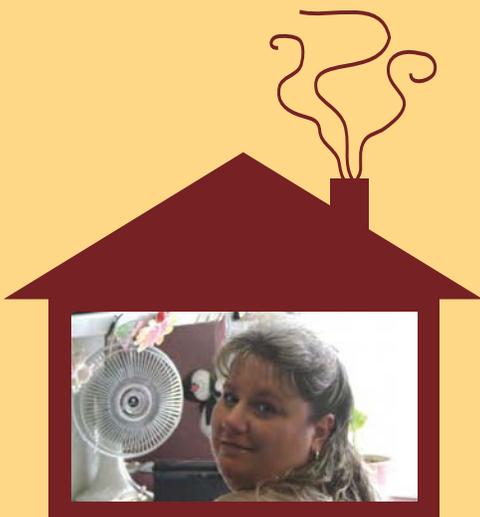




Dutchess County  
Department of Social Services  
60 Market Street  
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601

845-486-3000

*William R. Steinhaus, County Executive*



**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

A Message From The County Executive . . . . .1  
 A Message From The Commissioner of Social Services . . . . .1  
 Organizational Chart/ Goals and Objectives . . . . .2  
 Active Cases by ZIP/ Caseload Snapshot . . . . .3  
 2006 Facts at a Glance . . . . .4  
 Employee of the Month . . . . .5  
 HEAP/Weatherization . . . . .6  
 HEAP Feature Story . . . . .8  
 All Agency Retreat . . . . .9  
 Highlights of the Year . . . . .10  
 Staff Honored for Service . . . . .11  
 Employee Generosity . . . . .12  
 Commissioner's Office . . . . .13  
 Commissioner's Office Accomplishments . . . . .14  
 Administrative Services . . . . .15  
 WMS Accomplishments . . . . .16  
 Special Investigation Unit . . . . .18  
 Adult Services . . . . .20  
 Domestic Violence . . . . .21  
 Adult Services Accomplishments . . . . .21  
 Children Services . . . . .22  
 Child Protective/Preventive Services . . . . .22  
 Foster Care . . . . .23  
 Adoption/ Home Finding . . . . .24  
 Secure and Non-Secure Detection . . . . .24  
 Children Services Accomplishments . . .25, 26  
 Child Support Enforcement . . . . .27  
 Child Support Enforcement Accomplishments . . . . .28  
 Food Stamps . . . . .29  
 Food Stamps Accomplishments . . . . .29  
 Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) . . . . .30  
 HEAP Program Accomplishments . . . . .30  
 Legal Unit . . . . .31  
 Legal Services Accomplishments . . . . .31  
 Medical Assistance (Medicaid) . . . . .31  
 Medical Assistance Accomplishments . . . .34  
 Temporary Assistance & Employment . . . .34  
 Temporary Assistance & Employment Accomplishments . . . . .37  
 DSS Matters . . . . .38  
 My Life in Jeopardy . . . . .38  
 County-Wide Shaken Baby Campaign . . . .39  
 Important Internet Website Addresses . . . .40  
 Employee Appreciation Day . . . . .41

**Dutchess County Legislature**

**FAMILY/HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE**

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- Mary M. Swartz**, Vice Chairman
- Suzanne Horn
- Marcus Molinaro
- Barbara Jeter-Jackson
- Alison MacAvery
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- Walter Joseph**  
The Children's Home of Poughkeepsie
- Irene Magalski**  
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- Maryanne Maruschak**  
Dutchess County Dept. of Social Services
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Dutchess County Office for Aging
- Nancy Newall**  
Dutchess County Interfaith Council
- Brian Riddell**  
Dutchess Outreach
- Peter Simon**  
Dutchess County Dept. of Social Services
- Jeanne Wagner**  
Child Care Council of Dutchess, Inc.
- Gail Webster**  
Hudson River Housing



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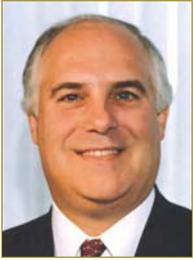
**Mission Statement**

**"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."**



## A Message From

THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE, WILLIAM STEINHAUS



As I review the data and information from the following Department of Social Services' 2006 Annual Report, I once again recognize the effort and dedication of our county employees who work so hard each day to meet the many challenging needs of our residents and families who are coping with issues surrounding self-sufficiency, safety and protection our young and old.

I congratulate the department for being one of the 27 local districts to earn a High Performance Federal Food Stamp Bonus Award. The achievement of four DSS workers to graduate from The Adelphi University Masters Program in Social Worker is an excellent milestone for the department. I also commend all of the efforts that have led to the increased number of adoptions.

Each day, DSS employees deal with many issues ranging from foster care to child support collection; eligibility for HEAP to Medicaid, handling of 353 contracts and payments to new installation of technology and staff development. Yet, the more than 300 workers still found the time and dedication to help others in ways that go beyond the scope of their job description. The staff is to be commended for their leadership in collecting food, mittens, and holiday presents for the needy, as well as contributing to the March of Dimes, Smile Train and United Way. They have also found the time to coor-

minate the annual Foster Care Family Brunch and the Adoption Dinner. The new interdepartmental newsletter written by the staff keeps everyone in the information loop regarding upcoming projects and updates on fellow staff members.

The successful outcomes of the many DSS sponsored program services are directly related to our contract services partners and their own hard working staffs. By fostering relationships with businesses, law enforcement, local government, and sister county agencies, we are able to provide more holistic, comprehensive services. Community partners working with a common vision and outcomes for our residents demonstrate the synergy that is created when we work in collaboration. I am deeply grateful for their support and participation to help strategically plan and improve services.

I extend my personal thanks and congratulations to the staff and partners of the Department of Social Services for all they do!

With best wishes,

William R. Steinhaus  
Dutchess County Executive

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## A Message From

THE COMMISSIONER, ROBERT B. ALLERS



Dear Staff and Colleagues:

As I review 2006, several items are clear in my mind. We received letters of commendation from the state for audits in Temporary Assistance, Children's Services, Food Stamps, and Protective Services for Adults, our Financial Management Records, and our Child Support Division. Thanks to the hard work and

expertise of workgroups, we resurrected an agency newsletter and had an agency retreat that gave us direction and "laughter that was good for the soul."

We had many friends and co-workers who retired in 2006 with new fresh, energetic faces to continue to provide much needed services. Of course, a new governor and his new staff of commissioners will

provide changes and challenges. We were able to continue to provide all services at the same or a better financed amount in 2006 compared to 2005 and we have started our Medicaid fraud initiative (VerifyNY).

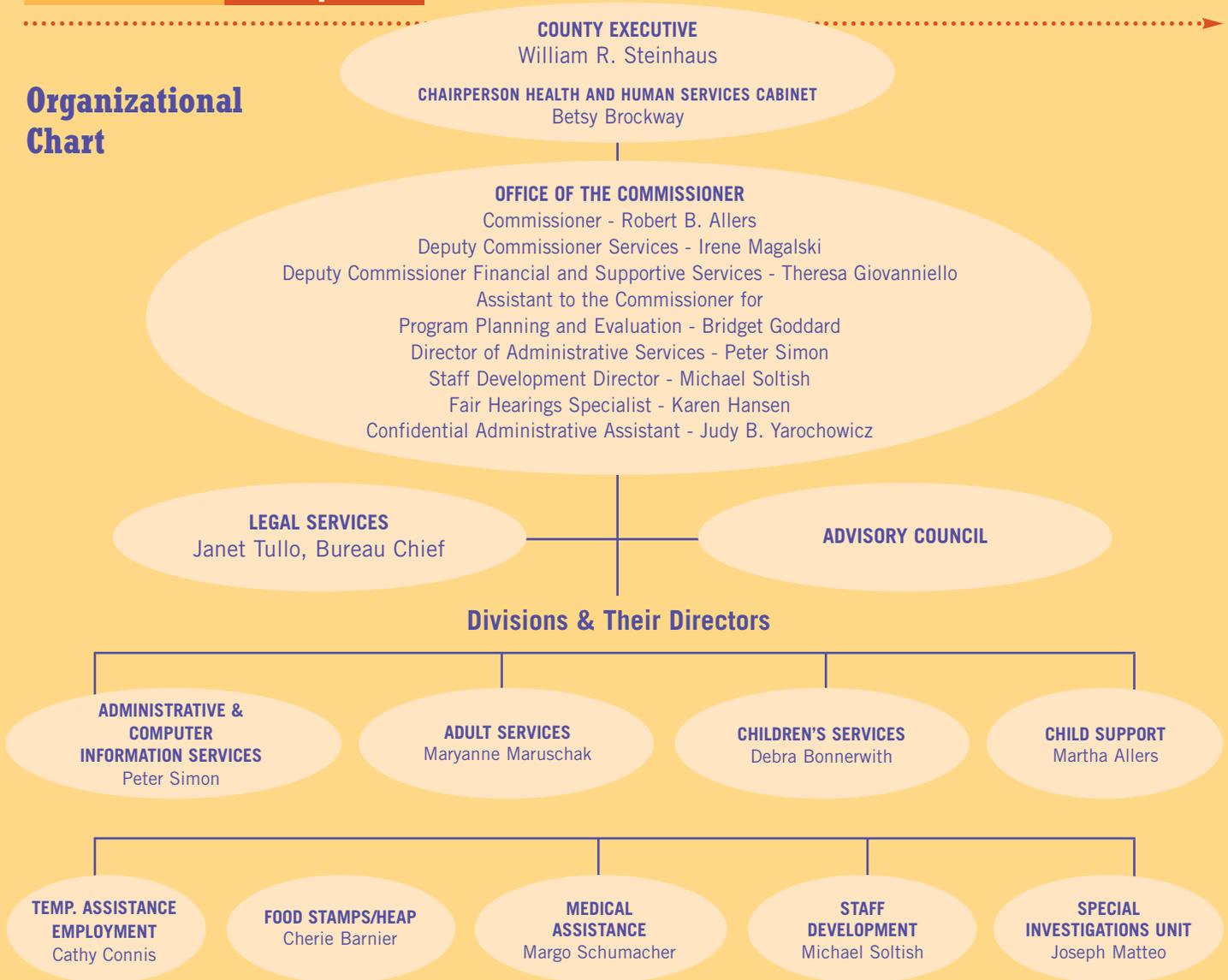
There is one thing that did not change in 2006 and that is the outstanding work done by our staff and our agency partners. Please enjoy our report and feel free to comment on the contents.

Sincerely,

Robert B. Allers, Commissioner



## Organizational Chart

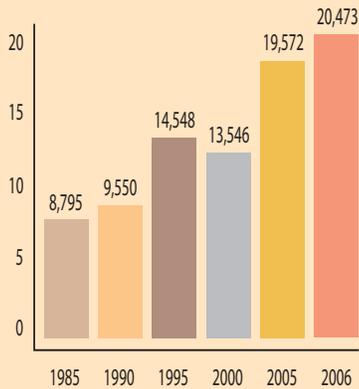


## Goals and Objectives

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



## CASELOAD SNAPSHOT



## ACTIVE INDIVIDUALS 12/31/06

Ages	Numbers
0 – 4	4,547
5 – 12	5,586
13 – 16	2,501
17 – 18	1,136
19 – 22	1,760
23 – 30	3,309
31 – 40	3,778
41 – 50	4,284
51 – 55	1,684
56 – 60	1,312
61 – 64	899
Over 65	5,635

## TOP NON-MEDICAID VENDORS IN COUNTY

Children's Home of Poughkeepsie	\$3,272,698
Hudson River Lodging	\$2,286,719
Astor Home for Children	\$2,038,912
LaSalle School	\$1,804,481
Central Hudson	\$1,621,634
DC Probation	\$1,352,747
DC Office for the Aging	\$1,175,556
Grace Smith House	\$ 995,997
St. Anne's Institute	\$ 986,318
Family Services, Inc.	\$ 783,323

## 2006 ACTIVE CASES BY ZIP CODE

Amenia	172	Pawling	311
Annandale	0	Pine Plains	228
Bangall	0	Pleasant Valley	447
Barrytown	10	Poughkeepsie	
Beacon	2,272	City	8,634
Billings	3	Town	2,511
Castle Point	0	Poughquag	205
Chelsea	11	Red Hook	457
Clinton Corners	128	Rhinebeck	782
Dover Plains	469	Rhinecliff	29
Fishkill	640	Salt Point	129
Glenham	26	Staatsburg	416
Holmes	114	Stanfordville	172
Hopewell Junction	765	Stormville	102
Hughsonville	22	Tivoli	139
Hyde Park	1,063	Verbank	58
Lagrangeville	256	Wappingers Falls	2,035
Milan	30	Wassaic	148
Millbrook	316	Wingdale	298
Millerton	240	Out of County	944
New Hamburg	13		

