the Department of Mental Hygiene and Astor High Risk Services program, five new home based crisis intervention waiver slots were made available to Dutchess County children. This program offers intensive home based services to children with psychiatric problems to prevent the need for psychiatric hospitalization and residential care.
- Planning was completed for a new family visitation program for infants in foster care. This program offers an opportunity for additional visitation and began in January 2006.
- The first Heart Gallery was successfully implemented in October 2005. This collaborative effort between Dutchess County Children's Services, the Departments of Social Services in surrounding counties, and the New York State Office of Children and Family Services Yonkers Regional Office, is a gallery exhibit showing photographs of children available for adoption.
- In November 2005, Dutchess County received an award of \$66,000 from New York State in recognition of 42 adoptions of Dutchess County children completed in 2004.
- 34 Private adoption home studies were processed.
- Completed 42 agency adoptions, which discharged children to permanent families.
- Authorized adoption subsidy payments totaling \$3,165,389.81.
- The campaign to recruit, certify and train qualified foster parents continued and included advertisements listed in local publications, and staff participation in numerous community events to recruit new resource parents, including Kids Expo, the Chamber of Commerce Showcase of Champions and Kids First.
- 23 New foster homes were certified.
- 8 ICPC home studies were completed.
- 2 Twelve-week MAPP foster parent training sessions, 2 eight-week Caring for Our Own Relative Foster Parent training sessions, and 3 seven-week Deciding Together Kinship Foster Parent training sessions were conducted.
- **On-going support continued to be offered to Dutchess County foster parents:**
 - ◆ Distributed a quarterly newsletter to all foster parents
 - ◆ Initiated a foster parent support group, which is organized and facilitated by the new foster parent liaison
 - ◆ Scheduled numerous on-going training opportunities at DSS and in the community. These included training on topics such as Attachment, Helping Children Grieve, Behavior Management, The Importance of Play for Children and Advocating for Your Child's Needs
 - ◆ Arranged for respite services for foster parents and made respite payments totaling \$12,352.54
 - ◆ Provided day care payments for foster children whose foster parents are employed outside of their homes
- Children's Services continued to participate in the Dutchess County Family Court's permanency court, which offers thorough review of cases in an effort to achieve permanency for children more quickly.
- Foster care units have worked diligently to implement significant changes made to New York State Permanency Legislation.
- 33 Children in foster care had a goal of Independent Living and were taught life skills they will need when they leave foster care.
- Authorized Independent Living stipends to youth totaling \$6,110.00 and paid out \$5,507.60 for independent living skills training.
- One youth in foster care graduated from high school, and three are going to college.
- The provision of preventive services for families, designed to prevent the need for children coming into foster care due to neglect and abuse, continues to be a crucial service offered. These services are provided by Children's Services caseworkers, and are also contracted for with community agencies including Astor, Abbott House and Dutchess County Community Action Agency.
- As an alternative to out of home placement, two community optional preventive services programs continued to be funded – PINS and Juvenile Delinquency diversion services through the Office of Probation and PINS/Truancy program offered by the Youth Bureau, which resulted in continued



Continued on page 26...



Children Services Accomplishments for 2005



...Continued from page 25

reduction in the number of PINS youth who required placement.

- Dutchess County received \$60,000 to implement programs to prevent the need for non-secure detention. This money is being used to fund collaborative efforts between Children's Services and the Department of Probation for wrap around and Preventive Services and staff training to meet the needs of PINS and pre PINS youth in Dutchess County.
- Changes in PINS legislation led to the development of a respite services contract with Riverhaven, which is utilized for youth involved with the Departments of Probation or Social Services.
- **Children's Services staff members participated in a number of work groups in the community, which address the needs of Dutchess County children and families. These included:**
 - ◆ Child Advocacy Center's Multidisciplinary Team
 - ◆ Children's Providers Committee
 - ◆ Children's Services Council
 - ◆ Coordinated Children's Services Initiative (CCSI)
 - ◆ Court Involved Youth Committee
 - ◆ Family Court Advisory Committee and its Family Visitation and Independent Living Subcommittees
 - ◆ Family Services Sex Offender Management Program
 - ◆ Integrated County Planning Committee
 - ◆ Juvenile Justice Task Force

"Foster parents are encouraged to adopt children in their homes and many foster parents become adoptive parents."

