

Frederick County Department of Social Services



FY2021 Annual Report

July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021

State of Maryland
Larry Hogan, Governor
Boyd Rutherford, Lt. Governor

Maryland Department of Human Services
Lourdes Padilla, Secretary

Frederick County Department of Social Services
Debbie Marini, LCSW-C, Director

A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

There was much uncertainty as Frederick County Department of Social Services (FCDSS) began Fiscal Year (FY) 2021. It was just months before that the Covid 19 pandemic had a significant impact on our community and on the way we work. Uncertainty surrounded our new telework practices and whether our staff could safely meet essential and critical needs in the community. The workforce at FCDSS met this uncertainty with a “growth mindset” and the importance of continued quality improvement was at the forefront of each new endeavor. I am in awe of the accomplishments that you will read about in this year’s Annual Report. I am grateful for the individual and family successes that occurred amid so much pain and uncertainty.

As we close out FY 2021, FCDSS has greeted the new year with a new way of working that ensures the well-being of our community and our workforce. And we continue to grow so that our mission, vision, and values can be lived out in our daily work.

Debbie Marini



A MESSAGE FROM THE ADVISORY BOARD CHAIR

We appreciate how difficult it has been for the agency, as embodied in its staff, to meet the needs of Frederick County’s neediest residents in the past year of Covid. Administrators and staff have had to be creative and persistent to fulfill the mission of the agency. We support and look forward to witnessing the team’s efforts to empower and partner with clients, to enhance equality and opportunity, and to continue to be the safety net for children and families in dire need. It is exciting to witness novel and creative efforts to maintain families, and help them function with dignity and efficacy, or when out of home placement is necessary, to creatively partner with biological and resource families to return children home or to another permanent living situation. We applaud the agency staff for coming together to assist statewide at times of overwhelming need for Maryland’s families. We also applaud the agency’s networking with other public and private service and resource providers on behalf of Frederick’s people. This Annual Report documents the commitment and dedication of the fine staff of the department.

Patrick Hammett

OVERVIEW

Mission Statement

The Mission of Frederick County Department of Social Services (FCDSS) is to help individuals and families achieve safety, independence, and self-sufficiency through the provision of professional, fiscally responsible, quality human services in an innovative, collaborative, and customer service-oriented environment.

Vision Statement

Everything we do is to enhance our internal and external customers' experience and improve the outcomes for individuals, children, and families in becoming self-sufficient.

Guiding Principles

We at FCDSS will:

- Manage our work using data.
- Approach our work with respect, compassion, understanding, tolerance, and a non-judgmental attitude.
- Deliver high quality services assuring customers receive all appropriate services and benefits.
- Concentrate on our strengths.
- Aid staff in continuous learning.
- Encourage all to "lead from any seat".
- Share teamwork and community partnerships.

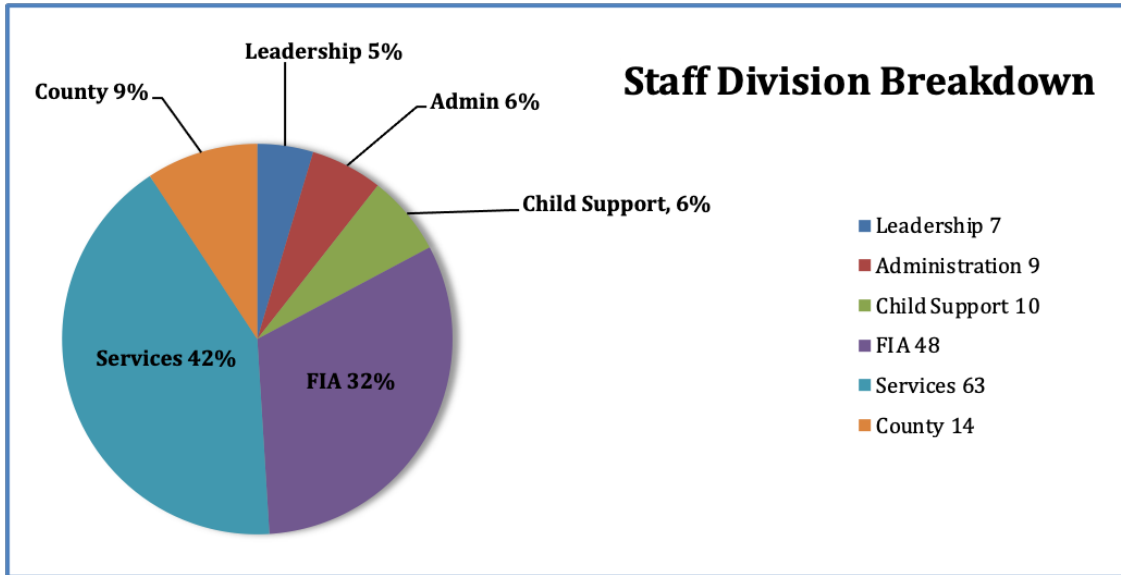
Agency Description:

FCDSS is a State agency operating as one of twenty-four local Departments of Social Services within the Maryland Department of Human Services (DHS). The operations are managed and funded by the State of Maryland and supported by both the federal and local governments to locally implement certain human services programs. FCDSS has four (4) Divisions: Child Support Administration (CSA), Family Investment Administration (FIA), Administrative Operations, Child, Family and Adult Services (SSA). FCDSS is part of a large network of local partners whose mission is to meet the needs of Frederick County Citizens. FCDSS brings over \$50,000,000 to Frederick County through these programs as well as grants and contracts with several community human service agencies. The goal is to provide support and enable families to stay together while maintaining their safety and self-sufficiency.



AGENCY STAFF AND ADVISORY BOARD

FCDSS has a truly dedicated staff and board who work tirelessly toward fulfilling our mission and vision for the individuals, children, and families we serve. There are a total of 151 Staff (134 State Staff, 3 DHS Staff 14 County Staff).