## TOP VENDORS IN COUNTY

Medicaid payments to local businesses in Dutchess County serve as an economic stimulus and multiplier. Payments in 2006 included:

St. Francis Hospital	\$14,951,295
DC Department of Mental Hygiene	\$14,683,761
Vassar Brothers Medical Center	\$11,210,873
MVP	\$ 9,841,400
Hudson Health Plan	\$ 8,252,401
NYS ARC Dutchess County	\$ 7,681,045
Wingate	\$ 7,392,138
Fishkill Health Related	\$ 7,114,843
Wellcare of New York	\$ 6,781,689
Greystone	\$ 6,414,790



## 2006 Facts At a Glance

### 2006 MODIFIED BUDGET

	Appropriations	Revenues
Administration		
(Salaries, fringe, materials, other)	\$21,204,112	\$16,899,207
Non-secure Detention	\$1,560,000	\$780,900
Day Care	\$5,261,769	\$5,147,607
Services for Recipients	\$6,088,849	\$3,784,748
Medicaid - Local payments	\$5,111,938	\$4,486,928
Medicaid - MMIS Payments	\$37,363,164	\$0
Adult Homes	\$0	\$0
Family Assistance	\$8,808,183	\$8,854,275
Foster Care	\$23,213,118	\$17,285,709
Juvenile Delinquents/PINS	\$373,100	\$601,000
State Training Schools	\$3,750,000	\$4,500
Safety Net	\$5,882,208	\$3,557,500
HEAP	\$2,900,000	\$2,234,000
Emergency Aid to Adults	\$162,000	\$61,500
Food Assistance	\$284,029	\$283,529
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$121,962,470</b>	<b>\$63,980,513</b>

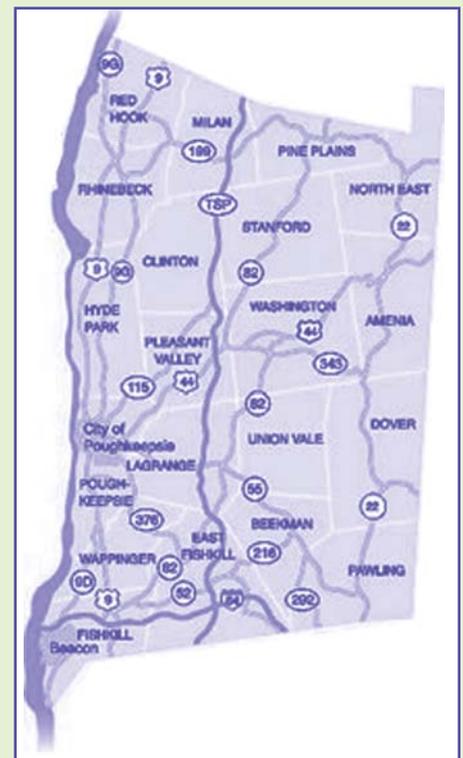
### ACTIVE CASES AS OF 12/31/06

Food Stamps	4,879
HEAP	2,091
Medicaid	7,701
Medicaid SSI	5,102
Family Health Plus	1,528
Family Assistance	583
Safety Net Assistance	526
Services	1,444

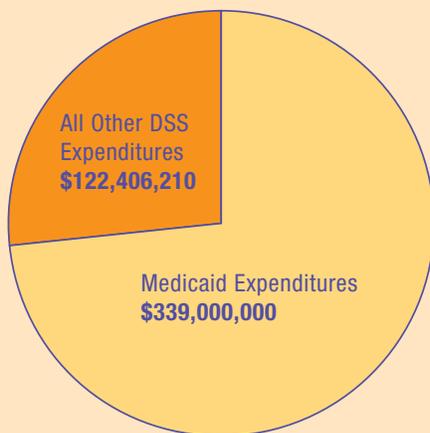
### ACTIVE CASES 07/03/06

Males	14,330
Females	20,047
Unborn	376

### Dutchess County Map



### ACTIVE CASES AS OF 12/31/06



DSS Employees

353



## Employee of The Month

The Employee Recognition Committee has been handing out the **Employee of the Month Recognition Award** to employees for the last 18 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

**Kathi Hanlon**  
Managed Care



*"Extremely helpful to clients and co-workers."*

### February

**Kathleen Cole**  
Adult and Family Services



*"A knowledgeable and supportive supervisor with a pleasant attitude."*

### March

**Deborah Fox**  
Medicaid



*"A real team worker, who knows her job inside and out."*

### April

**Stephanie Moshier**  
Child Protective Services



*"Always willing to go 'above and beyond' her job."*

### May

**Deborah Elliot**  
Medicaid



*"Hardworking, cooperative, pleasant and helpful."*

### June

**Jim Murphy**  
Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)



*"An outstanding example of what a social worker should be."*

### July

**Clayton Herriman**  
Administration/DPW



*"Always pleasant and helpful."*

### August

**Pat Janos**  
Medicaid



*"Goes out of her way to help new workers understand the job."*

### September

**Chris Corman**  
Special Investigations Unit



*"Always considerate and genuinely concerned for peoples well being."*

### October

**Deborah Robinton**  
Children Services



*"A valuable, dedicated county employee who exemplifies the best of our workforce."*

### November

**Theresa Krulish**  
Adult and Family Services



*"Always the first to assist to help in anyway."*

### December

**Linda Orlando**  
Children Services



*"Consistently demonstrates a professional demeanor, and sets a wonderful example."*





## HEAP/Weatherization

# Community Action Partnership of Dutchess County

**T**he Severe cold and high fuel prices during the winter can present difficulties for low-income residents. The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) is a federally funded low income energy program that provides clients with assistance for heating and heat-related expenses for their homes. Clients who receive Temporary Assistance or Food Stamps normally receive a regular HEAP benefit. Other individuals who meet the income requirements, receive a regular benefit by filing an application. This can be done through the early outreach process, mailing an application, or applying in person. Clients can also receive an additional emergency HEAP benefit if they have less than seven day's supply of fuel or are pending a heat-related utility shut-off. For clients who have electric heat and have a shut-off notice, there is a one-time heat-related benefit. If a clients' rental includes heat, and if they are income eligible, they can receive a small one-time benefit. Benefits are issued directly to vendors who must have a signed agreement with our agency. The exceptions are clients who heat with wood, coal, or pellets.

HEAP is administered by Temporary Assistance and Food Stamps for clients active to these programs. Other HEAP benefits are issued by the Food Stamp Unit. Dutchess County Department of Social Services contracts with Community



Action Partnership of Dutchess County (CAP) and Office for the Aging (OFA) to provide services to eligible HEAP applicants.

In 2006, the Dutchess County HEAP Unit focused efforts on utilizing the allowable "Early Outreach" period for HEAP. This project allowed households that received HEAP benefits in the previous year and whose household contained an individual under the age of six, age 60 or older, or disabled to submit HEAP applications prior to the HEAP season opening. This meant that many of our vulnerable HEAP recipients were pre-approved to receive benefits and the HEAP Unit was able to move more quickly and process applications for households that applied after program opening.

In an effort to help HEAP recipients get "more for their dollar," Dutchess County continued the HEAP Heating Oil Buying Program. This program established a maximum price that a heating company could charge HEAP clients based on the varying wholesale cost of oil and this season, kerosene. Since 2003, Dutchess County worked as a HEAP pilot county with the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA), New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), and the Community Power Network of New York State to develop the program.



**“The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) is a federally funded low income energy program that provides clients with assistance for heating and heat-related expense for their homes.”**



The program will be phased in statewide over the next three HEAP seasons.

New York State Supplemental Energy Assistance Program was initiated and was the first time New York State funds were utilized by the HEAP program. New York State provided \$100 million in supplemental funds for HEAP eligible households to assist in meeting energy needs during the 2005-2006 HEAP season. This supplemental Emergency benefit was issued to HEAP households through an additional application process.

The HEAP alternate certifier for Dutchess County is the Office for the Aging (OFA). OFA receives applications for those over 60 years of age and the SSI live-alone population. The purpose is to do outreach in order to streamline their application process. Upon completion of the application, they are forwarded to the Food Stamp Unit for review and authorization of benefits.

The Department of Social Services' contract with Community Action Partnership of Dutchess County (CAP) allows them to act as authorized representative for HEAP clients who are unable to appear for a

face-to-face interview. CAP also administers the Energy Crisis Intervention Program (ECIP). CAP maintains fuel depots throughout the county and contracts with an answering service to direct families in a heating emergency to the closest fuel depot. The answering service provides CAP with a list of families who have used the depot. Follow-up calls are made to the families to determine how the emergency occurred. Some families report that the cause was a one-time emergency and no further assistance is needed. Others are in need of help and will interact with the Client Advocate to access additional services, such as applying for HEAP benefits or Weatherization.

During the 2006-2007 heating season, CAP client advocates have assisted in processing 90 HEAP applications and of those, 30 completed a Weatherization application. In addition, referrals for this program are made from Dutchess County Department of Social Services and Office for the Aging.

Heating Equipment Repair or Replacement (HERR) helps HEAP eligible homeowners in emergency situations with the repair or replacement of heat-

ing equipment. To be eligible, clients must meet income and resource guidelines. As of March 31, 2006, the HERR program assisted 25 families with their heating equipment during the 2005-2006 heating season.

The Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) is funded by New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal (DHCR) and helps eligible families reduce their expenses by improving the energy efficiency of their homes. During the 2006-2007 funding cycle, an initial audit identifies specific areas in the home in need of energy conservation measures. The repairs in the home may include windows, doors, insulation and weather stripping. WAP provided services to 110 homes in Dutchess County.

**For more information on the HEAP Program call toll-free 1-800-342-3009 or visit our website at: [www.otda.state.ny.us](http://www.otda.state.ny.us)**





## HEAP Helps Heat Homes: Partnership to Success Stories

**A** CAP Client Advocate was contacted by a landlord to seek assistance for a tenant who was having trouble paying her heating bill. MC is a single mother of three. Her husband had died a little over a year ago and she was recently terminated from her employment. The CAP Client Advocate telephoned MC to see if there was anything CAP could help her with. MC made an appointment to meet with the client advocate to see what services might be available. MC completed a HEAP application as well as a Weatherization application. MC received a HEAP benefit and her home has received Weatherization services. The attic of her home was insulated, the doors were weather stripped, energy efficient light bulbs were placed throughout the home and a low-flow shower head was installed.

The weatherization process at MC's house was just recently completed and will be presented to DHCR for approval, tagged as completed. A post completion energy audit will be conducted and, based on a formula provided by DHCR, a comparison of the pre and post energy audits will provide an estimate of the financial relief MC can expect as a result of a reduction in her energy usage.

MC has also participated in non-energy related CAP programming; such as free income tax return preparation.

**The winter of '06-'07 was weeks away and "Sally" did not know what to do.**

She is a single mom with a 9-year-old daughter and found herself with no heat or funds to repair the furnace.

She had been to Community Action in February to apply for health insurance for herself and her daughter. During the conversations with her Client Advocate, Sally learned of our weatherization program as well as our No Heat Program funded by DC DSS.

Initially CAA of DC and DSS collaborated to get her heating system up to speed. The system was inspected by one of our staff and deemed not repairable. After going through a bid process, a new furnace was installed. CAP monitored the installation of the furnace and tested the system for health and safety after the contractor completed the job.

In the meantime, our Weatherization Department fast tracked her approval for energy reduction services. Through this program, Sally had carbon dioxide detectors and smoke detectors installed. The installation of energy efficient light bulbs and a low flow showerhead reduced her base load electric bills and her water usage.

Community Action's Weatherization Program outfitted her home with three new energy efficient windows and five storm windows were installed. Her very drafty and broken back door was replaced. New ductwork and registers were installed. That winter Sally saved roughly \$815 in fuel costs and \$1,654

in her base load electric.

Because CAP of DC has partnerships with DSS, United Way, The Hudson Valley Food Bank, the NYS Department of Health and Big Brothers Big Sisters, Sally and her daughter now live in a save energy efficient home. Sally is using her savings to purchase food through our food co-op thus reducing her dependency on emergency food.