- Continued work on collaborative projects with a number of public and private agencies in the community including the Dutchess County Family Court, District Attorney's office, Department of Probation, Youth Bureau, Child Abuse Preventive Center, Astor, Abbott House, Dutchess County Community Action Agency, Grace Smith House Domestic Violence Shelter, and Hudson River Housing's Riverhaven Shelter.
- Funded a District Attorney investigator for the multidisciplinary team at the Child Advocacy Center.
- Two Children's Services case managers continue to be part of the Dutchess County Family Treatment Court team, presided over by Judge Forman, which provides intensive support and supervision to families in which substance abuse has led to neglect of children. The Family Treatment Court graduated 5 individuals and their families in 2005.
- A domestic violence liaison jointly supervised by Child Protective Services and Grace Smith House continues to be located in Children's Services to ensure the best services and outcomes for families in which domestic violence has contributed to child maltreatment. The Liaison receives referrals from child protective, foster care and preventive caseworkers, attends case conferences and provides training, direct services and consultation regarding domestic violence issues. In 2005, the liaison handled referrals for

consultation and/or provision of direct services to approximately 200 families.

- A cross systems domestic violence training seminar was held for case managers and community service providers in September 2005.
- The foster parent liaison, home finding, foster care and child protective services staff members have made numerous community presentations regarding Children's Services.
- Children's Services staff members are participating in a higher education program leading to the Master's in Social Work Degree at Adelphi University. Nine staff members are currently enrolled in this program.
- An innovative biweekly caseworker training schedule was implemented to train caseworkers by utilizing the experience and expertise of staff members. Training has been provided in areas such as CPS safety and risk, CPS investigation, preventive and foster care referrals and services, engaging resistant clients, car seat safety and computer system issues.
- The statewide CONNECTIONS Computer System was implemented in Dutchess County in July 2005. This is a computerized case recording system for all Children's Services cases, which resulted in massive changes in recordkeeping.
- Staff members provided hats, mittens and gloves for children in foster care during Christmas and the holiday season.



Child Support Enforcement



The New York State Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) within the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance is the agency responsible for administering the child support program in our state through all the local 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 a variety of 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 which 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 New York State Central Collection Agency.
- Enforcement of a court order,
- Income execution when there is an employer, aided by New York State's Expedited New Hire Reporting program, which locates current employers of child support debtors, keeping income executions in place and enabling new executions to begin,

- Collection of arrears from federal and state tax refunds, OTB and lottery winnings, and bank accounts,
- Referral to the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance's program for collection and seizure of assets, which targets individuals over four months in arrears in their child support payments.
- Medical benefits execution to require enrollment of dependents in third party health insurance,
- Suspension or denial of a New York State driver's or professional license,
- Initiating violation proceedings in Family Court which may result in a jail term of up to six months for willful non-payment of child support,
- Taking liens against property and motor vehicles,
- Conducting financial investigations. Arranges professional legal services 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 Activity*	2004	2005
Child Support Cases Open at End of Year	11,132	11,166
Children Open in Support Cases at End of Year	12,443	12,319
Children Open Born Out of Wedlock at End of Year	6,279	6,318
Children Open with Paternity Established at End of Year	5,569	5,732
Percentage of Children Open with Paternity Resolved	88.7%	90.7%
Children Needing Paternity Determination	710	586
Cases with Collections During Year	5,105	5,195
Interstate Cases with Collections During Year	303	312
Cases Open Where Medical Support is Ordered	7,565	8,055
Cases with Arrears Due During Year	7,588	7,877
Cases with Arrears Due Paying During Year	3,443	3,263

* From NYS OCSE DSS-157 Report



Child Support Enforcement Accomplishments for 2005

- Continued to contract for genetic testing in Family Court. This enabled support orders to be obtained almost three to four weeks faster on 48 cases.
- We continued to have a working relationship with the Father's Rights Association of NYS. 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.
- Served on the Father's Day Parade Committee. This was the third official Fathers Day Parade in New York State. It was well attended by the fathers in Dutchess County and a huge success.
- Invited the New York State Deputy Commissioner and Director, Division of Child Support Enforcement, Scott

Cade, and Elise Drexler, Customer Service Bureau Chief, and Roger Green, our State representative, to speak at the annual division meeting.

- Collected \$27,636,371 in child support from absent parents. This is an increase of 4.3 percent over 2004. Of the total collected and distributed, \$26,625,779 was for the benefit of families who were not in receipt of public assistance.
- Prepared for the court 7,059 support and paternity establishment petitions.
- Continued to perform well on the State's new performance measure - Family Court Orders with health insurance included. Dutchess County with 84 percent was again ranked first for our county size.
- Actively volunteered its time and money by: having a hat and mitten tree for Grace Smith House, saving \$210 in loose change throughout the year and donating it to the Food Bank of the Hudson Valley, and adopting a family for the holidays providing a grandfather, grandmother, 3 boys and 2 girls with new clothes, toys bedding, a stuffed stocking for each child and a \$100 grocery store gift card. One of the Division's Supervisor's, Chris Bride, co-chaired the Department's Toys for Tots campaign, helping the Department collect 6 extra - large size boxes of toys.