Leadership Team:

Debbie Marini, Director
 Bradley Burns, Human Resources
 Leslie Slaby, Assistant Director, Family Investment Administration
 Tiffany Gregoire, Assistant Director, Child Support Administration
 Kim Smith, Assistant Director - Child, Family & Adult Services
 David Drees, Assistant Director - Administrative Operations

Extended Management Team:

Roni Shaffer, CSA, Supervisor
 Rajinder Sagar, CSA, Supervisor
 Margaret Flick, CSA, Supervisor
 Lori Heslin, FIA, Supervisor
 Benjamin Brusini, FIA Supervisor
 Jennifer Hemler, FIA, Supervisor
 Renee Walchuck, FIA, Supervisor
 Jacqueline Byerly, FIA, Deputy Assistant Director
 Rachelle Swope, FIA, Supervisor
 Linnea Jones, FIA, Supervisor
 Jennifer Long, SSA, Out of Home Program Manager
 Melissa Curtis-Cherry, SSA, Family Preservation, Program Manager
 Scott Birdsall, SSA, Adult Services Program Manager
 Shelley Sexton, SSA, Child Protective Services, Program Manager

Advisory Board:

Patrick Hammett - Chair (Frederick)
 Kerri Burson (New Market)
 Danielle Haskin (Frederick)
 Cheryl Back (Thurmont)
 Esther Slack-Metellus (Frederick)
 Jessica Fitzwater (Council Member Liaison)

SERVICES TO CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND ADULTS

FCDSS divisions that provide services to children, families and adults include: Child Support, Family Investment, and Child, Family and Adult Services. While each division provides its own unique programs, customers often access services across divisions. A brief description of each service is provided below along with the data and stories that demonstrate their impact.

SERVICES TO CHILDREN:

Child Protective Services (CPS) - is a mandated program designed to protect children from abuse and/or neglect. CPS receives and investigates reports of child abuse and neglect then work with the family to develop a plan as to what needs to change to maintain children's safety in their home. In Maryland, CPS has also implemented

Alternative Response (AR) - AR encourages community agencies to participate in supporting families who are considered low risk, allowing CPS to focus on the more serious cases in which abuse, and neglect have been confirmed. Finally, CPS will screen for Risk of Harm (ROH) cases for specific categories of reports such as Substance Exposed Newborns and reports of Domestic Violence, etc. In these ROH cases, FCDSS will work collaboratively with the family and appropriate community resources to assess the families' strengths, needs, and provide services without the threat of a formal finding.



Human Trafficking Task Force - The focus of the task force is to educate the public, identify and serve the victims of human trafficking, and increase prosecution of human traffickers. From this task force, the Frederick County Human Trafficking Response Team was created to provide a victim-centered, collaborative response to human trafficking in Frederick County to assist in the identification of victims, prosecution of cases, and the availability and use of comprehensive services for survivors.

Older Youth Services - Ready By 21 Services are available to youth ages 14 to 21 in out-of-home placement and are designed to prepare youth to transition from foster care into self-sufficiency. Independent Living Coordinators work with the youth on the goals of housing, health care, education, employment, financial literacy, and well-being. This work is fulfilled using several strategies, such as Youth Transition Planning, Independent Living Skills classes, and Youth Leadership activities, such as the Youth Advisory Board and Foster Youth Legislative Day.

Crossover Youth - The Crossover Youth Practice Model, developed by the Center for Juvenile Justice Reform at Georgetown University, creates a collaborative effort between FCDSS and the Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) that improves outcomes for child welfare youth who crossover into the juvenile system and vice versa. The goals of this collaboration are to reduce the number of youths placed in out of home care, reduce the length of stay in out of home care, reduce the use of congregate care, reduce the disproportionate representation of children of color, and reduce the number of youths crossing over and becoming dually involved.

Specialized Placement Services - Most children who come into foster care are placed with Kinship Families or Resource Families that are recruited, prepared, and supported by the Resource Homes unit of FCDSS. If a child has special needs that cannot be met in a FCDSS Resource Home, they are referred to a partner agency that provides therapeutic foster care in a family home setting. There are times when a group home or residential treatment center may be required to meet the child's needs until they are ready to return to a family setting.

OpenTable Story about Alex

Alex entered the foster care system at the age of 14 years old. Initially, Alex was in various placements due to challenging behaviors. He then joined a foster home and created a bond with the family to whom he remains connected. At the age of 18, after Alex graduated from high school, he decided he wanted to go to an independent living program. He was accepted into the Future Bound Independent Living Program. Alex lived in a shared two-bedroom apartment for two and a half years where he worked on his independent living skills such as cooking, cleaning, budgeting, banking, employment, education and scheduling his medical/mental health appointments. At Future Bound he was able to learn how to engage in and balance all these life demands. At 20.5 years old, Alex decided he would like to move to his own apartment and entered a Semi-Independent Living Arrangement (SILA) with the Department and located an apartment in the Frederick County area. He was able to locate employment and re-engage in friendship and connections he had made in Frederick County over the years. As Alex prepared to exit care at the age of 21 years old, it was determined that Alex would benefit from hands-on resources to support him as he made this transition.

The Frederick County Department of Social Services partnered with Alex and the Open Table program to assist Alex with his transition to independence from the foster care system. Due to COVID-19, Alex was able to remain involved with FCDSS after turning 21 years old because of the Pandemic Relief Extended Care Act. With this he was able to receive full services from the Department until September 30, 2021. While the year was hard on everyone, Alex greatly benefited from these extended services.

During this time, OpenTable engaged with Alex and became a significant support. This created an environment where John could develop his community support but also had FCDSS as a support. At one point during this last year Alex injured his knee to the point he needed surgery and was out of work. This time was very hard on Alex and he heavily relied on the OpenTable members. The support of Open Table to Alex created a protected environment where he was surrounded by support and guidance. Even though the formal process of Open Table is over for Alex, he and his team developed such strong relationships that they are still naturally involved in his life. They continue to offer support, celebrate his successes, and support him during challenging times. His team will remain in his life as supportive adults as he continues his journey.

Below are Alex's responses to questions about his experience with OpenTable:

When first presented with OpenTable what did you think?

It is a lot of people.

Having experienced OpenTable, what do you think of OpenTable now?

It is great. I enjoy all the people. I appreciate all the support from Open Table.