**On a rainy day in October 2006, John rode his bicycle to Community Action Partnership after being referred there by his DSS worker.** He needed a portable heater and help with replacing his furnace.

John's furnace was replaced in November 2006 through a partnership with DSS and Community Action Partnership of Dutchess County's Home Improvement and Energy Conservation Department. An energy audit was also done and weatherization of the home was completed.

Through the program, John's home was equipped with CO2 and smoke detectors. Energy efficient light bulbs and a low flow showerhead were also installed. In addition, John was provided with a new front and rear door, storm windows, new floor registers and duct work and a new refrigerator. Caulking was also done around all the windows and doors.

John reduced his energy consumption by over 30 percent and this new found savings has allowed him to more comfortably pay other household bills.



# All Agency Retreat 9.26.06

The department's second all agency retreat was held on September 26, 2006 at the Poughkeepsie Grand Hotel. A volunteer committee of 16 staff dedicated many hours of attention and work to the planning of this day which contributed to making the day a success.



**Anne Bryan Smollin C.S.J., Ph.D.**, who is an international lecturer on wellness and spirituality,

was our guest speaker. Finding humor in our everyday moments was the prevailing theme that resulted in much laughter for the staff who attended.

**Dr. Smollin** showed us that while difficulty, stress, and sorrow will always be a part of life, a positive attitude and a healthy dose of good humor will help us live each moment, both good and bad, more fully.

The retreat started with **County Executive Steinhaus** welcoming all of us and thanking us for the good work we do. **Commissioner Allers** outlined the current status of the department changes as well as the future goals for all units within the agency. The Power Point presentation **Commissioner Allers** pre-

sented displayed pictures of staff in each division and reported the current status of each one. This gave all the staff insight into each division within the department which helped understand the agency in a more global view and how their division has impact upon all divisions within the agency.

This retreat was a great success and it is our hope humor in the workplace will continue to remain a theme within our agency. The committee members who contributed to the success are: **Valencia Bailey, Jacky Cooper, Pat Daby, Pat Donovan, Christine Nastasi-Hlavaty, Christine Kimble, Lisette Mason, Suzan Mohamed-Zahzam, Ann Novicki, Marc Piraino, Donald Roy, Lisa Simpson, Joanne Sinagra, Barbara Swanson, Brenda Urbanski, and Lorelle Wuerz.**



## Highlights of the Year

**F**ood Stamp Program – received a federal Food Stamp Program High Performance Bonus Award in 2006. Only districts which exceed the statewide payment accuracy rate received an allocation of these federal funds. Dutchess County was one of 27 local social service districts to receive a bonus which was awarded based on New York State having the second highest improvement rate nationally in its Food Stamp Quality Control Negative Case Error Rate for FFY 2004. Dutchess County's allocation was \$55,236.

### EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AT DSS

The year 2006 was an important one for the participants in our Adelphi University MSW Program. This program, funded by the Social Work Education Consortium, The Amy Watkins Caseworker Education Program (formerly known as the Green Money), and local Dutchess County money allows employees in our Children's Services Division to work toward their MSW Degree at the Hudson Valley Campus of Adelphi University. The tuition fees are paid using the aforementioned funds, while university fees, student association fees, social work liability insurance, and books are paid for by the student. Nine employees are enrolled in the program.



This year four students, **Colleen Mahoney, Joan Howley, Freya Bomba, and Karen Genas** became our inaugural class of graduates.

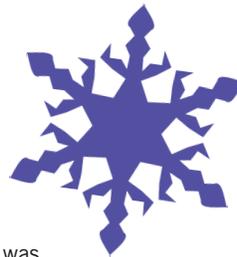
Graduation services were held at Adelphi's Hudson Valley Campus in Poughkeepsie. A graduation party was also held at DSS in conjunction with our annual celebration and graduation for our employees who participate in our education program with Dutchess Community College.

The goal of our educational programs is

the professionalization of our workforce. New students/employees are accepted into these programs on a yearly basis. We average about 40 participants, which means that over 12 percent of our staff is receiving financial support from DSS toward their educational advancement.

### EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION DAY

On Tuesday, December 12, 2006, management staff sponsored the 24th Annual Employee Appreciation Day.



"A Winter Frolic" was this year's theme. Each unit was asked to design a snowflake to be judged on Originality and Best Design. The Special Investigations Unit and Accounting Division won the awards respectively.

In conjunction with our invitation, which asked staff to "Help us, Help Others Prepare for the Upcoming Winter Season," employees were asked to bring a non-perishable food item for the Elizabeth Karlson Food Pantry or a pair of mittens or hat for our Mitten Tree.

Employees competed for prizes in various winter themed games such as ice fishing, snowball toss, and Frosty's missing buttons. All employees received a "DSS ice scrapper," and were treated to snow cones, home-made cookies, hot chocolate and soda.

### CHILDREN SERVICES EVENTS

**Foster Parent Brunch:** Child Welfare staff "tipped their hats" to foster and adoptive parents at the annual Foster Parent Brunch in the spring of 2006. This annual event is a special time to say "Thank You" to our foster parents and to let them know how much we appreciate them. Our theme for this year's brunch was "Hats Off to Foster Parents."

**Foster/Adoptive Family Picnic:** This annual

event, eagerly anticipated by foster and adoptive parents and especially the children, was held on August



17, 2006 at Bowdoin Park. In addition to the usual games, crafts, and temporary tattoos, children and their families were treated to a demonstration by the Sheriff's office and two trained "officer dogs," music with **Shannon Early**, ventriloquist **Steve Charney** and his sidekick **Harry** and **Marlene Woodason's** face painting artistry. New Hackensack Fire District brought their emergency trucks and equipment for the children to explore as they learned fire safety information. All enjoyed the incredible food, prepared by DSS administration and staff, as well as foster parent, **Elisa Perez'** now-famous pulled pork and rice and foster parent, **Alicia Gonzalez'** rice and beans.

**Heart Gallery:** During 2006, Dutchess County Department of Social Services collaborated with five neighboring mid-Hudson counties to produce the second annual Heart Gallery of the Mid-Hudson, a traveling portrait exhibit to raise awareness about adoption and children who are waiting for their "forever homes." Special thanks are extended to four local photographers who donated their time and talents and photographs for this year's gallery: **Myles** and **Sandra Pinkney** of Myles Studio, Poughkeepsie; **Theresa Terilli** of Photographic Images, Lagrangeville; **Maureen Gates** of Sharp Images Photographic Co., Rhinebeck; and **Eli Sloves**, Eli Sloves Photographers, Hopewell Junction. We also appreciate the support of the Poughkeepsie Galleria, who hosted this event for us in Center Court for the second year.

**Adoption Dinner:** On November 15, 2006, Dutchess County Department of Social Services held a dinner to celebrate the 40 adoptions that took place during the year.



The dinner was held in the second floor lounge in the department. The event was well attended and all were treated to a catered meal from the **Café Primavera**.

Dutchess County **Family Court Judge Amodio** and **Betsy Brockway**, Director of the Health and Human Services Cabinet were guest speakers. Presentations to adoptive parents and their children adopted during 2006 were made by Commissioner **Robert B. Allers**.

**Season's Reading Holiday Book Drive:** For the third time in as many years, **Barnes and Noble Bookstore** in Poughkeepsie selected DSS' children in foster care as the recipient of the store's Season's Readings Holiday Book Drive. Thanks to the generosity of Barnes and Noble and their customers, every child in care received the gift of a new book. DSS appreciates the opportunity to partner with **Barnes and Noble** and our community as together we support children in care.

**Stanfordville Christmas Party:** Children in foster care and their foster families in the Stanfordville area were treated to a joyful Christmas party by the **Stanfordville Grange**. The families enjoyed a great dinner, Christmas singing and games, and a visit by Santa himself as well as his favorite elf! Each child was presented with a specially-chosen Christmas gift. DSS appreciates the support the Stanfordville Grange offers to children in foster care and their foster families.

**Mitten Christmas Tree:** The fun and festivities of the 2006 holiday season included a special Holiday Tree in Children's Services. What made this so special were all the donated hats, mittens, gloves, and scarves donated by employees for the children in foster care. Adding an extra measure of joy were the many beautiful mittens, scarves, and hats made for the children by two different crafters, **Candis Stickle** and **Mary Lou Donohue**.

**Foster/Adoptive Family Lending Library:** A long-awaited dream became a reality in 2006 with the creation of the Foster/Adoptive Family Lending Library. More than 150 book titles for children and for parents are now available on such topics as parenting children with special needs;

attachment; child development; adoption; behavior management; multicultural diversity; handling emotions and loss; foster care; and social skills.

The library has been received with high regard from our own foster and adoptive families as well as service providers in outside agencies. As an added bonus, all certified foster families were presented with a highly-acclaimed book for their own library: Gregory Keck and Regina Kupecky's book, *Parenting the Hurt Child*.

#### **THE ELIZABETH ANN KARLSON FOOD BANK**

During 2006, we provided food to a larger number of families than in 2005. Although Adult Protective Services (APS) and Children's Services are the food bank's target group, we had more requests from other units. The Special Investigation's Unit specifically used the food bank more. They go out to a client's house and can really assess if there is a need.

In 2006, we distributed: 1,200 pounds of chicken; 200 pounds of chopped meat; 400 pounds of hot dogs; 400 cans of beans; 400 cans of soup; 400 cans of vegetables; 500 boxes of pasta; 300 jars of pasta sauce; 200 grilled cheese sandwiches; and, 200 macaroni dinners.

In 2006 I received more help than in previous years. APS staff has been great supporters of this program. Several individuals wishing to remain anonymous have helped so much.

The one thing that makes all of us involved in this program happy is the fact that we have always had enough food to meet every request.

This year we started preparing meals to go.

*Continued on page 38...*

## **STAFF HONORED FOR SERVICE**

**Awards for Service were presented by Commissioner Allers, at the May 26, 2006 Employee Appreciation Day to:**

### **Employee Years of Service**

#### **35 Years**

Mary Lee Flintosh

#### **30 Years**

Donna Daughton  
Cathy Connis  
Marc Piraino  
Michael Soltish  
Patricia Deal  
Gwen Starstrom

#### **25 Years**

Janice Arico  
Theodora Webster  
Elsa Fernandez  
Susan Prince  
Jacalyn Kahn  
Elizabeth Kelly  
Patricia Daby

#### **20 Years**

Victoria Cruz  
Francis Traver  
Lisa Simpson  
Colette Scotti  
Robin West  
Joanne Sinagra  
Ann Marie Piccone  
Bettina Dublin

#### **15 Years**

Bonita McManus  
Anna May Duncan  
Laurie Holland

Christopher Corman  
Elizabeth Elmendorf  
Nancy Rappa  
Celeste Ferguson  
Lourdes Montanez  
Wendy Baur

#### **10 Years**

Christina Perkins  
Daisy Thompson  
Barbara Ingram-Alfred  
Alethea Owens  
Lisa Goering  
Donna Brod  
Linda Tuttle  
Richard Fahey  
Christopher Logan  
Joan Howley  
James O'Connor

#### **5 Years**

Michele Olmo  
Linda Chesley  
Karen Leonard  
Sandra Favata  
Karin Ruparella  
Queen Murray  
Verna Neidam  
Patricia Vogt  
Lissette Mason  
Barbara McPartland  
Jerri Brink  
June Weldon  
Anna Brady  
Valencia Bailey



## Employee Generosity

**D**uring 2006 the employees of the Department of Social Services extended their support and generosity to various organizations on the local, state, and national level.

**The DSS Legal Unit** expanded their charitable contributions in 2006. In addition to their annual contribution to Heifer International for the purchase of livestock for needy families around the world, they also sent a \$250 donation to the Smile Train. This organization, whose motto is “Changing the World One Smile At A time” has its headquarters in New York City. They perform free cleft lip or palate surgery on children in 64 developing nations around the world. To date, they have provided this service to more than 211,000 children. To find out more information or to make a donation to “The Smile Train,” you can visit their website at [www.smiletrain.org](http://www.smiletrain.org).

**Adult & Family Services** employee **Barbara Ingram** coordinated the distribution of Salvation Army “Angel Tags” at Christmas time. Because of the generosity of DSS staff, 107 children received Christmas gifts.

**March of Dimes Walk.** **Robin West, Kathleen Cole, Amanda Tatko, Michael Ponder, Gweneth Hobson,** and **Jessie Normil** walked together to raise money for the March of Dimes. They raised \$480.

