



# FREDERICK COUNTY

## Department of Social Services

ANNUAL REPORT FY2023

## A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

I like to think of FY2023 as the year of the 3 R's! *Return, Restore, Reimagine*

**RETURN:** FCDSS, like most social services agencies, returned to fully operational in-person services in FY2023. It was great to get back to interacting in-person with our community and each other! The previous year, we served 7,248 walk-in customers and that number increased to 20,048 customers this year. This return increased a sense of community and teamwork.

**RESTORE:** Given the undeniable challenges of the last few years, it wasn't enough to simply return, we had to consider what resources were needed to restore and re-establish our agency. It was perfect timing to pursue re-accreditation through the Council on Accreditation (COA). This process allowed us to review and ensure our practices and policies are modeled after standards of excellence. At the end of this process, COA's President and CEO wrote, COA is proud to recognize Frederick County Department of Social Services as one of these outstanding providers, and we wish you the very best in your continuing work with the individuals you serve."

**REIMAGINE:** Beginning in July 2022, the agency embarked on a six-month reimagining process to build out a strategic plan through 2027, with a view to enhancing services, improving customers' experience, and ensuring that all decisions are based on clear and measurable data. We engaged staff of all levels through surveys, work sessions, and soliciting feedback. We are inspired by the results we aim to achieve through this plan and look forward to sharing more with you as we make progress.

*Debbie Marini*

## A MESSAGE FROM THE ADVISORY BOARD CHAIR

*The Frederick County Social Services Advisory Board is made up of local individuals from across the spectrum that serve at the request of the County Executive to support the Department's mission. Current representatives come from the business, nonprofit, religious, education sectors, as well as community organizations, service providers, and former customers.*

*Over the past year as we emerge from the pandemic, the Board has witnessed the transformation of the Department as it leans into the, at times, overwhelming need of the community. With renewed vigor, administration and staff alike have responded with a strong and resounding commitment to improved client-centric practices, responsiveness, and compassion.*

*In the coming year, the Advisory Board looks forward to witnessing the agency'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.*

*This Annual Report documents the commitment and dedication of the fine staff of the department.*

*Ed Hinde*

# 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.

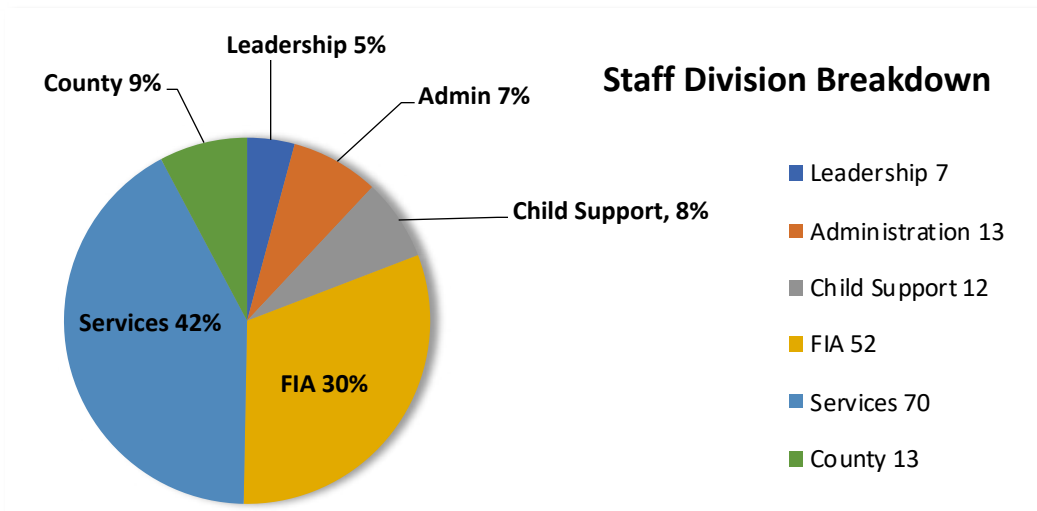
Agency Description:

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

Our objectives are to attract, retain, and develop the best talent to enable the highest quality service for the individuals, children, and families we serve. To support these objectives, goals are designed to enhance the agency's culture toward a more engaging, inclusive, and diverse workplace and to evolve and provide technology, tools, and resources to equip employees at work. As of June 30, 2023, FCDSS employed 171 people: 158 State staff including 3 DHS and 13 County staff.