How did OpenTable help you?

Helpful with understanding my goals and dreams. Helped me to reach some of my goals. Helped me with life stuff (budgeting, moving into my second apartment and looking at how I can save money). Supported me emotionally when I injured my knee. I can still reach out to members of my OpenTable for support not as part of Open Table but as part of my network.

Would you talk to other youth people about OpenTable?

Yes. I think it is a great tool to have for older youth leaving care to have other support.

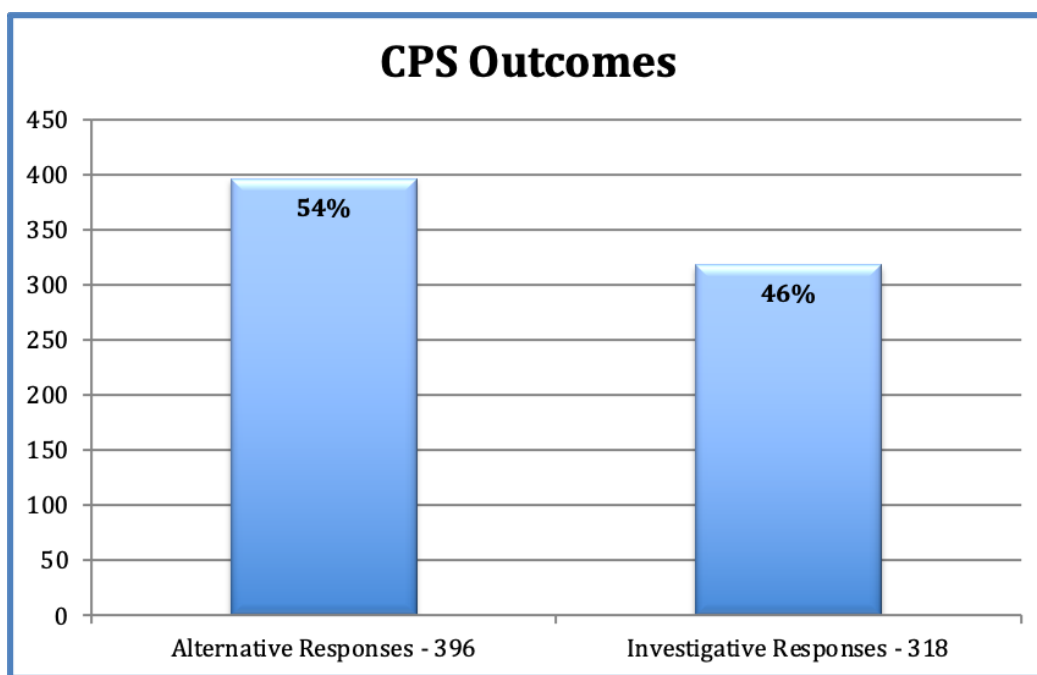
Statement from one of Alex's OpenTable member:

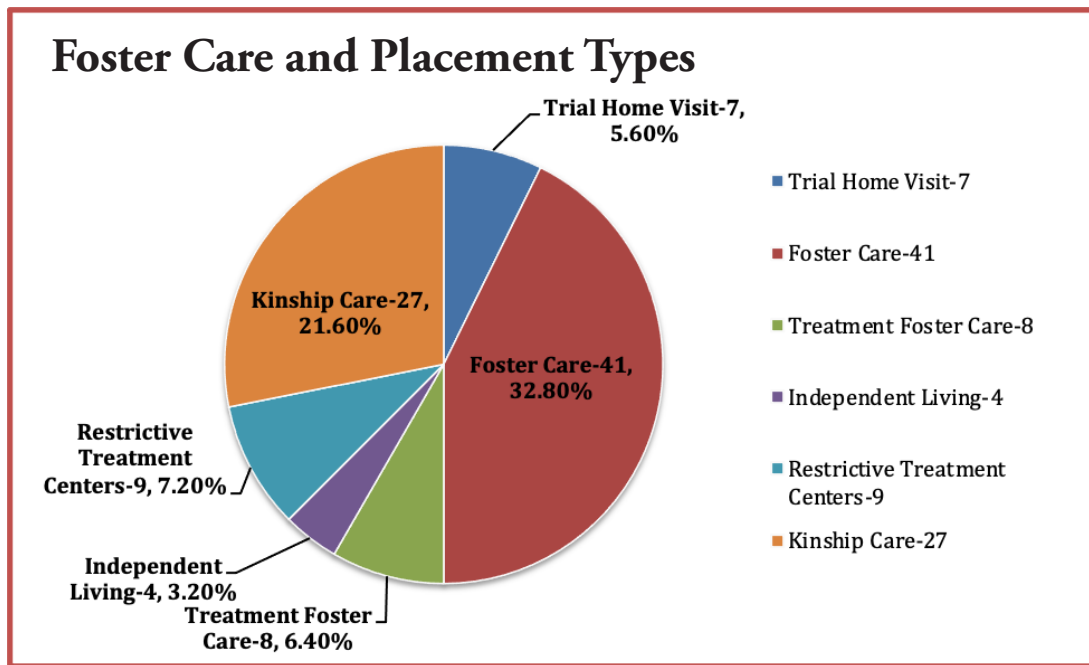
The summer of 2020 I was invited to be on The OpenTable for Alex. Alex and I had met for a few hours the previous year when I helped him put in some hours for his driver's license. Training for OpenTable took about 10 hours over the course of a few weeks. This was vital for getting the team to know each quickly and to run through the potential issues we might face, along with setting the expectations for the Table's goals. Ultimately the Table is about community, not so much about accomplishing a bunch of tasks and goals of the "Friend". It took time to build the trust and community as we met each week for an hour (during COVID). After a few months we found that meeting as a group every other week, and as one on one meetings the opposite weeks, worked best for Alex. This gave us time to really get to know each other, build friendship and fulfill tasks, or just have fun together. As a team we were able to answer life questions, explain the technical processes of some life requirements (resume building, banking, car buying/repair, etc.) and share a bit of our hard-earned wisdom. In May, Alex had a serious knee injury, and this is when the Table really came to be vital. Each of us played a part in getting him to appointments, keeping his spirits up, being sure he had groceries and meals, and turning to each other as we felt overwhelmed at times. This could have been a more devastating time than it was without OpenTable. Once Alex was back on his feet and employed (after two months) he showed his immense dedication by creating a bodybuilding and diet plan that earned him second place in an October competition, along with over 2.5 million views of his progress on TikTok. Being an official part of his life during that year, and still now by choice, was empowering for all of us. Alex is a wonderful man who gained a lot by having a community that he committed to for a full year. This was not easy for him as he is busy, and we were mostly strangers, but he showed up and let us in. Life is full of challenges and surprises and although there is much more for him to learn, he has created a stronger foundation than he had one year ago.