**Literacy Connections Spelling Bee.** **Lisa Simpson** saw an article in the *Poughkeepsie Journal* in January 2006 for the Literacy Connections Spelling Bee. Literacy Connections had been working with one of our PSA (Protective Services for Adults) clients for ten years and had helped to measurably improve the quality of this client’s life by teaching her to read with a volunteer tutor. **Lisa** asked if PSA could send a team of two spellers to help raise money for this organization. **Lisa** believed this could be an excellent way of giving back to the community and showing Department of Social Services’ workers helping others outside of their jobs.

**Barbara Ingram** agreed to team up with Lisa Simpson. As of February 2006, **Barbara** and **Lisa** had solicited \$5 from 55 separate sponsors to earn the \$275 sponsorship fee to enter the spelling bee. **Barbara** and **Lisa** spent many of their lunch hours practicing their lists of difficult words to spell, in preparation for the spelling bee.

**Barbara** and **Lisa** attended the 14th Annual Literacy Connections Spelling Bee at Marist College on March 14th. They were one of

**“To find out more information  
or to make a donation to  
‘The Smile Train’ you can visit their  
website at [www.smiletrain.org](http://www.smiletrain.org).”**

48 spelling teams, raising money for literacy programs, educational materials, and training of volunteer tutors at Literacy Connections. **Barbara** and **Lisa** managed to spell eight out of their ten words correctly, but did not reach the final round. There were three high school teams in the final round, and two teams were tied as co-champions.

**Barbara** and **Lisa** did not win the spelling bee, but they did receive the Best Teamwork Award and two medals, which are displayed in the Adult Services Unit. Apparently DSS – Adult Services was the first team ever to sponsor themselves; a tradition they plan to continue.

**Theresa Giovannello, Deputy Commissioner and Ted Starzyk, from the Staff Development/Personnel Unit,** were co-chairs of the Dutchess County government’s efforts in the **United Way Campaign**. Ted also chaired the DSS Campaign, which contributed \$13,710 towards the Dutchess County Government’s goal of \$105,000.

**Medicaid Unit** adopted three families over the holiday season. The staff raised over \$1,000 through a series of bake sales and raffles. This year’s families had mostly teenage children so although some toys were purchased; most of the money was used for clothing. **Jamie Williams** reports that the entire unit worked on the project and pooled sale coupons to ensure that the money was stretched as far as possible.

**The Child Support Unit** volunteered its time and money by: having a hat and mitten tree for Grace Smith House, saving \$220 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.

**Jackie Tortora (CIS) and Janice Arico (Special Investigations Unit)** continued the agency’s dedication to the Toys for Tots Campaign and co-chaired the DSS efforts in 2006. They collected seven extra large boxes of toys to help make the holidays better for some area children.



## Commissioner's Office



The Commissioner's Office includes the Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner for Services, Deputy Commissioner for Financial and Supportive Services, Administrative Assistant to the Commissioner, Assistant to the Commission for Program Planning and Evaluation, Fair Hearing Specialist, 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



### FAIR HEARINGS



Fair Hearings can be requested on a denial, discontinuance or reduction of benefits or services, on matters of State policy, employa-

bility 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 HEARING 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.

### PERSONNEL & STAFF DEVELOPMENT



Personnel and Staff Development includes 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 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 appli-

*Continued on page 14...*

## FAIR HEARING ACTIVITY

	2005	2006
Fair Hearings Scheduled	604	675
Administrative Disqualification Hearings	10	18
Appellant Defaults	137	181
Appellant Withdrawals	94	68
Cases Resolved at or Before Hearing	16	50
Agency Decisions Upheld	174	179
Agency Decisions Reversed	32	33
Inter-jurisdictional Hearings	3	3

## CONTRACT ACTIVITY 2006

Assisted Living / Adult Foster Care Services	7
Day Care	18
Detention/Foster Care Institutions	40
Domestic Violence Services	4
Employment Services	11
Nutrition Education/HEAP	3
Genetic Testing	2
Homeless Prevention	3
Interpreter Services	2
Legal Services	1
Medical Exams/Services	3
Memoranda of Agreement	74
Personal Care Related Services/Respite	17
Other Inter-Agency Service Agreements	7
Preventive Services/TASA	20
Resource Parents	131
Service Agreements	10
Totals	353



## Commissioner's Office

...Continued from page 13

cations for retirement as well as makes referrals to the County's Risk Management Office for disability benefits, leaves of absence, Family Medical Leave Act 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.
- Coordinates the completion of the Department of Social Services Annual Report.
- Completes state and local surveys, plans and needs assessments related to staffing and training.
- Coordinates the Employee Development & Education Program with Dutchess Community College and Adelphi University.

## Commissioner's Office Accomplishments for 2006

- \* 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.
- \* One of the pilot counties to contract for "VerifyNY," an anti-Medicaid fraud initiative.
- \* Developed plans for the use of over \$9,698,129 in Flexible Funding for Families (FFFS) awarded by New York State.
- \* Initiated a printing of forms by copier vs. printers.
- \* Increased funding for Hudson River Housing for homeless. This assured beds for all homeless persons in the winter of 2006.
- \* 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.
- \* Served as chairperson of the Children's Services Council Integrated County Planning Workgroup.
- \* Won 92 percent of fair hearings held.
- \* Guest speaker for Community Family Development's 35th Anniversary celebration.
- \* Hosted 2006 Heart Gallery – a showcase for children awaiting adoption.
- \* Increased emergency beds at Children's Home of Poughkeepsie to 12.
- \* Shaken Baby Awareness billboards placed throughout Dutchess County displaying three different slogans.
- \* Received "Best of New York" award for Commissioners' Dashboard
- \* Served on the New York State Staff Development Advisory Council and on the Temporary Assistance, and Membership Sub-Committees of the Council.
- \* Served on the Staff Development Institute Planning Committee for the 2006 Institute in Lake Placid, NY.
- \* Conducted 63 new employment interviews.
- \* Hired 45 new employees.
- \* Coordinated and processed 20 promotions, eight lateral transfers and 25 leaves of absences and 36 separations from county service.
- \* Coordinated the Dutchess Community College Project through which 22 employees took courses and worked towards a degree in an approved area.
- \* Coordinated the Adelphi University MSW Program through which eight Children Services' 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. Four DSS employees, who were funded through this program, graduated with their MSW Degree from Adelphi University.
- \* Coordinated the annual Employee Appreciation Day celebration and served as the Chair of the Employee of the Month committee.
- \* The Resource Consultant collected/assigned proceeds of \$1,260,284.
- \* The fraud section collected funds and/or received Confessions of Judgments in the amount of \$452,232.
- \* The FEDS section achieved a gross cost avoidance of \$9,659,988. Of this amount \$5,298,948 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 coordina-

tion 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 implements 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 personal computers, servers and systems including the Local Area Network.



- Develops and maintains local applications.
- Provides local PC Help Desk support.
- Serves as liaison with the State, and trains workers for State PC-based systems like CONNECTIONS in Children's Services and the Electronic Eligibility Decision Support System in Medicaid.
- Does website development and administration and network integration with New York State services.

### PURCHASING, FLEET CONTROL, REVENUE

- Purchases supplies and equipment, orders State and local forms, and maintains the stock room. Maintains the petty cash



**“Computer Information Services Installs, maintains and administers personal computers, servers and systems including the Local Area Network.”**

account and pays all administrative bills.

- Coordinates the purchase and maintenance of a fleet of 43 cars and vans with the County Auto Center.
- Reconciles monthly State and Federal revenues and reports the income to the County Finance Department.
- Serves as the liaison with the Public Works Department for repairs, maintenance and cleaning of the building.

### RECEPTION

- Screens 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.



## Welfare Management Systems Accomplishments for 2006

- ★ Completion of a two-year project to connect the state network to the county's Wide Area Network (WAN). This enabled DSS access to Dutchess County's Intranet, the Financial Management System, and the Record Management System. OFA – HEAP Benefit Calculator, DOL Status Tracking and DSS staff to access their files as if they were working at their desks, Mental Hygiene staff at DSS to access data at Mental Hygiene via the network rather than dial-up, which in turn enabled them access to the HSEN (e-mail, backups, shared directories, etc.).
- ★ Added a new application server to house all the new applications we would be installing this year as noted below.
- ★ A new print server was also added to the network. This server supports Planet Watch, which in turn runs our WMS Print Solution complete with imaging.
- ★ The WMS Processor Consolidation Project allowed us to go from seven WMS processors to one. This processor was moved from the second floor to the fourth floor server room where the climate is more closely managed. Additionally the old wiring was re-run to correlate with industry standards.
- ★ WMS Print Solution – This project captures the print streams coming from the state mainframe and re-directs the data to more efficient and dependable copy centers. Previously these print streams were printed on aged dot matrix printers which were very inefficient and unreliable, diminishing worker productivity. Additionally these were printed on pre-printed forms. Whenever the form changed, new forms had to be ordered and existing forms disposed of.
- ★ The data is now merged with an electronic form maintained on our server.

Changes to the form are easily managed on the fly. Additionally, as the data and the form are merged, the data is also imaged at the time of print. This data is then used in an electronic case folder that workers can refer to for later use.

- ★ Kindertrack – This system will assist the Day Care Unit and Accounting in managing our ever growing day care population. This system has been installed and staff are awaiting training by Controltec, Inc.
- ★ Client Tracking – We are currently using this system to manage benefit cards. When a client reports that a benefit card is not working, it is entered into the system where progress of the issue can be tracked by staff involved in the case. Staff can view where in the process the problem is to its resolution including whether the card was picked up by the client or mailed. It also allows staff to see clients who habitually have problems with benefit cards. We hope to expand the use of this system to track other issues in the coming year. Additionally this system enhances reception handling of clients with a numbering system in an effort to respect client confidentiality.
- ★ General Client Inquiry – This system allows staff to view WMS information in an organized manner along with imaged documents pertaining to the case. It also has the capability to enter case notes and view activities created in the Client Tracking System. Staff are especially excited with how budget information is displayed.
- ★ Employee Lookup – Allows staff the capability to look up personnel demographic information (i.e. phone number, unit).

- ★ Help Desk Tickets – This system is used as an enhancement to the mobile Help Desk phone, allowing staff to see new issues and their status.
- ★ Imaging – Wrote a program to move image files made by the new Planet Press 3209 printing system into a folder structure compatible with the new GCI system. The program auto-runs daily to relocate all 3209 files accumulated since the last run. Files are then visible with the GCI system to see actual images of 3209's that were created.
- ★ QuickBooks – Accounting uses this software to record our Immediate Issue checks. It helps us keep tabs on the balance in the checking account on a daily basis. It makes



reconciling the account a lot easier and accurate. We are also able to tell faster if a check has been cashed. Additionally they are starting to use Quickbooks with our Collection Account. They are using it to reconcile the account.

*Continued on page 17...*



...Continued from page 16

★ State Software – eMedNY – printing enhancements had to be installed on all Medicaid, Accounting, Managed Care, Special Investigations, and Temporary Assistance computers. Considerable changes were made by the state this year pushing more and more responsibility for maintaining security to state systems to local districts.

★ Data Warehouse – A significant amount of time was spent this year mining the Medicaid data warehouse for fraud. Additionally we received a large number of requests to look at specific doctors and vendors from American Quality Review (AQR). We continue to receive requests for information from the SOS, WRTS and OCFS data warehouses in addition to our published reports on our site.

★ WMS Training/Quality Control

■ Client Identification Number (CIN) Duplication Initiative.

- CIN unduplication was placed on the forefront of projects in WMS. All social welfare workers in Temporary Assistance and Food Stamps were given a brief overview of CIN issuance and the problem caused by duplicating CINS. As we all know, the ever important Medicaid coverage is associated with CINS and in this day and age of Managed Care and the cost of such benefits, it is extremely important that all levels of workers avoid duplicating CINS. As of December 15, there have been 250 CINS “unduplicated” and all benefits have been converted to the CIN maintained by the agency.