## Leadership Team:

Debbie Marini, Director  
 Donna Heller, Administrative Officer  
 Jackie Byerly, 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:

Rajinder Sagar, CSA, Supervisor	Dawn Horner, FIA, Supervisor
Margaret Flick, CSA, Supervisor	Linnea Adams, FIA, Program Integrity Administrator
Lori Heslin, FIA, Supervisor	Ray Brown, Admin, Supervisor
Benjamin Brusini, FIA, Supervisor	Melissa Curtis-Cherry, SSA, In Home Services Program Manager
Jennifer Hemler, FIA, Supervisor	Jennifer Long, SSA, Foster Care Program Manager
Renee Walchuck, FIA, Supervisor	Scott Birdsall, SSA, Adult Services Program Manager
Rachelle Swope, FIA, Supervisor	Kristen Dunn, SSA, Child Protective Services Program Manager

The Social Services Advisory Board is appointed by the County Executive and is composed of individuals from Frederick County. The Board advocates for the department with the public and, when possible, with elected officials at the county and state level. They have a recruitment, fundraising/outreach, and legislative committee. They follow the open meetings act and meet monthly, with meetings being open to the public.

## Advisory Board:

Ed Hinde - Chair (Frederick)	Patrick Hammett (Frederick)	Jenifer Zimmer - Monrovia
Kerri Burson (New Market)	Renee Knapp (Council Member Liaison)	Natalie Gipson - Frederick
Cheryl Back (Thurmont)	Chris Kimberly - Frederick	David Drezner - Walkersville
Esther Slack-Metellus (Frederick)	Casey Day-Kells - Frederick	Elizabeth Etouke - Frederick

# 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)** - (CPS) is a mandated program designed to protect children from abuse and/or neglect. CPS receives and investigates reports of child abuse and neglect and then works with the family to develop a plan as to what needs to change in order to maintain children safely in their homes.

**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. FCDSS works collaboratively with the family and appropriate community resources to assess the families' strengths and needs, and to provide services without the threat of a formal finding.

**Risk of Harm (ROH)** - CPS screens for ROH cases for specific categories of reports, such as Substance Exposed Newborns and domestic violence. In ROH cases, FCDSS works collaboratively with the family and appropriate community resources to assess the families' strengths and needs, and to provide services.

**Human Trafficking Response Team** - The Frederick County Human Trafficking Response Team was created to provide a victim-centered, collaborative response to human trafficking in Frederick County. This team was the result of the work from the 2019 Human Trafficking Task Force, whose goal was to educate the public, identify and serve the victims of human trafficking with comprehensive services, and increase prosecution of human traffickers.

**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 to self-sufficiency. An Independent Living Coordinator works with the youth on the goals of housing, health care, education, employment, financial literacy, and well-being. This work is fulfilled using strategies such as Youth Transition Planning, Independent Living Skills classes, and Youth Leadership activities, including the Youth Advisory Board and Foster Youth Legislative Day.

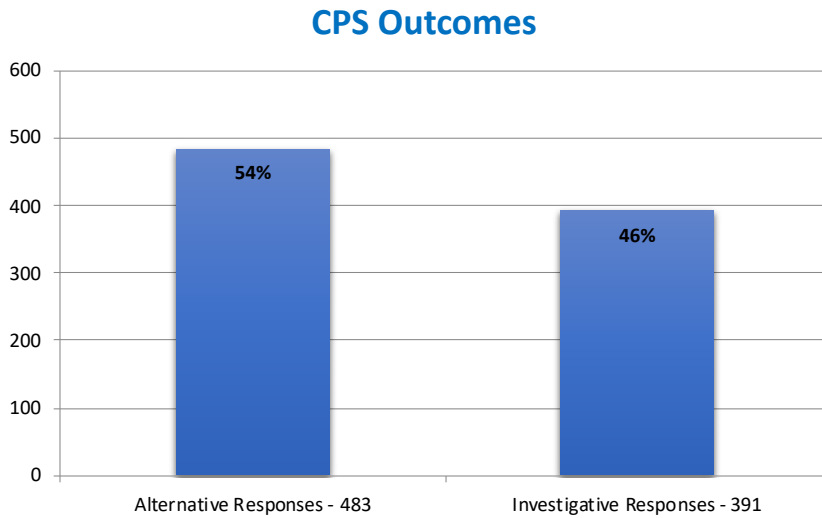
**Crossover Youth** - The Crossover Youth Practice Model, developed by the Center for Juvenile Justice Reform at Georgetown University, is a collaborative effort between FCDSS and the Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) intended to improve outcomes for child welfare youth who crossover into the juvenile 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 youth crossing over and becoming dually involved.