PROGRAM OUTCOMES FOR SERVICES TO CHILDREN:

- 691 Child Protective Services Responses
- 240 Risk of Harm Cases
- 17 Family Involvement Meetings held for older youth transitioning from foster care.
- 6 Older Youth Discussion Groups held with an average of 5-6 youth participating in each
- 6 Youth Advisory Board meetings with 2-5 participating each meeting
- Spring Life Skills Classes held with 7 older youth attending each, Online Life Skills Class- 2 youth attending
- Older Youth Special Events: Keys to your Financial Future, Job Readiness Boot Camp
- 8 youth identified as Crossover Youth by FCDSS & DJS
- 125 Children served in Foster Care in the following Placement Types:





SERVICES TO FAMILIES:

Family Teaming - Family team meetings occur with a family when a child in the home has been identified as at risk for out-of-home placement and with the child and the family throughout their engagement with the agency. The purpose includes reinforcement of the partnership between families/youth and the agency; serving as a vehicle for family-driven decision making; and identifying who the family would choose to participate in the teaming. A neutral facilitator mediates and leads these meetings at FCDSS.

In-Home Family Services - The following services are offered as a part of FCDSS' efforts to partner with families and the community to promote the stability of children with their families and prevent the need for the child to be placed in out-of-home services. In 2018, the Family First Prevention Services Act was enacted which was the biggest child welfare reform bill in many years. FCDSS has been innovative addressing the needs of in-home services families and will continue to expand our work in this area with this legislation being implemented. A few innovative in-home family services programs include:

Sobriety Treatment and Recovery Teams (START) -The broad goals of START are to keep children safely with their parents whenever possible and to promote parental recovery and capacity to care for their children. A START Family Mentor (individual in long-term recovery) is in the LDSS where they share family and children's cases with LDSS caseworkers

Family Partnership - through formal and informal parent education workshops, support, and counseling, FCDSS partners with the county to prevent families from indicated findings in Child Protective Services investigations and out-of-home placements. Intensive Family Preservation Services (IFPS)- The IFPS program is an intensive, in-home family intervention service targeting families whose children are at imminent risk of out-of-home placement into foster care, juvenile commitment, education and/or mental health facilities and/or at high risk for future maltreatment. IFPS involves families as partners in all steps of the therapeutic and intervention process. Services include but are not limited to crisis intervention/prevention; family counseling; and family education in the areas of child development, parenting skills, communication skills, and mood management. Way Station/Sheppard Pratt provides these contracted services to our families.



Multi-systemic Therapy (MST) - is an intensive family and community-evidence based treatment for juveniles with serious clinical issues and their families. The primary goals of MST are to decrease youth delinquent behavior and out-of-home placements.

Kinship Navigation - These services support informal kinship families (defined as families who provide 24-hour care for children through a private living arrangement made by the parent or legal guardian, due to serious hardship or absence, in which a relative or fictive kin provides care to a child, who is not in the care and custody or guardianship of the LDSS).

Out-of-Home Family Services - When a child cannot be safely cared for in their home, FCDSS initiates out-of-home family services with the goal of safety for the child(ren) and effective permanency planning for the child and family. Below are a few of the out-of-home family services offered by FCDSS:

Foster Care/Resource Homes - Children are placed into foster care either involuntarily by the courts or voluntarily by the parent(s) when the needs of the child clearly cannot be met. Foster parents are called "Resource Parents" because they serve as not only a resource to the child but to the child's family with the goal of providing temporary care while also working toward permanency. Reunification is the primary goal of foster care and requires the involvement of a team to be successful.

Permanency Services - While reunification is the primary goal, some foster children will find permanency in other ways. For example, adoption, guardianship, and independent living are all permanency outcomes for foster children. In each of these outcomes, it is important to engage the families involved in ensuring the well-being and safety of the child. Some specific permanency services include:

Family Assessments - FCDSS Family Assessor works diligently to collect and summarize information to complete psycho-social/family assessments with families in court-ordered out-of-home foster care. These assessments are utilized to develop timely and appropriate case plans to reduce the length of stay for children in out-of-home care.

Family Visitation - Parent, Child and Sibling visitation is facilitated to maintain attachments, preserve a sense of family and work toward reunification. FCDSS has family visitation rooms and many visits also take place in the community, supervised and unsupervised, as well as through our partnerships with community organizations.

Safe Babies Court Team - The first three years of life encompass the most critical phase of brain development. Recognizing this, the Safe Babies Court Team Project aims to: increase awareness among those who work with maltreated infants and toddlers about the negative impact of abuse and neglect on very young children; and change local systems to improve outcomes and prevent future court involvement in the lives of very young children.

Voluntary Placement Agreements (VPA) - Parents, or legal guardians, of children with a documented developmental disability or mental illness, to be able to enter into an agreement with the Department to have their child voluntarily placed when treatment needs cannot be met in the community and the parent needs funding assistance. In these situations, the Department would not have custody of the child.

Financial Benefits and Supports - Mainly through our Family Investment and Child Support Administration, numerous families are provided with the financial benefits and support needed to be stable and healthy. Some of the financial benefits and supports offered through FCDSS include:

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) - Supplements a household's food budget by providing benefits to Frederick County residents with income too low to provide their families with basic nutrition. Monthly allotments are used to purchase food items only.

Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) - Temporarily provides for children in need and their caretaker relatives. Those who are employable are included on the grant and must find employment. Most adult participants can only receive benefits for five years.