★ BICS

- Printed and distributed approximately 68,000 authorizations, 8,000 vouchers and 17,640 checks.
- Designed and wrote a program to revamp

the entire BICS process. Features include:

- Printing of any BICS file to any printer in the building.
- Converting any BICS file to a PDF for paperless use.
- Make backups of ALL files sent from Albany:
  - Allows simple access to any report, even months later.
  - Archive in Albany was only two weeks long and required a request via a phone call.
  - Now data can be kept for years on compact disc and is online in seconds when needed.
- Prepares billing statements:
  - Old billing system used OCIS, but they eliminated their ability to help.
  - Our 4,000 bills could not go out at all without BICS Tool.
  - Helps BICS Operator manage the daily operation, minimizes errors and mishandled reports.
  - Allows administration staff to monitor BICS operation from their office.
  - Allows management of BICS files from any computer.
  - Tool logs all file creation activity for debugging of missing files.
  - Automatically makes separate PDF files for Adjudicated Claims Reports, which are for many people in one file.
- The program is presently used by three other counties.
- This overall capability has completely eliminated a backup printer in the BICS room.

■ No longer use green-bar paper (used approximately eight boxes a month).

■ Main BICS printer is now only needed for 3209/2970 voucher forms and checks.

★ MISCELLANEOUS

- Member of the State Imaging Electronic Document Repository (IEDR) Workgroup.
- Member of the state-wide Welfare Management System Workgroup.
- Member of the Medicaid Data Warehouse User’s Group.
- Presented the WMS Print Solution at the Region 5 User’s Group and the LAN Administrator’s Conference.

**“ A significant amount of time was spent this year mining the Medicaid data warehouse for fraud. Additionally we received a large number of requests to look at specific doctors and vendors from American Quality Review (AQR). We continue to receive requests for information from the SOS, WRTS and OCFS data warehouses in addition to our published reports on our site.”**





**SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS UNIT**



**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:**

- 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.
- Makes collateral contacts, performs computer reporting systems checks and makes field visits to assist workers in determining eligibility.

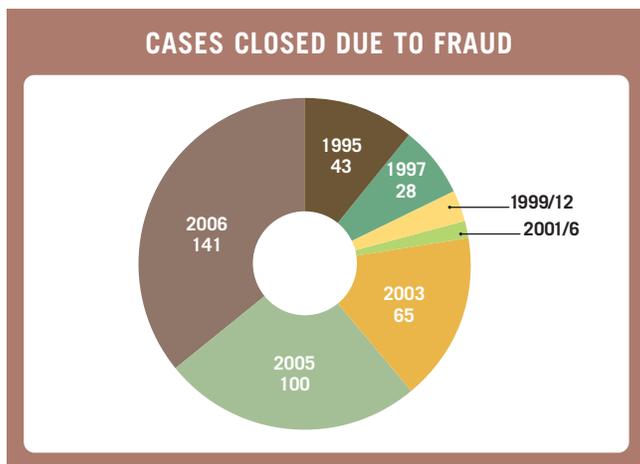
- Conducts fraud investigations on all cases referred by staff, and reports from the public, of recipients fraudulently receiving benefits. The investigation may include field visits, obtaining collateral verification, reviewing computerized records, and interviews to determine if fraud was committed.
- Investigates any instance of fraud identified through the Automated Finger Imaging System (AFIS), which utilizes the latest technology to establish positive identification on adults seeking assistance. The system captures demographic data, client photo, and electronic finger images of the left and right index fingers. It is the largest and most sophisticated of any Social Services Finger-Imaging System in the nation and serves as a model for other states.

- Refers appropriate cases to the District Attorney or for prosecution or disqualification.
- Reviews the results of computer file matches done by New York State including:
  - ◆ An interstate match of individuals receiving assistance in the five contiguous states as well as Florida, Virginia, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia to ensure that recipients

are not receiving assistance in two or more jurisdictions,

- SSI matches to identify cases that may no longer reside in 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.

*Continued on page 19...*



	2005	2006
Lottery Intercepts	\$35,198	\$27,565
Food Stamp Tax Intercepts (Court Injunction)	\$0	\$61,780
Fees (parking, guardian, adoption home study, phone, postage, Confessions of Judgment, copies, subpoenas)	\$24,910	\$20,165
Cash collections (TANF, SN, MA, Services, FS, SN-SSI Repayments)	\$3,618,545	\$2,745,314
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,876,653</b>	<b>\$2,854,824</b>



**SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS UNIT** ...Continued from page 18

- 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.

**WELFARE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM UNIT**

- Performs entry of data from an application or authorization into the State Welfare Management System.
- 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.

**NUMBER OF BURIALS**

2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
108	123	117	109	110	106

**SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS UNIT ACTIVITY**

	2005	2006
Completed Investigations	7780	535
Confessions of Judgment	262	197
Number of Repayment Agreements Signed	62	54
Value of Repayment Agreements Signed	\$69,101	\$123,941
Food Stamp Disqualifications	10	14
Value of Food Stamp Disqualifications	\$4,187	\$10,395
Public Assistance Disqualification	11	16
Value of Public Assistance Disqualifications	\$3,283	\$2,730
Medicaid Fraud	\$414,894	\$262,947
Fraud Cases Referred for Prosecution	10	4
Convictions Obtained	7	3

**RESOURCE AND RECOVERY UNIT ACTIVITY**

	2005	2006
Bank & Estate Recoveries from Deceased Clients	\$10,892	\$4,583
Medicaid Property Liens & Mortgages	\$301,991	\$40,576
Claims Against Estates	\$357,279	\$221,292
Lawsuit Settlements	\$472,729	\$1,269,509
Life Insurance Assignments	\$0	\$0
Public Assistance Mortgages	\$52,356	\$52,491
Safety Net Repayments from SSI	\$337,994	\$417,055
Medicaid Reimbursement	\$57,481	\$80,138
Nursing Home Personal Accounts & Other Recoveries	\$84,85	\$77,380
Income Executions	\$92,840	\$69,182
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,768,421</b>	<b>\$2,232,206</b>

**FUNDS RECOVERED BY TYPE**

	2005	2006
Affidavits & Article 13	\$4,583	\$8,085
Proceeds & Mortgages	\$40,576	\$60,718
Claims Against Estates	\$221,292	\$41,570
Lawsuit Settlements	\$1,269,509	\$380,038
Life Insurance	\$0	\$0
Mortgages	\$52,491	\$28,209
SSI Repay & Volunteer	\$417,055	\$306,859
MA Reimbursement	\$80,138	\$262,948
Personal Accounts & Others	\$77,380	\$90,954
Income Executions	\$69,182	\$80,904
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$2,232,206</b>	<b>\$1,260,285</b>



## 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 neces-

sary including assisting clients in obtaining orders of protection, securing admission to a psychiatric facility or Developmental Center or having the DSS become protective payee of the clients' funds.

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

### 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.

### TEMPORARY SHELTER HOUSING

Year	Number of Persons
1994	725
1995	540
1996	559
1997	561
1998	567
1999	453
2000	549
2001	566
2002	746
2003	791
2004	774
2005	672
2006	637



### ADULT SERVICES

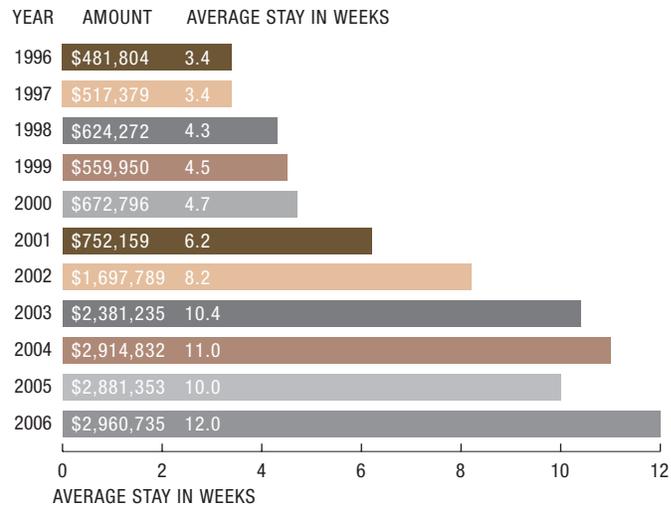
Adult Services	2005	2006
Adult Services Cases Open at End of Year	342	350
Temporary Housing Placements	355	331
Families	147	146
Singles	208	185
Domestic Violence Screenings	116	120
Temporary Shelter Stays in Weeks	11.0	12
Temporary Shelter Expenditures	\$2,877,692	\$2,960,735
Number of Persons Placed	672	637





## Adult Services Accomplishments for 2006

### TEMPORARY SHELTER EXPENDITURES



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

## 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 services rules and regulations.
- 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.

- 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 four 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 \$97,00 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 \$1,304,375 to the Grace Smith

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 provide funds for a staff member at the Probation Department's Victims Services Unit to ensure that victims in the criminal justice process have representation.

- Continued a case review team in order to allow staff to discuss difficult cases.
- Dedicated a worker to educating the public about protective services for adults.
- 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 142 individuals.



## Children's Services

### CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES

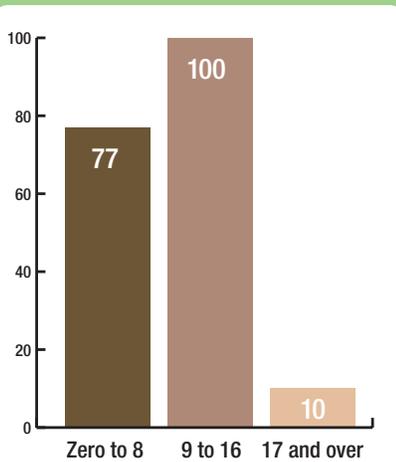


- Investigates allegations of abuse and/or neglect of children under 18 years of age. Case managers are available seven days a week, 24 hours per

day to investigate reports received through the State Central Register for Child Abuse and Maltreatment (1-800-342-3720).

- Assesses safety of and risk 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.

#### CHILDREN IN SEXUAL ABUSE ALLEGATIONS BY AGE



- 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 Center for the Prevention of Child Abuse offices in Poughkeepsie.
- Contracts with the Center for the Prevention of Child Abuse 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.
- 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 disabili-

ties, medical care, counseling, day care and other needs.

- Provides transportation assistance, day care and homemaking 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 Abbott 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.



Dear Jackie,

A small note to show our gratitude for service above and beyond the call of duty.

You made a potentially bad situation into somewhat a positive and pleasant one. You treated us like people, not just another case number.

Thank you for your support in court, also with your help with day care and social services. Keep up the great work.

Thanks again for your time and consideration.

JH



# Thank You!

- 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.

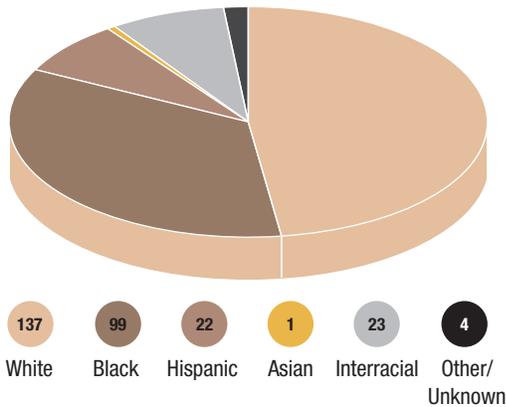
- Contracts with the Poughkeepsie Children's Home to provide a 16 bed emergency foster care placement cottage which includes diagnostic evaluations when children need them.

## FOSTER CARE

This unit:

- Directly supervises children in foster family homes and provides case management to children placed in childcare facilities such as residential treatment or group homes.

## CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE BY ETHNICITY



\*From CCRS Monthly Summary Characteristics Report for 12/31/06

## CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE BY AGE

Under 2	.30
2-5 years	.58
6-9 years	.51
10-13 years	.44
14-17 years	.91
Over 17	.15

\* From CCRS Monthly Summary Characteristics Report for 12/31/06

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.

There are currently 103 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's Services

### 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.

**C**hildren 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 interests 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 chil-



dren in their homes and many foster parents become adoptive parents. Others provide temporary care until children are discharged to more permanent living situations.

### 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 in 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 emergency basis directly from court.