Child Support Collections

1996	.....	\$13,312,471
1997	.....	\$14,902,565
1998	.....	\$16,687,297
1999	.....	\$18,687,297
2000	.....	\$21,442,928
2001	.....	\$22,789,005
2002	.....	\$24,237,743
2003	.....	\$25,187,954
2004	.....	\$26,537,960
2005	.....	\$27,636,371

* From NYS OCSE DSS-157 Report

Food Stamps

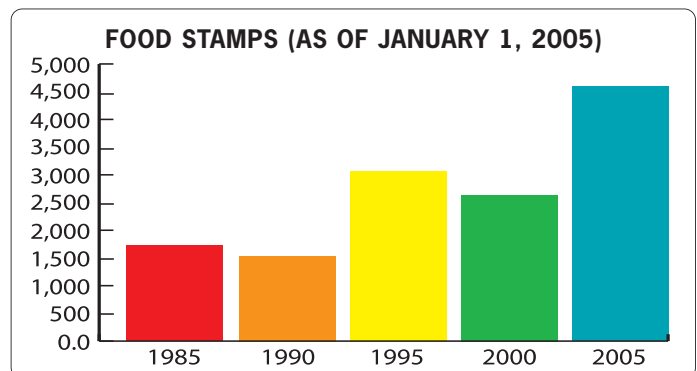


The program's purpose is to help low-income households purchase food needed for good nutrition and health. Clients who are eligible for Food Stamps, access benefits electronically by using a benefit card and a PIN at authorized grocery stores. Benefits may be used for food products or seeds to grow food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

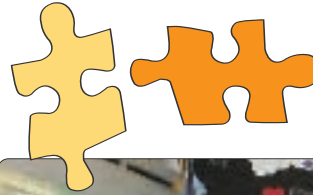
This unit:

- Determines eligibility for and provides Food Stamp benefits to individuals and families, households containing a mix of Temporary Assistance (TA) and non-Temporary Assistance recipients, the elderly, the disabled, Certified Group Home, and Alcohol/Drug Facility residents. Pure TA households receive food stamps through the 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). Project activities are conducted for the benefit of the Food Stamp eligible population and address food security, food safety, and dietary quality.



Food Stamps Accomplishments for 2005



- Achieved a Food Stamp error rate of 2.3%, far lower than the national average of 6.3% and the New York State average of 4.45%.
- Continued to have the EAT SMART NEW YORK Nutrition Improvement Education staff available during Food Stamp recertification interviews at the Department.
- Continued the New York State SSI Nutrition Improvement Project (NYSNIP) which provides simplified program access for the SSI population of elderly and disabled individuals living alone in the community. The standardized benefits better ensure adequate nutrition for this vulnerable population.
- Implemented the Food Stamp Benefits for Group Home Program (FSGHP) which simplified and standardized the budgeting for group home residents.
- Focused efforts on increasing the participation of income-eligible County residents in the Food Stamp Program. As a result of initiatives the Food Stamp caseload increased to a total of 4,691 cases by year end.
- Continued to provide an alternate site for recertification interviews at Dutchess County Community Action's offices in Dover Plains, for people unable to travel to Poughkeepsie,

with 84 households recertifying.

- Provided Food Stamps Benefits valued at \$9,572,165 to over 5,400 households. This represents a 2.3 percent increase over 2004.
- Participated in the after hours recertification program, servicing over 35 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. This waiver was obtained because the City's unemployment rate exceeded the national rate.
- Continued the Transitional Food Stamp Benefit Alternative effective December 1, 2001. As the focus moves from welfare to work, the Food Stamp Program has become increasingly important to clients as they leave Temporary Assistance. Transitional Benefit Alternative (TBA) allows qualified TA recipients to continue to receive Food Stamp benefits remain unchanged for an established period when the TA case closes. The cases are opened by the TA Under-care/Family Assistance unit through the Separate Determination process and maintained by the Food Stamp Unit.

Food Stamp Assistance Case Activity*		
	2004	2005
Applications Registered	3,887	3,631
Cases Opened/Reactivated/ Open-Closed	4,421	3,681
Withdrawn	252	237
Denied	923	812
Cases Closed	3,110	3,592
Recertifications	3,395	3,370
Changes to Active/ Closed Cases	9,170	11,328
Totals - All Case Activity	21,271**	23,020

*From WMS WST002
**Corrected from 2004 Annual Report



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.

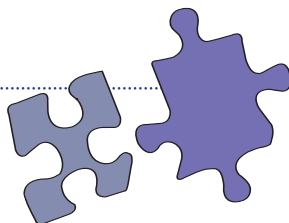
This unit:

- 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, and a weatherization referral and packaging program.