Child Support - Child Support works with both parents to provide financial and medical support to help in raising their child(ren). Child Support specifically addresses the issue of financial support and is viewed as a separate issue from physical care, emotional and spiritual support, and the day-to-day raising of the child(ren). Services available with Child support include Location, Establishment, Collections, and Enforcement.

Location - Once all necessary information is received in an application, Child Support Division will use different resources to locate the non-custodial parent (NCP) to move forward with a case. Some of these resources include State Directory of New Hires, Maryland Automated Benefits System, Federal Parent Locator Service, MVA, Maryland Judiciary among others.

Establishment - Once the non-custodial parent is located, a case then moves into the Establishment phase. There are two parts to establishment: - establishment of parentage if not already established and establishment of court order for support. A total of 733 applications were received and processed this fiscal year.

Collections - After there has been an establishment of a court order for support, accounts are set up on the Child Support Enforcement System (CSES) so that collection for payments can commence. That can be done through direct pay from the non-custodial parent or via earnings withholding through NCP's employer. For Federal fiscal year 2021, Frederick County collected \$15,705,907 in child support collections.

Enforcement - If no payments are received, enforcement actions are taken against NCP to obtain payments. These enforcement actions are broken down into administrative enforcement actions which include but are not limited to driver's license suspensions, professional license suspensions, bank liens, passport denial and judicial enforcement actions where the case is taken back to court for contempt. As of the end of the fiscal year, there were 4331 active child support cases.

Holiday Assistance - Every year, FCDSS partners with the community to support seniors and children with their parents over the holidays with gifts and items needed to make the holiday special.

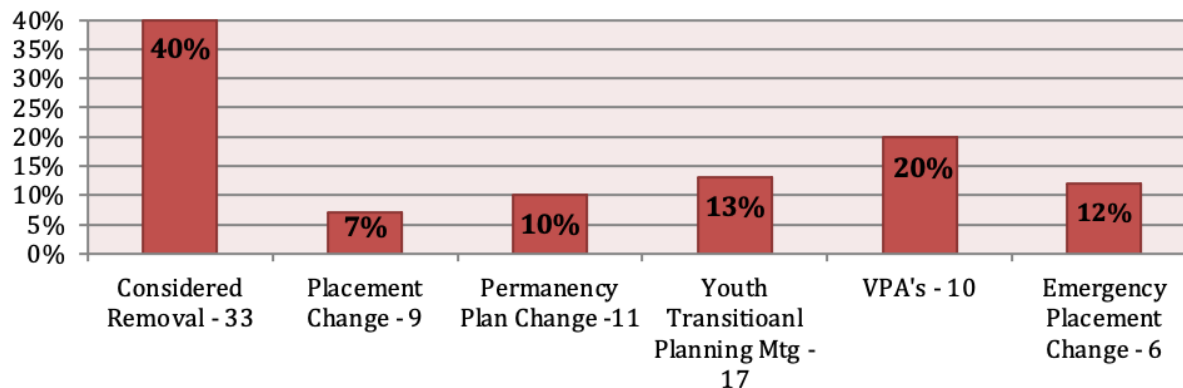
Generous Jurors - The Circuit Court for Frederick County and FCDSS cooperate in this program where jurors may donate their jury pay to the FCDSS Foster Care unit. The donations are used to provide for foster children in the county items which state budgets do not support, such as school band uniforms, funds for field trips, birthday, and holiday gifts, etc.

Care Portal - During the past fiscal year, FCDSS entered a partnership with Crossed Bridges and the Asian American Center of Frederick to implement the CarePortal platform. CarePortal is an online platform developed by the Global Orphan Project that connects vulnerable families, children, and adults to resources within the local faith community.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES FOR SERVICES TO FAMILIES:

- 86 Family Teamings were held for the following reasons:
- As a result of Family Teamings, 55 children were diverted from out-of-home placement.

Family Teamings



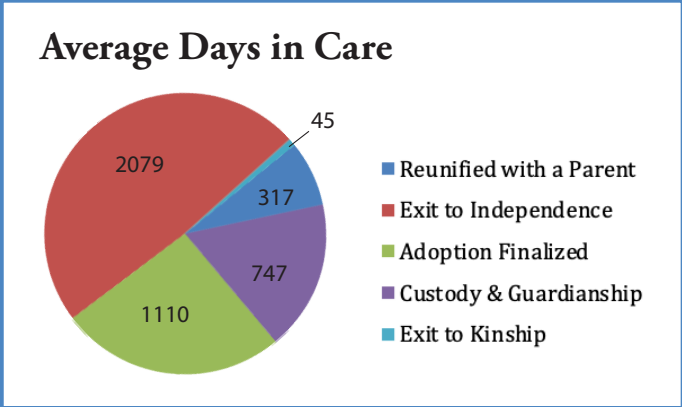
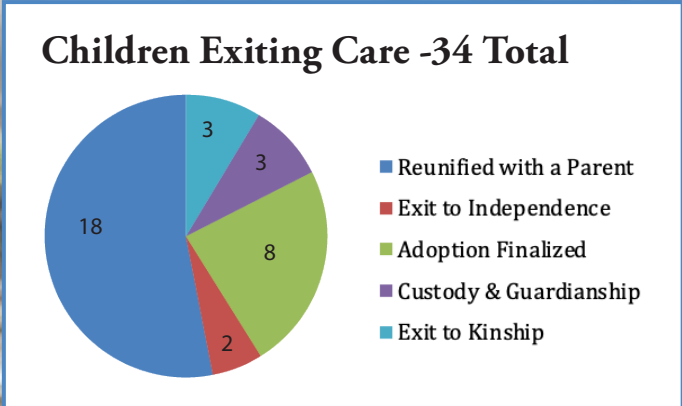
In-Home Family Services:

- 223 children (102 families) were served by the FCDSS In Home Services team throughout the fiscal year and as of June 20, 2021.
- 15 of these families served through Family Preservation had kinship caregivers and were supported by our Kinship Navigator.
- 30 additional families with kinship caregivers requested short-term support and were served with information and referrals
- A virtual support group for kinship caregivers was held March 19, 2021, in person support groups resumed on July 28, 2021, with 48 people in attendance. Subsequent group meetings are scheduled at a local park pavilion in September and October 2021. We celebrated Kinship Care Month with our families at our event on September 29, 2021
- The Sobriety Treatment and Recovery Team (START) was fully implemented in June 2020, with the first official START cases being accepted in July 2020
- For FY21 START served 11 families, including 14 adults and 21 children
- 87 Families were served through a contract with Way Station Interagency Family Preservation Services
- 43 Families (60 children) were served through our collaboration with Family Partnership
- 18 families completed the full course of MST
- 91% of families completing MST met program outcomes

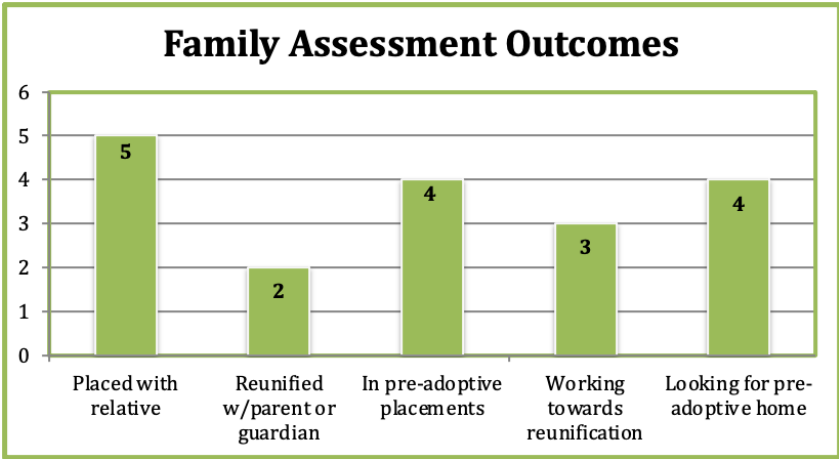


Out-of-Home Services:

- 82 Children in Foster Care as of June 30, 2021
- 12 Children in placements with a VPA
- 37 families are licensed as foster/adoptive families as of June 30, 2021



- 12 Family Assessments were completed (18 children) and those children had the following plans/ outcomes:



- 25 children were served through Safe Babies Court Team (SBCT)
- 7 total SBCT cases closed with 4 reunifications and 3 children reached permanency through adoption.

FINANCIAL SERVICES AND BENEFITS TO FAMILIES:

- Approved 5249 new applications for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
- \$45,904,417 issued in SNAP benefits (monthly average of 9,746 households with a total of 19,029 recipients)
- Approved 246 new applications for Temporary Cash Assistance.
- \$3,140,887 issued in Temporary Cash Assistance benefits (monthly average of 374 households with a total of 840 recipients)
- On average a TCA family of three (3) received \$877.00 per month.
- Child Support Collections – (07/01/2020 to 06/30/2021) \$14,686,123
- 4443 active cases as of 06/30/2021
- 748 Child Support applications received (07/01/2020 to 06/30/2021)
- Gift Drive Highlight: welding helmets for a father who needed them for work; hover boards for a sibling group
- Donations were used for summer camps, soccer camps, martial art camps, electronic needs for virtual learning and therapeutic sensory items.
- 14 children used Generous Juror funds this year.
- In FY21, 15 FCDSS clients were served through CarePortal for a total of \$1887 in economic impact. Resources provided include diapers, wipes, food, and funeral expenses to name a few.





SERVICES TO ADULTS:

Adult Services - Providing programs and services to assist vulnerable adults including, Protective Services, In Home Aide, Respite, Adult Foster Care and Guardianship.

Workforce Development - FCDSS partners with Frederick County Workforce which is a one-stop-shop for resume writing services, mock interviewing, job readiness workshops and a multitude of employment opportunities including internships and educational grants to qualified applicants. After COVID 19 they began offering virtual services. Services are available to all Frederick County US citizens.

Medical Assistance (Medicaid) - Medicaid programs assist eligible residents of all ages year-round. FCDSS staff provides eligibility determinations and re-determinations for this assistance. Frederick County residents who are aged, blind, or disabled are offered government subsidized health insurance through Maryland Health Connection. Qualified Health Plan Coverage (QHP) is available for households whose income exceeds Medicaid standards during an open enrollment period. The Maryland Children's Health Program (MCHP) provides medical coverage to individuals under the age of 19 and pregnant women with family income below 200 percent of the federal poverty level.

Emergency Assistance - Provides cash assistance payments to help families with children resolve a specific emergency such as an eviction, foreclosure, utility cut-off. Burial assistance payments are limited to recipients of public assistance, SSI, foster care children, or certain medical assistance recipients in nursing homes. Local policy defines eligible types of emergencies and determines the amount available for assistance. Funding is limited.

Temporary Cash Assistance to Disabled Adults - (TDAP) a state-funded entitlement program for needy, disabled adults without children who are ineligible for other forms of public assistance. A temporary benefit is paid to eligible individuals until their conditions improve or they become eligible for long-term federal disability benefits.

Public Assistance to Entrepreneurship (PA2E) - This program offers classes on starting a business. The primary goal is to provide entrepreneurship training for customers with ideas and talent, who are in pursuit of their entrepreneurial dreams of starting a small business while supporting their families. DHS/FCDSS conveniently partners with the Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) in the region.

Walk-in and Call Center and Online Support Services - Applying for benefits can be complex. The FCDSS provides "gold standard" customer service by assisting customers with online support and as needed, in-person support.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES FOR SERVICES TO ADULTS:

Adult Services

- 193 Adult Protective Services Responses
- 157 Adults served in Social Services to Adults/Senior Care
- 112 Adults served by In-Home Aide Service (IHAS)
- 13,240 hours of (IHAS) service
- 7 Temporary adult guardianship assessments
- 9 Adults under Public Guardianship with the agency as of June 30, 2021
- 13 Project Home individuals placed with 8 Project Home providers (Adult Foster Care) as of June 30, 2021
- Funded 1,718 State Respite hours



Workforce Development

- 164 TCA customers placed in employment with 133 employers
- 84 adults served by workforce center
- 162 total employment placements with 80 full time/\$10+ an hour job.