### PREVENTIVE/FOSTER CARE/ADOPTION SUMMARY\*

	2005	2006
Children Discharged to Adoption . . . . .	.42	.40
Children in Care with Goal of Adoption at Year End . . . . .	.87	.68

\*From CCRS Monthly Summary . . Characteristics Report for 12/31/06

### JUVENILE PLACEMENTS WITH SOCIAL SERVICES\*

	2005	2006
Persons in Need of Supervision (PINS) . . . . .	.17	.19
Juvenile Delinquents . . . . .	.36	.25

\*From Intake Log

### CPS CASE SUMMARY\*

	2005	2006
Reports of Abuse and Neglect made to State Central Register . . . . .	.2304	.2643
Abuse Petitions Filed in Family Court . . . . .	.33	.50
Neglect Petitions . . . . .	.852	.734
Termination of parental rights . . . . .	.69	.42
Surrender Petitions Filed in Family Court . . . . .	.49	.44
Foster Care Placement Petitions Filed in Family Court . . . . .	.3	.4
Foster Care Review Petitions filed in Family Court . . . . .	.176	.*2
Sex Abuse Investigations . . . . .	.125	.154
Substantiated . . . . .	.20	.27
Indicated for Other Allegation . . . . .	.11	.N/A
Unfounded . . . . .	.3	.132

\* Foster Care Review Petitions are no longer filed as abuse/neglect cases.



# Children's Services Accomplishments for 2006

- Children's Services staff continues to offer the Strengthening Families Program. This is a group experience for parents and children to improve communication and family dynamics, and teach teens and pre-teens to make good choices. Sessions were offered in spring and fall of 2006, and have been well received by attendees. Sessions will continue in the spring of 2007. Twenty one parents and 39 children participated in the program in 2006.
- In collaboration with the Department of Mental Hygiene and Astor High Risk Services program, five home based crisis intervention waiver slots continue to be 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.
- A new family visitation program for infants in foster care began in January 2006. This program offers an opportunity for additional visitation for families. Ten families participated in this program in 2006.
- The second Heart Gallery was successfully implemented in October 2006. 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 exclusive showing photographs of children available for adoption. Dutchess County children participated in this exhibit.
- Dutchess County adoption staff members received awards from the NYS Office of Children and Family Services in recognition of 40 adoptions completed this year through December 12, 2006. This unit also processed 36 private adoption home studies.

- Dutchess County received monetary allocation from OCFS to implement programs to prevent the need for non-secure detention. This money will be used to fund col-

CHILDREN IN CARE*		TYPES OF PLACEMENT	
	2005	2006	
Foster Homes . . .	100	109	
Institutions . . . .	99	102	
Group Homes . . . .	16	12	
Agency Operated Boarding Homes . .	11	10	
Adoptive Homes . .	36	26	
Approved Relative Foster Homes . . .	21	26	
Other . . . . .	4	2	
Total . . . . .	287	287	

\*From CCRS Monthly Summary Characteristics Report for 12/31/06

laborative efforts between Children's Services and the Department of Probation for services to meet the needs of PINS and pre-PINS youth in Dutchess County.

- Children's Services staff members are participating in a higher education program leading to the Master's in Social Work Degree at Adelphi University. Eight staff members are currently enrolled in this program.
- The statewide CONNECTIONS computer system, a computerized case recording system for all Children's Services cases, continues to be utilized and expanded. Children's Services is gearing up to implement a new build to this system in March

2007 regarding documentation of health and educational information for foster care and preventive services.

- Child Protective Services investigated 2,643 reports of suspected child abuse or maltreatment. On December 31, 2006 there were 289 children in foster care, and 26 were receiving after-care services.
- The annual foster parent recognition day awards went to foster families who provided emergency care to children. Our annual foster parent picnic was held in August and was a success, with a variety of activities and foods offered. In November, we celebrated National Adoption month by having a dinner to honor this years adoptive families, which was attended by adoptive parents, children, social services, and family court staff members.
- Children's Services 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, Community Action Partnership of Dutchess County , Grace Smith House Domestic Violence Shelter, and the Hudson River Housing Riverhaven Shelter. Children's Services staff members continue to participate in a number of work groups in the community which address the needs of Dutchess County children and families including the Coordinated Children's Services Initiative (CCSI), Children's Provider's Committee, The Child Advocacy Center's Multi Disciplinary Team, Family Court Advisory Committee and sub-committees, and the Juvenile Justice Task Force.
- A District Attorney investigator for the multidisciplinary team at the Child Advocacy Center continues to be funded.
- Two Children's Services case managers continue to be part of the Dutchess County Family Treatment Court team,

*Continued on page 26...*



## Children's Services Accomplishments for 2006

...Continued from page 25

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 nine individuals and their families in 2006.

- Children's Services continues to participate in Dutchess County Family Court's permanency court, which offers thorough reviews of cases in an effort to achieve permanency for children more quickly. In the first 9 months of 2006, 284 permanency hearings occurred.
- A domestic violence liaison jointly supervised by Child Protective Services and Grace Smith House continues to be located in Children's Services. The liaison receives referrals from child protective, foster care and preventive caseworkers, attends case conferences and provides both direct services and consultation regarding domestic violence issues. In 2006, the liaison has handled referrals for consultation and/or provided direct services to approximately 215 families.
- Funding continues for both mandated preventive and community optional preventive services provided by the Probation Department and Youth Bureau. A respite services contract with Riverhaven continues to be utilized for youth involved with the Departments of Probation or Social Services.
- There continues to be an emphasis on staff and foster parent development and training in 2006, with numerous training opportunities being arranged and offered at the Department of Social Services. A sampling of the sessions provided includes bi-weekly, in-house training for case managers, training regarding community services available, car seat training, and computer training. The foster

parent liaison, home finding and child protective services staff members have made numerous community presentations regarding Children's Services.

- On-going support continues to be offered to Dutchess County foster parents:
  1. The foster parent liaison continues to distribute a newsletter to all foster parents approximately quarterly.
  2. Arranged for respite services for foster parents and made respite payments totaling \$8,467.
  3. Provided daycare payments for foster children whose foster parents are employed outside of their homes.
- 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 Community Action Partnership of Dutchess County.
- As always, recruitment efforts continue to locate, train and certify qualified foster parents for Dutchess County children. Foster home finding case managers and the foster parent liaison have attended many community functions to advocate for foster parenting including the Kids Expo, Kids First, and the Chamber of Commerce Showcase of Champions.
- Two ten-week MAPP foster parent and two Caring For Our Own relative foster parent training sessions have been completed to train 34 new foster parents and 15 new relative foster parents.
- Planning has started to co-locate Certified Alcohol Substance Abuse Counselors (CASAC's) in Children's

Services to assist in CPS investigations of and provision of services to families that are impacted by substance abuse issues. This program is a joint effort between Dutchess County's Department of Social Services and Mental Hygiene and is being funded by NYS OASAS and OCFS.

- Once again in 2006, Children's Services staff members collected hats, mittens and toys to donate to children in foster care. Staff members from other parts of the agency, foster parents, and other members of the community also generously donated both items and their time to this cause. Outside community agencies also "adopted" seven Children's Services families and provided Christmas gifts.
- Children's Services staff members implemented a foster child support group which has facilitated the creation of Life Books for children in foster care.
- Thirty-one children were returned to their parents following foster care placement.
- The Dutchess County Health Department has worked with Children's Services in a collaborative effort to provide public health nurse review of foster children's health records.
- Authorized adoption subsidy payments totaling \$3,510,261.
- Eighteen new foster homes were certified.
- Seven Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children (ICPC) home studies were completed.
- Twenty-seven children in foster care had a goal of Independent Living and were taught life skills such as budgeting, decoding classified ads, balancing checkbooks, stress reduction techniques and breathing exercises.

*Continued on page 27...*



## Children's Services

...Continued from page 26

- Authorized Independent Living stipends to youth totaling \$1,411 and paid out \$6,191.34 for Independent Living skills training.
- Three youth in foster care are in college and one is in vocational training.
- A total of 101 youth were placed in Non-secure Detention; including 70 youth who had juvenile delinquent charges and 31 youth who were PINS.
- Children's Services developed a lending library as a resource to foster and adoptive parents. Many useful informational books are available both for adults and children including topics such as adoption and parenting issues, children with special needs, and sexual abuse. This project has been very well received by foster and adoptive parents.
- 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:
  - **Children's Providers Committee**
  - **Children's Services Council**
  - **Coordinated Children's Services Initiative (CCSI)**
  - **Court Involved Youth Committee**
  - **Family Court Advisory Committee**
  - **Family Services Sex Offender Management Program**
  - **Integrated County Planning Committee**
  - **Juvenile Justice Task Force**
  - **Baby Safe Haven Work Group**

## Child Support Enforcement



**T**he 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 execu-

Continued on page 28...

### CHILD SUPPORT ACTIVITY\*

	2005	2006
Child Support Cases Open at End of Year	.11,166	...10,900
Children Open in Support Cases at End of Year	.12,319	...11,897
Children Open Born Out of Wedlock at End of Year	.6,318	...6,228
Children Open with Paternity Established at End of Year	.5,732	...5,721
Percentage of Children Open with Paternity Resolved	.90.7%	...91%
Children Needing Paternity Determination	.586	...455
Cases with Collections During Year	.5,195	...5,221
Interstate Cases with Collections During Year	.312	...291
Cases Open Where Medical Support is Ordered	.8,055	...7,693
Cases with Arrears Due During Year	.7,877	...7,702
Cases with Arrears Due Paying During Year	.3,263	...3,214

\* From NYS OCSE DSS-157 Report



## Child Support Enforcement

...Continued from page 27

### 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
2006	\$28,816,452

tions 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.

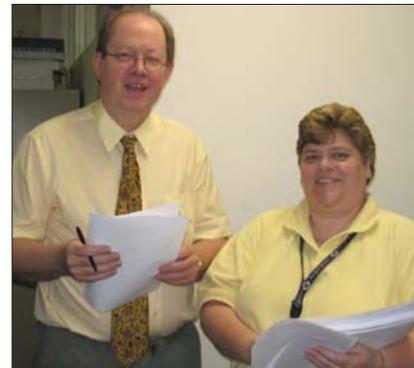
Arranges professional legal services through contracted private attorneys who charge \$90 per hour. Family, Medical and Safety Net minor recipients are not charged fees for legal representation.

## Child Support Accomplishments for 2006



- Continued to contract for genetic testing in Family Court. This enabled support orders to be obtained almost three to four weeks faster on 93 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 fourth official Fathers Day Parade in New York State. It was well attended by the fathers in Dutchess County and a huge success.
- Collected \$28,816,452 in child support from absent parents. This is an increase



of 4.27 percent over 2005. Of the total collected and distributed, \$25,426,881 was for the benefit of families who were not in receipt of Temporary Assistance.

- Prepared for the court 6,624 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 81 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 \$220 in loose change throughout the year and donating it to the Food Bank of the Hudson Valley
- Two child support workers serve on two different Astor Councils.

Ms. Allers:

I would like to take this time to extend my thanks to Ms. DeCarlo as my caseworker. Ms. DeCarlo always found the time to see me, speak to me over the phone, and even return my calls. No matter how big or small the problem, Ms. DeCarlo was always there to explain and even correct the situation. Ms. DeCarlo makes you feel like a person not just another case number. Having someone like her on your staff is definitely a plus.

Please be sure to extend my thanks to her for a job well done.

Sincerely, T.C.



**Thank You!**



## 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 pop-

## Food Stamp Accomplishments for 2006

- ulation and address food security, food safety, and dietary quality.
- Dutchess County received two Federal Food Stamp Program high Performance Bonus Awards during 2006.
- \$55,236 was awarded to Dutchess County as one of 27 districts in New York State for improvements in quality control.
- \$46,361 was awarded to Dutchess County as part of the award received by New York State for improvements in program access.
- The EAT SMART NEW YORK program continued in 2006 to have Nutrition Improvement Education staff available during Food Stamp recertification interviews at the Dutchess County Department of Social Services. Project activities addressed food security, food safety, and dietary quality. The program is provided through a contract with the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Dutchess County.
- 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.

- Continued 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 case-load increased to a total of 5,037 cases by year end.
- Continued to offer after-

hours recertification interviews for employed recipients as well as recertification interviews at an alternate site in Dover Plains.

- Provided Food Stamps Benefits valued at \$10,441,761 to over 5,600 households. This represents a .9 percent increase over 2005.
- Participated in the after hours recertification program, servicing employed individuals who are unable to take time off from work or school.

### FOOD STAMPS AS OF 1/1/06

1985	1,594
1990	1,521
1995	3,044
2000	2,651
2004	3,321
2005	4,607
2006	4,749

- 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. 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\*

	2005	2006
<b>Applications Registered</b>	3,631	3,972
<b>Cases Opened/Reactivated/</b>		
Open-Closed	3,681	4,442
Withdrawn	237	275
Denied	812	936
<b>Cases Closed</b>	3,592	4,083
<b>Recertifications</b>	3,370	3,758
Changes to Active/		
Closed Cases	11,328	12,817
Totals - All Case Activity	23,020	23,311

\* From WMS WST002



## 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 Community Action Partnership of Dutchess County for an emergency fuel depot, a heating equipment crisis program, and a weatherization referral and packaging program.