**Specialized Placement Services** - Most children who come into foster care are placed with Kinship Families or Resource Families who 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.



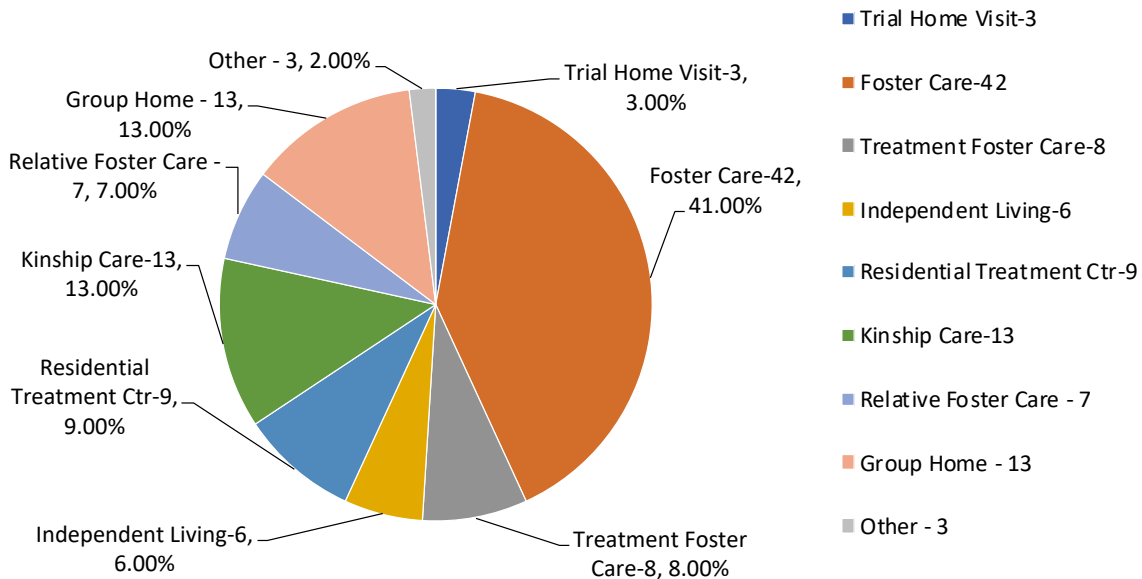
# PROGRAM OUTCOMES FOR SERVICES TO CHILDREN:

- 874 Child Protective Services Responses



- 216 Risk of Harm Cases
- 43 Family Family Team Decision Making Meetings (FTDMS) Meetings held for older youth transitioning from foster care.
- 6 Older Youth Discussion Groups held with an average of 4-5 youth participating in each
- Individual life skills meetings were held with 7 youth
- 10 youth identified as Crossover Youth by FCDSS & DJS
- 102 children served in Foster Care in the following placement types:

## Foster Care and Placement Types





## SERVICES TO FAMILIES:

**Family Teaming** - Family Team Decision Meetings (FTDMs) occur when a child in the home has been identified as being at risk for out-of-home placement and are held with the child and the family throughout their engagement with the agency. The purpose of these meetings is to reinforce the partnership between families/youth and the agency; serve as a vehicle for family-driven decision making; and identify supports of the family who could participate in the teaming. A neutral, trained facilitator mediates and leads these meetings at FCDSS.

***In-Home Family Services*** - The services listed below are offered as a part of FCDSS's efforts to partner with families and the community to promote the stability of children with their families and prevent the need for children to be placed in out-of-home care. In 2018, the Family First Prevention Services Act was enacted and represents the biggest child welfare reform bill passed in many years. FCDSS has been innovative in its efforts to address the needs of families and continues to expand our work in this area. A few innovative in-home family services programs include:

**Sobriety Treatment and Recovery Teams (START)** - The broad goals of START are to keep children safe with their parents whenever possible and to promote parental recovery and their capacity to care for their children. A START Family Mentor (an individual in long-term recovery) is paired with the LDSS caseworker, and the team works collaboratively with the family to address parental substance use.

**Family Partnership** - Through formal and informal parent education workshops, support, and counseling, FCDSS partners with the county to provide services that will prevent future child abuse and neglect as measured by indicated findings in Child Protective Services investigations and out-of-home placements.

**Interagency 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, educational and/or mental health facilities, and/or are at high risk for future maltreatment. IFPS involves families as partners in all steps of the therapeutic and interven-

tion process. Services include crisis intervention/prevention; family counseling; and family education in the areas of child development, parenting skills, communication skills, and behavior management. Sheppard Pratt provides these contracted services to our families.