HEAP Assistance Case Activity		
	2004	2005
Applications Registered	967	998
Cases Opened/Reactivated		
/Open-Closed	730	612
Withdrawn	23	25
Denied	270	186
Cases Closed	678	771
Recertifications	0	0
Changes to Active/Closed Cases	1,561	1,291
Totals - All Case Activity	3,262	2,885

* From WMS WST002

HEAP Accomplishments for 2005



- In an effort to help HEAP recipients get more for their dollar Dutchess County continued to participate in the

HEAP Oil Buying Program. This program establishes a maximum price that a participating heating oil company can charge a HEAP clients based on the varying wholesale cost of oil. Since 2003 Dutchess County worked as a HEAP pilot county with the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority and the Community Power Network of NYS to develop the program. This program became mandatory for the 2004-

2005 heating season.

- Dutchess County HEAP continued to participate in the Electronic HEAP Application Pilot (E-HEAP). This electronic application is available through the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance website at www.otda.state.ny.us.
- The Fuel Buyers Club, partially funded through a contract the Dutchess County Community Action Agency, continued to provide group purchasing power for income eligible recipients of Dutchess County, 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 fulltime 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 a system of emergency fuel depots throughout the County.
- Provided HEAP benefits valued at \$488,375 to 2,049 Dutchess County resident households during the 2004-2005 season.
- In the 2004-2005 season 1124 households received emergency benefits for heat or heat-related utilities valued at \$525,595.
- Paid for \$149,956 for 43 furnace replacements.



Legal Unit



The Legal Unit is comprised of a Bureau Chief and five Senior and Assistant County Attorneys assigned to the Department of Social Services 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.

Legal Dispositions		2004	2005	2004	2005
Child Abuse Petitions	.....66	.....41	Foster Care Place/Ext Petitions	.....249	.....176
Child Neglect Petitions	.....692	.....888	Surrender of Child Petitions	....37	.....47
Termination of Parental Rights	.....80	.....67	IVD Paternity	.....424	.....404
			IVD Support	... 4,247	.. 4,867

Legal Services Accomplishments for 2005

- Implemented the massive changes mandated by the State's Welfare Laws of 2005.
- Attended the Sharing Success III program sponsored by New York State Office of Children and Families and the New York State Permanent Judicial Commission on Justice for Children.
- Continued to participate in weekly Family Treatment Court and the Family Court Advisory Board.
- DSS Attorneys in Family Court provided legal counsel for 2,304 Child Protective Reports, 7,067 support filings, 160 Interstate support filings, and 184 private support cases.
- Participated in special calendar days to enable New York State to resolve hearing issues for 120 Fair Hearings
- Handled 95 State Central Register Report expungement hearings.
- Provided legal counsel for 92 collection and resource recovery cases.
- Represented approximately 20 adult protective court actions.
- Assisted the Child Support Collection Unit in increasing support collections by 4.3 % over 2004

Medical Assistance (Medicaid)



Medicaid provides services to the medically indigent making payments directly to providers of medical care,

such as hospitals, doctors, pharmacists, etc. It is funded 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 child-bearing age with income at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level;

The Breast and Cervical Cancer Program

– provides full Medicaid cover-

age to individuals who have been screened by Healthy Women's Partnership and who 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 benefits more in line with commercial plans, but with no co-pays,

It only offers prospective coverage and therefore cannot go back and pay prior





Medical Assistance (Medicaid)

...CONTINUED Family Health Plus (FHP)

bills. The income eligibility level is higher than the Medicaid income eligibility level for individuals with children. The current level is 150% of the Federal Poverty Level. For adults with no children, it remains at 100 percent of the Federal Poverty level. There is a resource test and individuals cannot be covered by other health insurance, including Medicare. The program has a cost that ranges from \$224 to \$458 per month per person, with pregnant women costing an additional \$4,662 upon delivery;

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 (SSA) but have too much income to qualify for SSI, be between 16-64, have less than \$10,000 in assets and have net income below 250% of the Federal poverty level.

Medical Assistance Case Activity*		
	2004	2005
Applications Registered	7,369	7,270
Cases Opened/ Reactivated/ Open-Closed	6,833	7,432
Withdrawn	502	431
Denied	2,062	1,893
Cases Closed	5,937	6,319
Recertifications	5,218	5,433
Changes to Active/Closed Cases	29,368	30,275
Totals - All Case Activity	49,920**	51,783

* From WMS WST002
**Corrected from 2004 Annual Report

MEDICAID ELIGIBILITY

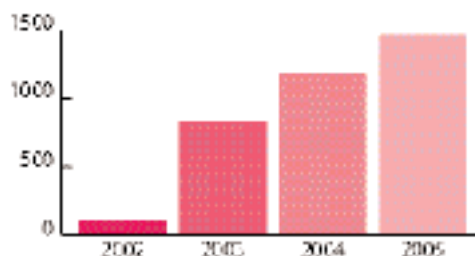
- Handles eligibility determinations, recertifications for chronic care cases (mostly nursing homes), general Medicaid cases (persons in the community) as well as the SSI Medicaid cases.
- Contracts with other agencies to take Medicaid applications for children, for families with children and applications for single individuals and forward 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 also provide information and referral to persons in need of long term care, case management for private duty nursing services, the 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.