### HEAP ASSISTANCE CASE ACTIVITY

	2005	2006
Applications Registered	.998	.1,268
Cases Opened/ Reactivated/ Open-Closed	.612	.974
Withdrawn	.25	.35
Denied	.186	.409
Cases Closed	.771	.567
Recertifications	.0	.0
Changes to Active/ Closed Cases	.1,291	.1,623
Totals - All Case Activity	.2,885	.3,623

\* From WMS WST002

## HEAP Accomplishments for 2006



• 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 par-

ticipate 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](http://www.otda.state.ny.us).

- The Fuel Buyers Club, partially funded through a contract with the Community Action Partnership of Dutchess County, 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 Community Action Partnership of Dutchess County,

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 \$1,296,030 to 4,836 Dutchess County resident households during the 2005-2006 season.
- In the 2005-2006 season, 1,534 households received emergency benefits for heat or heat-related utilities valued at \$1,003,769.
- Paid \$104,709 for 35 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

	2005	2006
Child Abuse Petitions . . . . .	41	50
Child Neglect Petitions . . . . .	888	729
Termination of Parental Rights . . .67 . . . . .		75
Foster Care Place/Ext Petitions . . . . .	176	23
Surrender of Child Petitions . . .47 . . . . .		284*
IVD Paternity . . .404 . . . . .		244
IVD Support . . .4,867 . . . . .		4,581

(\*Permanency hearings have replaced extension of placement hearings. Statistics are only available for nine months of 2006.)

**“The Legal Unit presented a training workshop at the Child Advocacy Center for the multi-disciplinary team members.”**

## Legal Services Accomplishments for 2006



- Participated in New York State Office of Children and Family Services legislation and special projects, termination of parental rights brainstorming meeting in New York City.
- Assisted as a facilitator in the “New Drug Treatment Court Team Member Training” at the Judicial Institute in White Plains.
- Participated in New York Public Welfare Association (NYPWA) conference as presenter and moderator.
- Presented a training workshop at the Child Advocacy Center for the multi-disciplinary team members.

- Continued to participate in weekly Family Treatment Court and the Family Court Advisory Board.
- Provided legal counsel for 2,643 child protective reports; 6,708 support filings; 172 interstate support filings; and 219 private support cases.
- Participated in six special calendar days to enable New York State to resolve hearing issues for 74 fair hearings.
- Handled 57 State Central Registry Report expungement hearings.
- Provided legal counsel for 87 collection and resource recovery cases.
- Represented DSS in approximately 20 adult protective court actions.

## 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 coverage 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 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**

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*Continued on page 32...*



## Medical Assistance (Medicaid)

...Continued from page 31

**Federal Poverty level. There is no 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; and 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.**

### 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 MANAGED CARE/ FAMILY HEALTH PLUS

- Coordinates the enrollment and disenrollment 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.

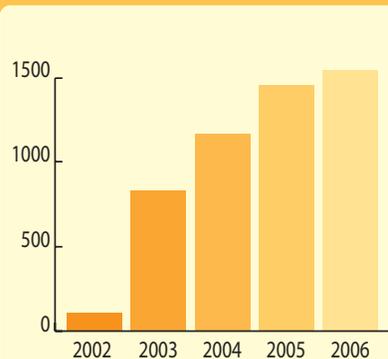
### MEDICAL ASSISTANCE CASE ACTIVITY\*

	2005	2006
Applications Registered	7,270	7,241
Cases Opened/Reactivated/ Open-Closed	7,432	7,146
Withdrawn	431	351
Denied	1,893	2,063
Cases Closed	6,319	6,967
Recertifications	5,433	5,284
Changes to Active/ Closed Cases	30,275	26,057
Totals - All Case Activity	51,783	47,868

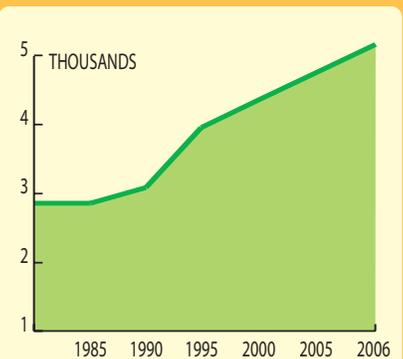
### MEDICAID CASES (AS OF 1/2006)

1985	2,202
1990	2,751
1995	4,146
2000	5,192
2005	7,422
2006	7,865

### FAMILY HEALTH PLUS CASES AS OF JANUARY 1, 2006



### MA/SSI AS OF JANUARY 1, 2006



**MEDICAL EXPENDITURES BY PROVIDER\***

Provider Type	2003	2004	2005	2006	Change
Hospital Inpatient Services	34,619,871	34,653,133	33,473,000	31,56,3878	-5.7%
Hospital Outpatient Services	6,980,577	5,805,446	6,164,679	5,891,547	-4.4%
Skilled Nursing Facilities	73,505,408	73,633,446	78,500,297	79,234,650	0.9%
Intermediate Care					
Facility Services	9,067,393	8,844,507	8,084,887	8,479,510	4.9%
Clinics	16,886,743	20,233,881	17,651,869	25,118,127	42.3%
Hospice	1,647,071	1,745,996	1,380,362	1,381,153	0.1%
Physicians Services	3,834,692	2,878,889	2,670,647	2,475,317	-7.3%
Dental Services	1,236,694	1,508,849	1,638,591	2,036,871	24.3%
Other Practitioners Services	2,586,738	3,068,007	2,872,153	2,804,110	-2.4%
Child Care Institutional					
Medical Per Diem	1,283,309	1,097,132	1,184,154	1,141,054	-3.6%
Personal Care Services	6,529,217	6,977,095	7,543,474	8,622,086	14.3%
Home Health Services	1,541,977	1,655,303	1,591,350	1,799,865	13.1%
Assisted Living Services	2,072,192	2,121,848	2,241,350	2,325,054	3.7%
Long Term Home Health					
Care Waived Services	565,932	543,511	533,587	610,842	14.5%
Home & Community Based					
Waived Services	22,886,444	26,649,719	32,600,456	37,269,407	14.3%
Rehabilitation & Therapy	431,745	443,338	493,538	631,502	28.0%
Office of Mental Hygiene					
Restorative Rehabilitation	6,664,876	7,163,877	7,221,612	8,512,196	17.9%
Drugs & Supplies	30,981,654	35,863,353	38,815,308	22,278,684	-42.6%
Eye Appliances & Durable					
Medical Equipment	999,510	1,062,389	789,249	774,389	-1.9%
Prepaid Care	7,613,144	13,244,597	18,002,718	22,510,209	25.0%
Case Management	4,165,438	4,460,501	5,310,453	5,603,652	5.5%
Prepaid Mental Health	1,690,447	1,442,788	998,863	759,308	-24.0%
Medical Transportation	667,573	695,384	609,524	871,676	43.0%
Lab & X-Ray Services	1,182,919	1,260,328	1,183,552	1,169,983	-1.1%
Other	1,537	147,079	218,642	170,254	-22.1%
Total	\$239,643,103	\$257,200,395	\$271,774,315	\$274,035,624	8%

\* From NYSDOH MARS MR-0-01

**MEDICAID MMIS (MEDICAL MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM) – GROSS SHARES**



## Medical Assistance Accomplishments for 2006



- Paid Medical Assistance Benefits for Dutchess County residents equal to \$9.18 per second, \$551 a minute and \$793,065 a day, amounting to a gross cost of \$289,468,700 and a net cost of \$37,177,868 to the County.
- Net Medicaid costs to the county declined in 2006. The primary reasons for the decrease include the state's Medicaid cap and the new Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Program, which significantly reduced our drug costs. There were large percentage increases in payments for clinics, dental, home and community-based waived services, managed care plan premiums, personal and home health care services, 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.
- Processed 272 Disability reviews.
- Using Wellcare, Hudson Health Plan, GHI and MVP as providers, 9,099 individuals were enrolled in managed care.
- Processed 918 Pre-Natal Care and Assistance Program (PCAP) applications.

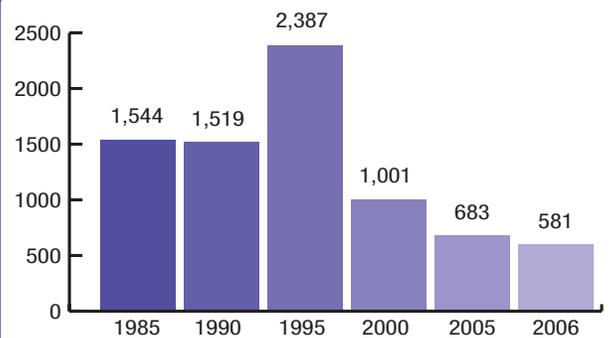
**“Medicaid provides services to the medically indigent making payments directly to providers of medical care, such as hospitals, doctors, pharmacists, etc.”**

## Temporary Assistance & 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 CASES (As of 1/106)**



### FAMILY ASSISTANCE

Family Assistance is 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.

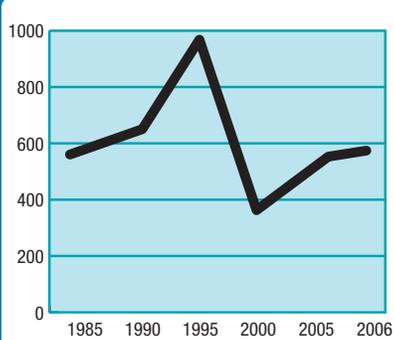
The Family Assistance program fosters recipient self-sufficiency. Recipients undergo an assessment of their employability skills, training needs, and unless exempted, must participate in assigned work activities. Employed recipients are now able to have 47 percent of their gross earnings disregarded when determining their need for assistance and level of benefit.

### SAFETY NET ASSISTANCE

Safety Net Assistance (SNA) is a temporary assistance program that is funded jointly by New York State and counties. Individuals and families, who are ineligible for Family Assistance or other federally reimbursed TA programs, receive Safety Net Assistance (SNA). Most SNA recipients are single individuals or childless couples. They must



## SAFETY NET (AS OF 12/31/06)



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

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

## TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE CASE ACTIVITY

	2005	2006
Applications Registered	6,531	7,098
Cases Opened/Reactivated/Open-Closed	2,862	2,823
Withdrawn	143	252
Denied	3,691	4,404
Cases Closed	1,819	2,050
Recertifications	1,562	1,454
Changes to Active/Closed Cases	10,889	8,081
Totals - Case Activity	20,966	19,064

\*From WMS WST002

### TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE

This unit

- Determines eligibility for the various programs. Screens all applicants for domestic violence, drug and/or alcohol abuse, and any other physical or psychological barriers to employment and refers individuals to the Domestic Violence Liaison, Certified Alcohol and Substance Abuse Counselor, or Family Development worker from Community Action Partnership. All except the Family Development worker are located on site.
- Refers potentially employable individuals to the Employment Unit for an assessment.
- Refers individuals to the Child Support Unit to assist in establishing paternity and/or obtaining support.
- Authorizes payments including recurring assistance, one-time payments, either emergency payment 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 for other programs available in the community as appropriate.
- Maintains the active Family Assistance and

Safety Net cases that include individuals / families who need more than a one-time payment to reach self-sufficiency.

### EMPLOYMENT

This unit:

- Assists able-bodied clients to attain self-sufficiency and helps those who are temporarily or permanently incapacitated to obtain necessary treatment and rehabilitation services.
- Conduct, in conjunction with BOCES, 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 individuals who are sanctioned or about to be sanctioned for failing to comply with employment activities.

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

- Diagnostic vocational evaluation,
- Assessments/TABE testing,
- 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.