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

**Kinship Navigation** - Kinship Navigation services support informal kinship families, which are 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. The 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 ensuring safety for the child and providing effective permanency planning for both 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 not only as a resource to the child, but also 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 order to ensure the well-being and safety of the child. Some specific permanency services include:

**Family Assessments** - The FCDSS Family Assessment Specialist works diligently to collect and summarize information to complete psycho-social family assessments with families of children 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. In addition to the family visitation rooms at FCDSS, many visits also take place in the community, both supervised and unsupervised, as well as through our partnerships with community organizations.

**Safe Babies** - The first three years of life encompass the most critical phase of brain development. Recognizing this, the Safe Babies program 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 to change local systems in order 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 are able to enter into an agreement with the Department to have their child voluntarily placed when their treatment needs cannot be met in the community and the parent needs funding assistance. In these situations, the parents retain custody of their child.



**Financial Benefits and Supports** - Mainly through our Family Investment and Child Support Administration, 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)** - SNAP benefits supplement 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)** - TCA benefits are temporarily provided 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 receive benefits for only 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 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. Services available through Child Support include Location, Establishment, Collections and Enforcement (see descriptions below).

#### Location

Once all necessary information is received in an application, the 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, BEACON, Federal Parent Locator Service, MVA, Lexis Nexis, and 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.

#### Collections

After there has been an establishment of a court order for support, accounts are set up on the Child Support Management System (CSMS) 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.

#### 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.

**Holiday Assistance** - FCDSS partners with the community to support seniors and children with holiday gifts and items needed to make the holiday special.

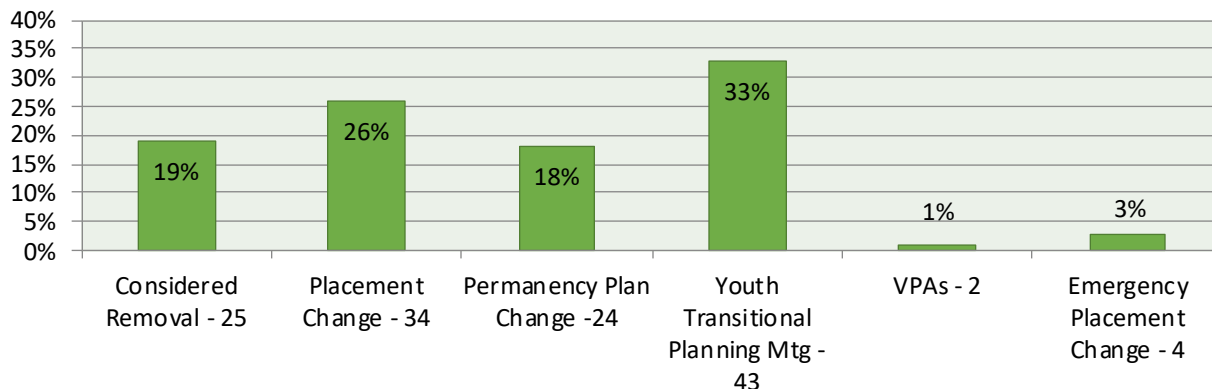
**Generous Jurors** - The Circuit Court for Frederick County and FCDSS cooperate in this program that allows jurors to donate their jury pay to the FCDSS Foster Care Unit. The donations are used to provide items for foster children in the county that state budgets do not support, such as school band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

**The Bridge** - FCDSS has a partnership with Crossed Bridges and the Asian American Center of Frederick to implement the The Bridge platform. The Bridge is an online platform that connects vulnerable families, children, and adults to resources and supplies donated by the local faith and business communities.

# PROGRAM OUTCOMES FOR SERVICES TO FAMILIES:

- 132 Family Teamings were held for the following reasons:

## Family Teamings



As a result of Family Teamings, 19 children were diverted from out-of-home placement.