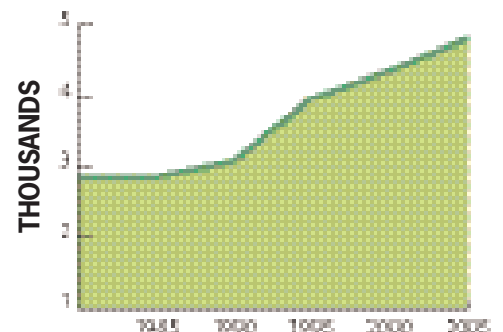
Medicaid Cases	
1985	2,202
1990	2,751
1995	4,146
2000	5,192
2005	7,422

(as of January 1)

FAMILY HEALTH PLUS AS OF JANUARY 1, 2005



MA/SSI AS OF JANUARY 1, 2005

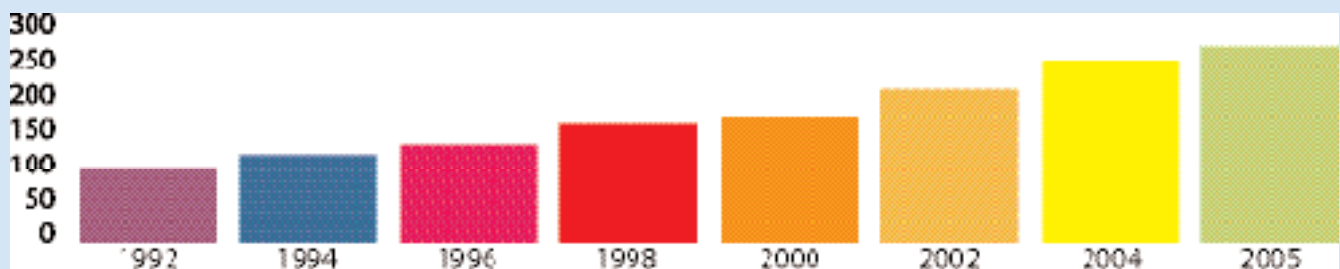


Medicaid Expenditures by Provider*

Provider Type	2003	2004	2005	Change
Hospital Inpatient Services	34,619,871	34,653,133	33,473,000	-3.4%
Hospital Outpatient Services	6,980,577	5,805,446	6,164,679	6.2%
Skilled Nursing Facilities	73,505,408	73,633,446	78,500,297	6.6%
Intermediate Care Facility Services	9,067,393	8,844,507	8,084,887	-8.6%
Clinics	16,886,743	20,233,881	17,651,869	-12.8%
Hospice	1,647,071	1,745,996	1,380,362	-20.9%
Physicians Services	3,834,692	2,878,889	2,670,647	-7.2%
Dental Services	1,236,694	1,508,849	1,638,591	8.6%
Other Practitioners Services	2,586,738	3,068,007	2,872,153	-6.4%
Child Care Institutional Medical Per Diem	1,283,309	1,097,132	1,184,154	7.9%
Personal Care Services	6,529,217	6,977,095	7,543,474	8.1%
Home Health Services	1,541,977	1,655,303	1,591,350	-3.9%
Assisted Living Services	2,072,192	2,121,848	2,241,350	5.6%
Long Term Home Health Care Waived Services	565,932	543,511	533,587	-1.85
Home & Community Based Waived Services	22,886,444	26,649,719	32,600,456	22.3%
Rehabilitation & Therapy	431,745	443,338	493,538	11.3%
Office of Mental Hygiene Restorative Rehabilitation	6,664,876	7,163,877	7,221,612	.8%
Drugs & Supplies	30,981,654	35,863,353	38,815,308	8.2%
Eye Appliances & Durable Medical Equipment	999,510	1,062,389	789,249	-25.7%
Prepaid Care	7,613,144	13,244,597	18,002,718	35.9%
Case Management	4,165,438	4,460,501	5,310,453	19.1%
Prepaid Mental Health	1,690,447	1,442,788	998,863	-30.8%
Medical Transportation	667,573	695,384	609,524	-12.3%
Lab & X-Ray Services	1,182,919	1,260,328	1,183,552	-6.1%
Other	1,537	147,079	218,642	48.7%
Total	\$239,643,103	\$257,200,395	\$271,774,315	5.7%

* From NYSDOH MARS MR-0-01

MEDICAL MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM MEDICAID GROSS SHARES (IN MILLIONS)



**MEDICAID MANAGED CARE/
FAMILY HEALTH PLUS**

- 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 advocate for clients.