Medical Assistance

- 1236 new applications approved for Medical Assistance
- 468 new applications for Long Term Care
- 384 SSI medical cases were approved
- 5,056 monthly Medical Assistance recipients

Emergency Assistance

- \$1,300 spent on Emergency Assistance to families (2 families served) for utility, eviction, security deposit, and burial assistance.

Temporary Cash Assistance to Disabled Adults

- 350 approved new applications for TDAP
- Average TDAP recipients per month – 240

PA2E

- 6 participants for PA2E for the Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 virtual classes

Walk-in and Online Support

- 10,493 online program applications
- FIA responded to 9,569 work orders generated by the Call Center
- 93 walk-in customers were assisted

A Story of Hope and Inspiration from the Family Investment Administration

I was previously on welfare, and now 12 years later I am a Lead Worker at FCDSS. The thought that my story could somewhat be inspiring to someone else had never crossed my mind.

It was August of 2008-2009 when I first started receiving food stamps and TCA out of necessity. My husband at the time and I lost our jobs and were on the last of our money.

We were stuck and welfare seemed to be the only hope now. Hesitant, I applied for benefits and we were finally able to feed our kids and breathe a bit. As much as I hated receiving benefits, my kids came first.

You always try to stay positive but behind that smile there was worry, pain and plenty of tears. Then this opportunity came up to make an extra \$60 on top of your TCA grant by being a WEX, I accepted it without hesitation in August of 2009. The job was to work in the office of DSS filing, copying, and doing basic office clerk duties. This later led to a program they had begun that allowed the DSS to hire TCA recipients to be FIA Aides and gain more experience and work. This came with an actual paycheck. They offered me the position. The new year couldn't start in a better way. With this I was able to get daycare vouchers and a car through WAG that lasted me until a year ago. We were now able to pay a bit of rent to my stepdad and the husband could use the car to work. We were off to a good start.

This job has also granted me the chance to buy a house, daycare for the kids and now finally I was able to buy a car with money that I had saved up. I have gained knowledge and I strive every day to learn more and help other workers as much as I can. I strive every day to help the customers that come in knowing that I was once in their shoes. I can say that my growth has been seen by my family, coworkers, and management. This now led me to get two promotions in the last year and I am finally a Lead worker. Patience pays off, hitting rock bottom pays off and this is not the destination of my journey.

Never give up and whether it's a little step or a huge one just never give up on a goal to become better, be better and strive for more. It doesn't matter how long it takes. You'll get there.

- Written by Militza Suarez, an FIA Lead Worker who started in the WEX program



2021 NEW INITIATIVES:

PQI (Performance Quality Improvement) - Fiscal Year 21 saw the return of the Agency PQI team. The goal of PQI as a function of FCDSSS is to actively promote and demonstrate a culture of learning and continual improvement. A highly developed PQI system effectively engages staff, at all levels, to advance the mission and achieve strategic goals of the agency. This is achieved by utilizing data to better understand the following:

- How well we are doing as an agency. (OUTPUTS)
- The impact we have on our clients. (OUTCOMES)
- The quality of the work being completed. (QUALITY)
- Is the process adequate to meet the desired program objectives? (ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW)

PQI is a fluid process of ongoing assessing, planning and adjusting strategies to achieve the desired outcomes for each program.

From July 2020 through June 2021, the following PQI activities occurred:

- Virtual committee meetings were held monthly throughout the year.
- Surveys were developed and sent out to Community Stakeholders, Internal Staff of the Agency, and Resource Parents.
- Development of Program Indicators for each Division
- Revising the Case Record Review process for applicable case management programs
- Development of an Annual Process Review tool to be utilized by Divisions to ensure internal processes remain up to date and relevant to the work we do.

IPM – Integrated Practice Model (IPM) for Child Welfare and Adult Services- The IPM articulates Maryland’s values, principles and core practices and sets forth expectations for how we will work with children, youth, families, and vulnerable adults, as well as how we will work with each other and with our community and state partners, regardless of jurisdiction. FCDSS supervisors and staff have been engaged in training and coaching on the tools and materials of the IPM to improve practice. We will continue to implement and sustain these practices and are committed to collaborating with, advocating for, respecting, and empowering each other and the children, youth, families, and vulnerable adults we serve and support.

Center for Excellence – Center for Excellence in Resource Parent Development (CFE) - In 2019, the federal Children’s Bureau awarded the Maryland Department of Human Services (DHS)/ Social Services Administration (SSA) funding for the National Center for Excellence in Foster Family Development (CfE). The purpose of the CFE is to prepare and support resource parents to support timely reunification, permanency, & family-based placements. Resource parents participating in the program will provide enhanced reunification and stability support to birth families and children. FCDSS is one of 5 Maryland jurisdictions selected to implement the CFE locally and in FY 21 we began our planning phase.

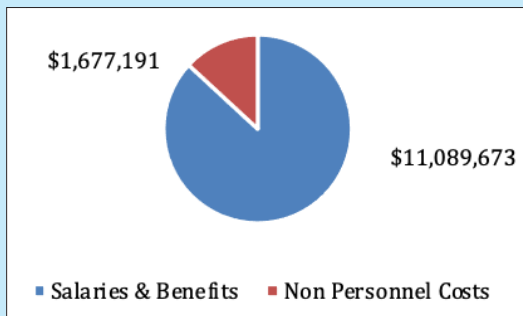
ADMINISTRATION

In FY2021, we have had a full year of impact from Covid-19 on our employees, our customers, and our community. Management focused on supporting the physical and mental well-being of our teams as a top priority, thereby enabling our people to do what was needed of them, both for themselves and their families as well as for our customers. The leadership team is grateful to our employees for their dedication and resilience. Our team had to find new ways to collaborate, were able to respond to the work from home environment and rapidly deliver results for our customers. There were of course challenges at times with productivity and staff availability, but the strength of the group allowed us to keep delivering on our purpose, week in and week out.