**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 percent 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 Temporary 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

**EMPLOYMENT UNIT ACTIVITY**

	2005	2006
Clients Assessed . . . . .	705	.717
Employment Development Plans Developed . . . . .	591	.600
Referrals to Employment . . . . .	675	1,357
Clients Who Entered Training . . . . .	98	.3
Current TA Clients Who Completed Training . . . . .	40	.27
200% Clients Who Completed Training . . . . .	40	.70
TANF Clients Assigned to Work Experience . . . . .	359	.391
TANF Clients Completed Work Experience . . . . .	154	.180
SN Assigned to Work Experience . . . . .	414	.323
SN Completed Work Experience . . . . .	179	.157
Number of TANF Sanctions Commenced . . . . .	196	.136
Number of SN Sanctioned Commenced . . . . .	325	.204

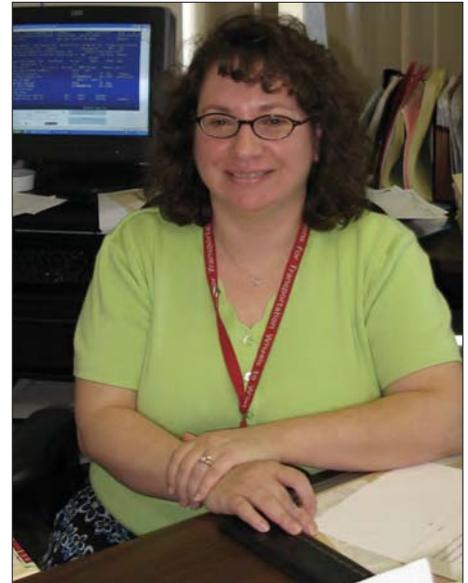
reported criminal convictions.

- 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 child care 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.



## TA/Employment Accomplishments for 2006

- Mentored clients worked at 28 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.
- The Community Solutions for Transportation program touched the lives of 124 families, reporting the following successes:
  - Gave away 95 vehicles.
  - Forty-two individuals completed a defensive driving course.
  - Paid for 49 car registrations on behalf of program participants.
  - Forty-nine people received a minimum deposit for car insurance.
  - To transport people to work or work-related activities, 10,000 city bus passes and 17,500 LOOP bus passes were provided.
  - Approved 14 repairs on behalf of program participants.
  - Provided \$12,251,000 in Temporary Assistance payments to or on behalf of clients.
  - Provided \$4,502,031 in day care assistance on behalf of Dutchess County residents.
- For the sixth 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 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 1,334 to the contracted Assessor for evaluation, who then mandated 742 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 \$568 in Grants of Assistance for Guide Dogs.
- Purchased \$386,000 in case management and employment related services from BOCES and Community Action Partnership of Dutchess County.
- Purchased \$405,862 in employment-related and mentoring services for clients from the Greater Southern Dutchess and Poughkeepsie Area Chambers of Commerce.
- As of December 2006, 44 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, 55 individuals participated. This year, 68 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.



**“For the sixth year in a row our day care program operated without a waiting list for subsidy.”**

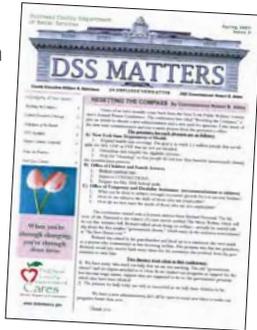
- A new initiative for 2006 is the Youth Employment Services (YES) Program and Tools of the Trade Apprenticeship Program (36 participants). This is a partnership enterprise between local area manufacturers, the Poughkeepsie Area Chamber of Commerce and Dutchess County Department of Social Services. In collaboration with Dutchess Community College, local manufacturers, PACC, and DSS, participants will learn soft skills, earn GED's and work as apprentices in the afternoons. They will receive supportive services such as mentoring, child care, and transportation subsidies while learning job skills and earning wages. Employers will receive tax credits and trainees who will become full time when they have been trained to the company's technical standard.
- BOCES began doing complete assessments on TA applicants and recipients over the age of 18 in June and to date have completed 413 assessments.



...Continued from page 11

## DSS Matters!

In the Fall of 2006, DSS saw the re-birth of an agency newsletter. Many recall *Focus DSS* which was issued about a decade ago. Always printed on its signature blue paper, the newsletter



contained interesting articles about staff and programs. Today with the use of digital cameras, PCs on every desk, the intranet and a large diversified team, the current newsletter is accessed via a link on the DSS homepage and provides us with a wide range of material. The inaugural issue of *DSS Matters* was printed in full color as an eight page booklet for all 355 DSS staff persons by our Dutchess County print shop. It was distributed at our agency retreat on September 26th. The cover article, "Changing Again, For The Better" was written by our Commissioner, Robert B. Allers, and gave us a little history lesson on how far we have already come at DSS.

The *DSS Matters* team boasts representatives from almost every department in the agency. The team's skills and talents include photography, interviewing, writing, graphic design, technical support and even baking (for our fund-raising bake sales). Everyone plays a valuable part whether large or small, frequent or intermittent. Issued quarterly, it maintains the tradition of celebrating our "Employees of the Month". In addition, you will find articles featuring our DSS departmental teams, staff achievements, Dutchess County tourist spots, health tips, agency and County events, staff development, personal interest stories and recipes. Occasionally, there will be a contest for agency staff. The first contest involved the naming of the newsletter.

We thank all the members of the newsletter team for their efforts and for reminding us that DSS Matters!

## My Life in JEOPARDY!

Lisa Llanes-Simpson

**J**uly 2006, I appeared on JEOPARDY! after 20 years of being a fan and participating in numerous JEOPARDY contestant searches. I had grown up with a knack for remembering obscure, innocuous facts, and a photographic memory; helpful skills for trivia gamers and JEOPARDY fans.

In February 2006, I saw a TV ad for a JEOPARDY Brain Bus event in New York. It was a JEOPARDY contestant search. With nothing to lose, I took the ten-question pre-test on February 25th, and passed. I received a ticket to take the 50-question test that afternoon at the convention center. I passed and was auditioned immediately, which never happened before. They took my picture, I signed forms, and practiced with a real buzzer from the show. No guarantee for an appearance or taping date, (in Culver City, CA) but they took my file and said it's kept for one year. In late March, JEOPARDY called and invited me to tape in California on April 21st.

I flew out to Los Angeles on April 19th, the same day that Ken Jennings was at the Poughkeepsie Chamber of Commerce Breakfast at the Poughkeepsie Grand Hotel, four blocks from DSS. I couldn't have scripted this better if I tried. The winningest JEOPARDY contestant ever, in Poughkeepsie, the same day I left to tape JEOPARDY. (What are the odds?) I met my sister-in-law, Jeanne at LAX, and we spent two days sightseeing and shopping, while I read the 2006 World Almanac to brush up. Fellow trivia fans let me assure you, there is no way to study for JEOPARDY. There are just too many categories.

Taping day at SONY Pictures Studio was very busy. All of the contestants, categories, and questions were picked at random.



Contestants are kept secluded before the live taping in the "Green Room", which really is green. No one met Alex Trebek until they were on stage, taping the show in front of a live audience. During breaks, Alex posed with each contestant for a photo, and answered questions from the audience. My sister-in-law, Jeanne, a teacher, asked him a question about his legacy. Alex said he hoped he would be remembered more for encouraging young people to be well educated and informed, than for being a game show host.

I played in the final and fifth taped game of the day. I faced Eric Allen, from Alabama and Bruce Lin, a Canadian. I was leading going into Double JEOPARDY, plus I had answered the Daily Double correctly. Final JEOPARDY was an obscure clue about a George Bernard Shaw play. My brain just froze and I lost most of my money. Bruce didn't answer correctly either, but finished with more money, so he became the champion. (Bruce also won three more games the next week.)

While the credits rolled, I had a chance to speak with Alex Trebek. He was friendly, humorous and a good conversationalist. I then returned to Poughkeepsie with a vow of silence

until the show aired on July 14th. That was harder than answering clues!

I may have finished second on JEOPARDY, but I had the best vacation ever, and enjoyed my "15 minutes of fame". It's not every day a DSS caseworker appears on JEOPARDY. You never know where life may take you, but some dreams do come true. Never give up!

**"You never know where life may take you, but some dreams do come true. Never give up!"**



# County-Wide Shaken Baby Campaign

**I**n 2006, the Dutchess County Department of Social Services launched a county-wide campaign to inform the public about the dangers of Shaken Baby Syndrome such as visual disabilities or blindness; learning disabilities; physical disabilities; hearing impairment; seizures; behavior disorders; cognitive impairment; even death. But we didn't stop there. This campaign provided alternatives to shaking a baby, including what a caregiver can do if a baby or young child's crying or other behavior is frustrating, difficult, or exhausting. Caring for a child is a tough job. An adult's frustration from non-stop crying is the number one reason a baby is shaken. Remember, crying is a way for the baby to communicate discomforts or needs. The baby might be hungry, have a soiled diaper, diaper rash, have a fever, be teething, or be too warmly dressed. Another area that



can be overlooked is that discomfort could be caused by a string from clothing wrapped around the infant's fingers or toes.

If these basic needs have been met but the child continues to cry, what can a frustrated caregiver do?

- Gently rock or walk the infant.
- Use a swing or offer a pacifier.
- Provide soft music, singing, reading or talking.
- Soothingly rub the child's tummy or back.
- Take the child for a drive. If

none of this works, remain calm. Crying doesn't hurt the baby. It's okay to feel overwhelmed, but it's not okay to take that frustration out on your child. Just a few seconds of violent shaking can change

the child's life and yours forever.

- Place the baby in a safe place, like a crib, and leave the room.
- Only return to the room when you feel calm.
- Relax, breathe deeply, count to ten, then 20.
- Ask a friend or relative to "take over" for a while.
- Ask for support from someone who understands the frustration of caring for a crying baby.



If you need someone to talk to, call the **Child Abuse Prevention Center at (845) 454-0595** or the **Dutchess County Child Protection Services at (845) 486-3080**. To report suspected child abuse or neglect, call the 24-hour hotline at **1-800-342-3720**.

The next time you check out our Shaken Baby page on the County website, remember "**Rock, Don't Shake,**" "**Life is Fragile, Handle With Care,**" and "**Never, Ever Shake A Baby!**"



## Important Internet Website Addresses

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**Child Care Council of Dutchess**

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

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**Dutchess County**

<http://www.dutchessny.gov>

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**Dutchess County Community Action Agency**

<http://www.dccaa.org>

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**Dutchess Outreach, Inc.**

<http://www.dutchessoutreach.org>

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**Grace Smith House**

<http://gracesmithhouse.org>

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**New York State**

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

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**New York State Adoption Service**

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

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

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

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

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

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

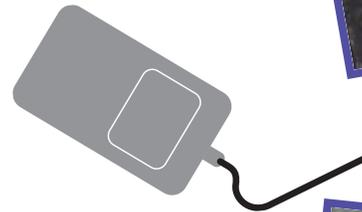
<http://www.nyskwic.org>

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**United States Administration for Children & Families**

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

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December 29, 2006

Dear Ms. Novicki:

I am writing to inform you of a very special worker, Ms. Donna Wood. During my time of need, Ms. Wood was very humble, patient and kind, which I am sure everyone who is in contact with her would confirm. I just wanted to write you before I sign off with the program which should be very soon. I am working on employment which will bring me some stability financially.

Thanks to Ms. Wood and the agency, it brought me through what could have been very hard times.

DB

**Thank You!**

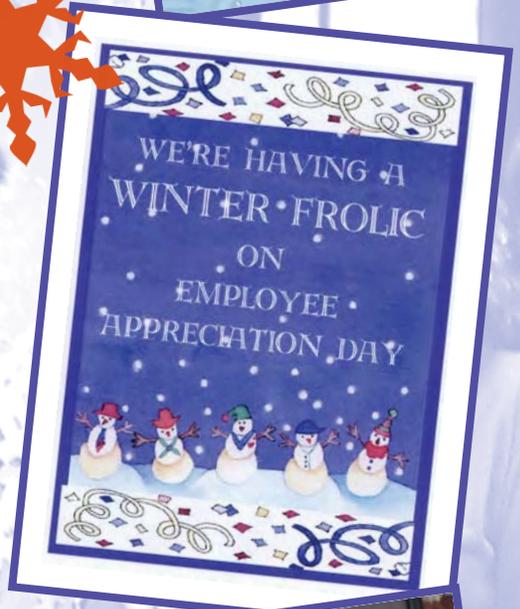
# Employee Appreciation Day



**“Make it a habit to tell people thank you.**

**To express your appreciation, sincerely and without the expectation of anything in return. Truly appreciate those around you, and you’ll soon find many others around you. Truly appreciate life, and you’ll find that you have more of it.”**

**— Ralph Marston**





HELPING TO HEAT HOMES Partnership to Success

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DUTCHESS COUNTY