**Medical Assistance
Accomplishments for 2005**

- Paid Medical Assistance Benefits for Dutchess County residents equal to \$9.22 per second, \$453 a minute and \$796,682 a day, amounting to a gross cost of \$280,432,068 and a net cost of \$45,180,465 to the County.
- Medicaid costs continued to rise in 2005. Reasons for the increase include large increases in payments for prescription drugs, home and community based waived services, managed care plan premiums and continued nationwide increases in the costs of health therapies and the costs of health care over the rate of inflation, and an aging population.
- Using Wellcare, Hudson Health Plan, GHI and MVP as providers, 9,169 individuals were enrolled in managed care.
- Prepared 268 Disability Reviews.
- Processed 1,339 Pre-Natal Care and Assistance Program (PCAP) applications.

**Temporary Assistance
and Employment**



The Temporary Assistance and Employment Division includes 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 45 percent of their gross earnings disregarded when deter-

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Temporary Assistance Case Activity		
	2004	2005
Applications Registered	6,649	6,531
Cases Opened/		
Reactivated/Open-Closed	2,742	2,862
Withdrawn	234	143
Denied	3,757	3,691
Cases Closed	1,689	1,819
Recertifications	1,694	1,562
Changes to Active/ Closed Cases	9,766	10,889
Totals – Case Activity	19,882	20,966
*From WMS WST002		



Temporary Assistance and Employment

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mining 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 of 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 ELIGIBILITY



Dutchess County Temporary Assistance Unit
 Ms. Mary Rivera
 Poughkeepsie,
 NY 12601-3200

This world needs people like you who are genuine. I hope you know that your life is blessed simply because you are real and understand the struggle...

Peace and Blessings...

Happy Holidays!

ML

This unit:

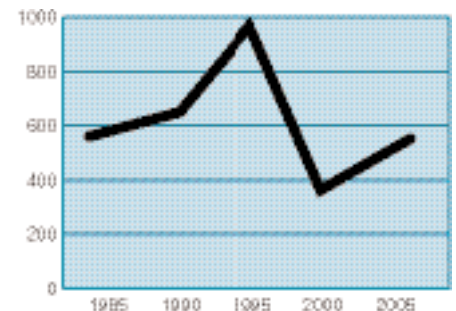
- Determines eligibility for the various programs. Screen all applicants for domestic violence, drug and/or alcohol abuse, and any other physical or psychological barriers to employment and refer individuals to the Domestic Violence Liaison, Certified Alcohol and Substance Abuse Counselor, or Family Development Worker from Community Action. All except the Family Development Worker are located on site.

FAMILY ASSISTANCE CASES
(As of January 1, 2005)



- Refers potentially employable individuals to the Employment Unit for an assessment.
- Refers to individuals to the Child Support Unit to assist in establishing paternity and/or obtaining support.
- Authorizes payments including recurring assistance, one-time payments, either 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.

SAFETY NET
(As of January 1)



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.
- Conduct employment assessments, helping clients to identify skills, interests and talents.
- Develop employment plans and make 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 and TANF applicants and recipients. Clients must contact five potential employers a week for six weeks. Staff supervises this activity as well as contracted staff at the New York State 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 100 work experience positions in 36 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.

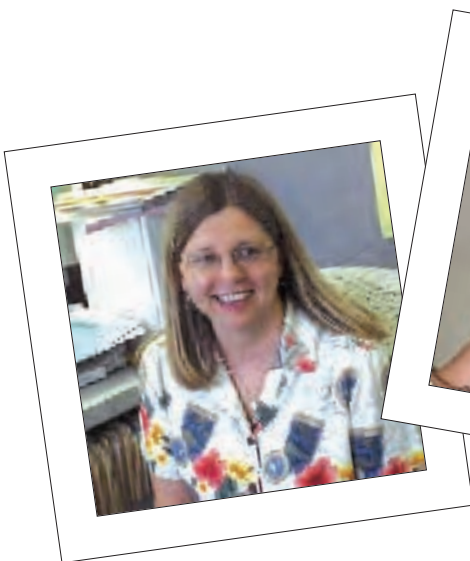
- Together with Temporary Assistance Eligibility staff conducts an orientation regarding Temporary Assistance, Medicaid and Food Stamp Benefits, employment requirements and transitional benefits two times daily to applicants for Temporary Assistance. Orientation consists of a video, questions and answers and each applicant has access to written materials on all programs mentioned.

- Contracts with several local agencies:

Greater Southern Dutchess Chamber of Commerce and Poughkeepsie Area Chamber of Commerce – Mentoring Programs together employ Mentors to work with individuals to assist them in transitioning to work by helping them to find solutions for employment issues and teach them how to manage personal and family issues related to working.