Without a doubt we have a lot of work ahead of us as we navigate through our new business model. We continue to have great confidence in the strength of our team members as they are critical to our responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars. We are proud of the Operations team and what we have accomplished in an unprecedented and difficult year and look forward to continuing to serve our customers, partner agencies and the community in which we work and live.

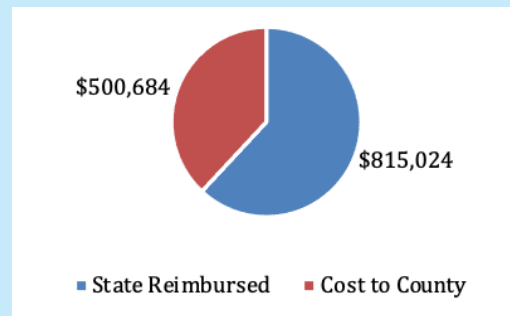
FY21 State Administrative Appropriation Budget

Salaries & Benefits	\$11,089,673
Non-Personnel Costs	\$1,677,191
Total	\$12,766,864

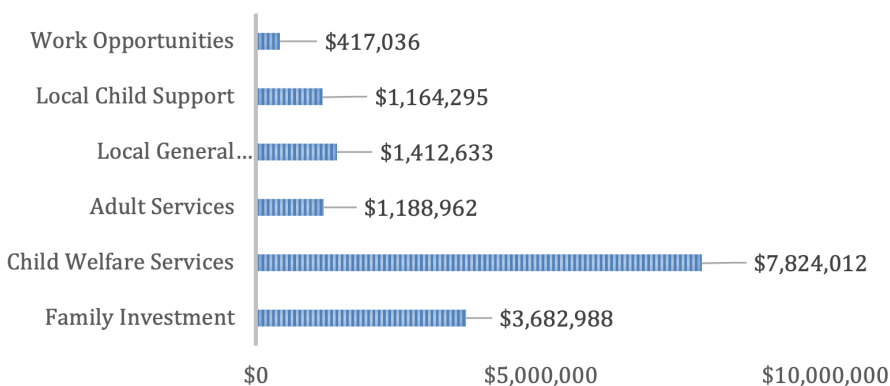


FY21 County Operating Budget

State Reimbursed	\$815,024
Cost to County	\$500,684
Total	\$1,315,708



FCDSS FY21 EXPENDITURES



FY2021 Expenditures

Family Investment	\$3,682,988
Child Welfare Services	\$7,824,012
Adult Services	\$1,188,962
Local General Admin	\$1,412,633
Local Child Support	\$1,164,295
Work Opportunities	\$417,036
Total	\$15,689,926

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, our agency did not participate in any outreach events. Most events were canceled throughout the community and year.

PARTNERSHIPS

ASIAN AMERICAN CENTER
CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER
COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATES
CROSSED BRIDGES
DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE SERVICES
FAITH COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP (VARIOUS FAITH PARTNERS)
FAMILY PARTNERSHIP
FAMILIES CONNECTED
FREDERICK CITY POLICE
FREDERICK CITY PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY
FREDERICK COMMUNITY COLLEGE
FREDERICK COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
FREDERICK COUNTY CITIZENS SERVICES
FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT
FREDERICK COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
FREDERICK COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT
FREDERICK COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
FREDERICK COUNTY SENIOR SERVICES
FREDERICK COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
FREDERICK DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND HUMAN SERVICES
HEARTLY HOUSE
LOCAL FOOD BANKS
MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION
RELIGIOUS COALITION
RESCUE MISSION
SECOND CHANCE GARAGE
SHIP
TRAUMA RESPONSIVE FREDERICK
UNITED WAY OF FREDERICK COUNTY
WAY STATION



GET INVOLVED

If You Have Considered....

Helping Children in Foster Care in Frederick County? You can:

- Spread the word about the need for foster and adoptive parents in Frederick County by following our foster care Facebook page (fcdss.fosteradopt)
- Become a childcare volunteer so foster parents can attend training and support groups
- Attend an information session to learn more about becoming a resource parent
- Become a mentor to a teen in foster care
- Join a small group of community members to provide support to one youth at a time through a program called The Open Table
- Become a CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate)
- Host an information session through your business, place of worship, or other club or organization
- Display our foster parenting brochures or flyers in your office or place of worship?
- Donate to the Frederick County Foster and Adoptive Parent Association through Amazon Smiles?
- Donate to the Frederick County foster care program during jury duty through Generous Jurors
- Ask your pastor or faith leader to consider participating in the Faith Community Partnership with Frederick County DSS.

Are you are interested in Helping Vulnerable Individuals and Families in Your Community in Frederick County?

- Donate to the Crib Crawl fundraiser that allows FCDSS to raise awareness about safe sleeping for infants, as well as other important safety tips and reminders for families and children. The funds are used to purchase pack-n-plays that will be given to families in the community as a safer sleep option.
- Share information about our services to families through your school systems, churches, and community groups.
- Become a Project Home provider and host a vulnerable adult in your family setting.
- Learn about how Trauma impacts those in our community and commit to supporting those who have been impacted by trauma. Instead of asking, "What's wrong with that family?" ask "What has happened?" and "How can I help? Learn more about trauma by contacting Trauma Responsive Frederick by clicking their link at <https://traumaresponsivefrederick.org/about/>.

Social Media Information:



Facebook – Like us at:

Frederick County Department of Social Services

Contact Us:

General Phone

(301) 600-4555

Adult & Elderly Services

(301) 600-2635

Child Protective Services

(301) 600-2464

Child Support

(800) 332-6347

Family Investment

(301) 600-4575

Foster Care and Adoption

(301) 600-2466

Email Information:

General Email

FCDSS.info@maryland.gov

Child Support

fcdss.childsupport@maryland.gov

Family Investment

fcdss.fia@maryland.gov

State of Maryland
Larry Hogan, Governor
Boyd Rutherford, Lt. Governor

Maryland Department of Human Services
Lourdes Padilla, Secretary

Frederick County Department of Social Services
Debbie Marini, LCSW-C, Director