Poughkeepsie Area Chamber of Commerce – Responsible Parent Program mentor who works with individu-

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EMPLOYMENT

...Continued from page 36

als who are sanctioned or about to be sanctioned for failing to comply with employment activities.

The New York State Department of Labor - provides the services of one Labor Service Representative who conducts the Job Club, job readiness training using the KARLI Program. Training is designed to provide counseling, motivation and direction to work-ready clients. The worker provides an eight week supervised job search after the Job Club.

Dutchess County BOCES - provides vocational educational training for those who have no marketable skills. Services provided include:

- Diagnostic vocational evaluation,
- 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.

Employment Unit Activity

	2004	2005
Clients Assessed	764	705
Employment Development		
Plans Developed	575	591
Referrals to Employment	624	675
Number of Clients Placed in Employment by Staff		
61	101	
Number of Clients Obtaining Employment	236	246
Clients Who Entered Training		
94	98	
Current TA Clients Who Completed Training	3	40
200% Clients Who Completed Training		
62	40	
TANF Clients Assigned to Work Experience	394	359
TANF Clients Completed Work Experience		
178	154	
SN Assigned to Work Experience	338	414
SN Completed Work Experience		
142	179	
Clients Assigned Job Club	141	52
Clients Attended Job Club		
48	22	
Number of TANF Sanctions Commenced	213	196
Number of SN Sanctioned Commenced		
287	325	



DAY CARE

Day Care program is designed to help low-income families meet their child care needs. Low Income Day Care is granted to anyone who applies and provides all requested documentation and has gross income below 200% of the Federal Poverty level. No interview is currently required and there is no waiting list. There is, however, a parent fee that must be paid based on the parent's income. The minimum fee is \$1 per month.

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, reviewing 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 assist clients in locating childcare providers for their children.



- Meets with the Child Care Council to review the DSS process and to answer any questions that providers may have in order to assist all providers in the billing process.
- Works with the Child Care Council to provide information and supplies to providers.

T/A Employment Unit Accomplishments for 2005

- Mentored clients worked at 23 different companies with most positions in the areas of office work, health services or production. Over 90 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.
- Three of the eight Job Club sessions included one or more employer presentations. Since 1997, 498 individuals have completed Job Club training.
- The Community Solutions for Transportation program touched the lives of 359 families, reporting the following successes:
 - Gave away 46 vehicles.
 - Eleven individuals obtained a NYS Learners Permit.
 - Eighteen individuals completed the five-hour pre-licensing class.
 - Driver's licenses were obtained by 14 individuals, after passing their NYS road test.
 - Thirty-two individuals completed a Defensive Driving course.
- Paid for 40 car registrations on behalf of program participants.
- Thirty-seven people received a minimum deposit for car insurance.
- To transport people to work or work-related activities, 7,088 City bus passes and 13,963 Loop bus passes were provided.
- A total of 8 one-way taxi trips were paid, to get people to work or work-related activities.
- Approved 38 repairs on behalf of program participants.
- Provided \$11,691,010 in public assistance payments to or on behalf of clients, a 2% percent increase from 2004.
- Provided \$3,873,004 in day care assistance on behalf of Dutchess County residents.
- For the fifth year in a row our Day Care program operated without a waiting list for subsidy. Anyone who needs child-care to get or keep a job receives an immediate opportunity for subsidy. This provides a seamless transition for

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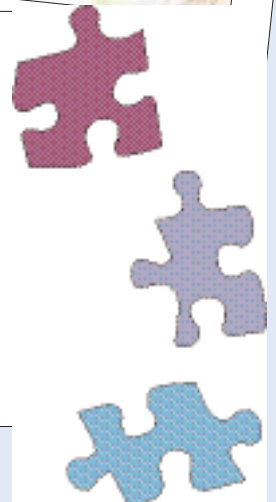
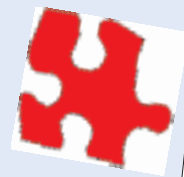


T/A Employment Unit Accomplishments for 2005

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Temporary Assistance recipients who obtain employment and for applicants who need day care to begin a job (as an alternative to Temporary Assistance)

- Continued to offer Saturday appointments in addition to one evening per month for any child care applicants unable to come in during weekday hours.
- Eligibility staff screened all clients for drug or alcohol abuse and referred 1,665 to the contracted Assessor for evaluation, who then mandated 740 to attend substance abuse treatment programs.
- We continue testing through BOCES and Industrial Medical Associates to assess a client's full capacity for employment. This testing is done on long-term clients that have been unsuccessful at obtaining and retaining employment. Testing on new clients is being done to give us a baseline and formulate an employment plan that is compatible with abilities and capabilities.
- Provided \$420 in Grants of Assistance for Guide Dogs.
- Purchased \$589,000 in case management and employment related services from Dutchess County BOCES and Dutchess County Community Action Agency.
- Purchased \$331,221 in employment related and mentoring services for clients from the New York State Department of Labor, the Greater Southern Dutchess and Poughkeepsie Area Chambers of Commerce.
- Continued to locate a DSS Employment worker every day at the One Stop Center. This worker conducts an orientation to the Department of Labor /One Stop Center.
- As of December 2005, 37 individuals were active in the Responsible Parent Program administered by the Poughkeepsie Area Chamber of Commerce.
- In the Employment Mentoring program administered by the Chambers of Commerce, 45 individuals participated. Since the beginning of the program, 448 individuals have participated with 325 successfully completing. This year, 34 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.



Important Internet Website Addresses

Child Care Council of Dutchess

<http://www.childcaredutchess.org/index.htm>

Dutchess County

<http://www.dutchessny.gov>

**Dutchess County
Community Action Agency**

<http://www.dccaa.org>

Dutchess County Data

<http://www.dutchessdata.com>

Dutchess Outreach, Inc.

<http://www.dutchessoutreach.org>

Grace Smith House

<http://gracesmithhouse.org>

National Adoption Photo Listing

<http://www.AdoptUSKids.org>

New York State

<http://www.state.ny.us>

New York State Adoption Album

<http://www.dfa.state.ny.us/adopt>

New York State Adoption Service

<http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/adopt>

**New York State Office of Children
& Family Services**

<http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us>

**New York State Office of Temporary
& Disability Assistance**

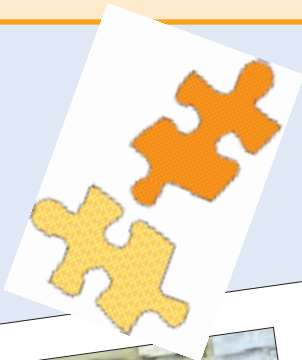
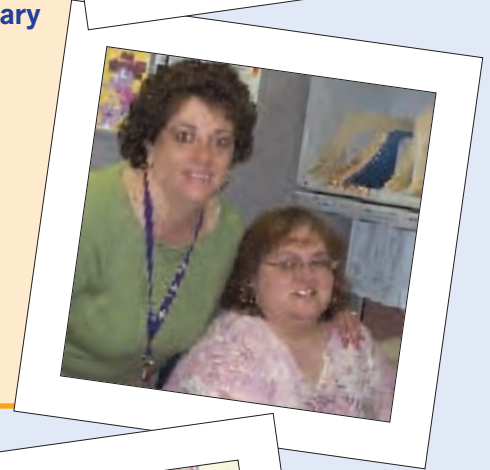
<http://www.otda.state.ny.us>

**New York State Kids' Well-Being
Indicator Clearinghouse**

<http://www.nyskwic.org>

United States Administration for Children & Families

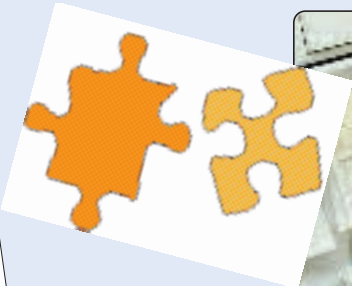
<http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/cse>



“Individual commitment to a group effort — that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work.”

— Vince Lombardi





Dutchess County Child Support Enforcement Unit
58 Market Street
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601-3200

Dear Ms. Eride:

As a mother, and as a client of Dutchess County SCU, I would like you to know a few things.

Ms. Coleman, the caseworker assigned to me and my children; I can't say enough how wonderful she has been to me. I have called this poor woman so many times she knows my name by my voice. I have driven Ms. Coleman nuts with all the calls, messages, and correspondence.

My case is in the process or by the time you get this, will be in Ulster County SCU. I have heard many bad things about caseworkers not doing their job appropriately and/or not caring, not responding to messages and the such.

Well, I would appreciate it if you could make sure Ms. Coleman knows how much I, and my children appreciate all of her efforts and all the time she has taken to put up with my and my ex's problems. In my opinion, she went far beyond the scope of her job duties to help me and along with that, she never once ignored me or made me feel like I was a nuisance. Please make sure she knows there are people out here that she takes endless phone calls, paperwork, and all the other things she does, for granted. I sincerely appreciate and I am so very grateful to her for all the things she has done for me. I think she has a pretty thankless job, and I want her to know THANK YOU!!! I don't know what I would have done without her!!!!!! God bless this woman. If I could I would recommend and give her a huge raise and promotion. She is just fantastic. Thank you for reading this and please share it with Ms. Coleman and her personnel file.

Very truly yours, DMK