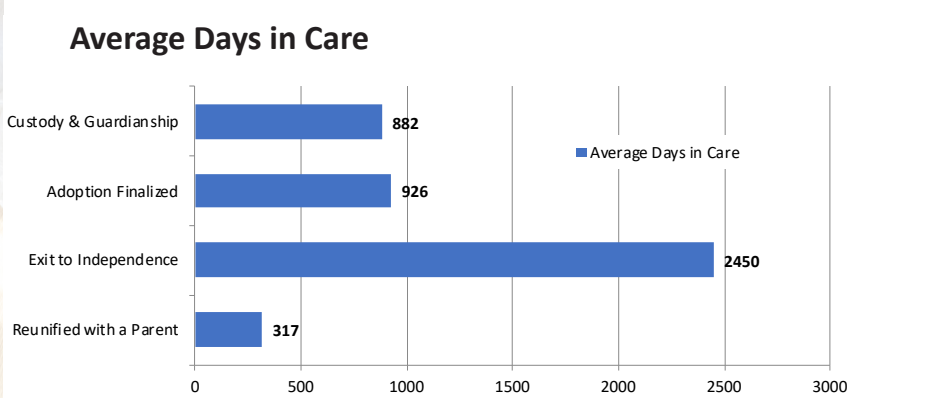
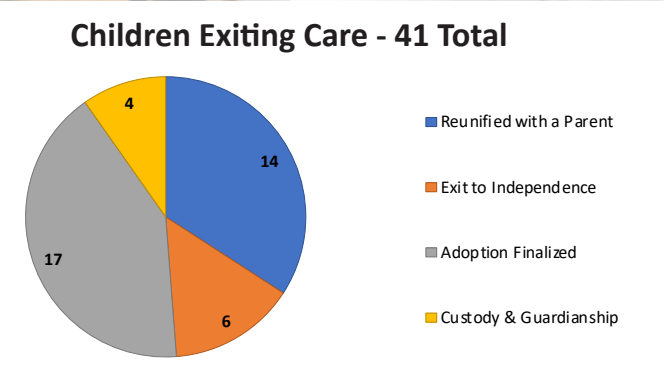
## In-Home Family Services:

- 103 children (53 families) were served by the FCDSS In Home Services team throughout the fiscal year.
- 7 of these families served through Family Preservation had kinship caregivers and were supported by our Kinship Navigator.
- 41 additional families with kinship caregivers requested short-term support and were served with information and referrals. In-person relative caregiver support group events were held monthly at a local YMCA with 87 families participated in a special Thanksgiving dinner was also held in November and a Mother's Day celebration in May at a local restaurant with 121 caregivers and children in attendance.
- The Sobriety Treatment and Recovery Team (START) served 10 families, including 15 children.
- 85 families were served through a contract with Sheppard Pratt Interagency Family Preservation Services.
- 56 caregivers and 74 children were served through our collaboration with Family Partnership.
- The Multisystemic Therapy (MST) Program served 25 families in FY23, with 14 families completing the full course of MST treatment.



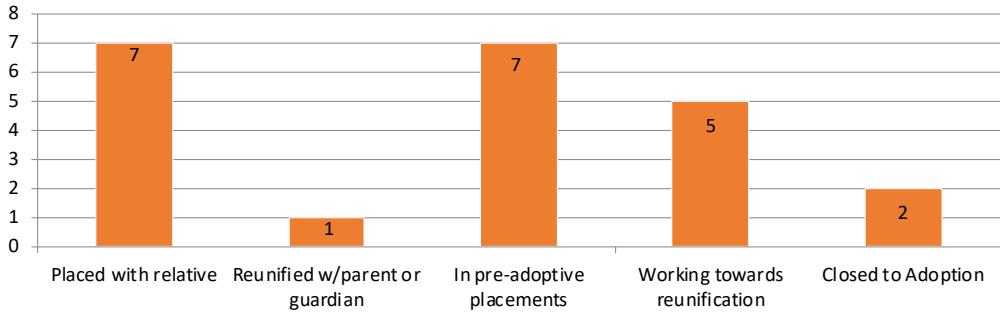
## Foster Care:

- 63 Children in Foster Care as of June 30, 2023
- 4 Children in placements with a VPA
- 38 families are licensed as foster/adoptive families as of June 30, 2023



- 10 Family Assessments were completed (19 children) and those children had the following plans/outcomes:

### Family Assessment Outcomes



*\*Some children are included in more than one category*

- 34 children were served through Safe Babies Court Team (SBCT)
- 13 total SBCT cases closed with 2 reunifications and 11 children reached permanency through adoption.

## FINANCIAL SERVICES AND BENEFITS TO FAMILIES:

- 6,402 new applications were approved for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).
- \$49,529,078 issued in SNAP benefits (monthly average of 9,367 households/18,107 recipients)
- Approved 363 new applications for Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA).
- 714 active Temporary Cash Assistance cases totaling \$3,774,306 of funds disbursed.
- Average of 411 Temporary Cash Assistance households per month with a total of 1,066 recipients
- On average, a TCA household received \$765 per month
- For FFY23, Frederick County collected \$13,276,593 in child support collections.
- 3,322 children in Frederick County had paternity established or acknowledged at the end of FFY23.
- 287 cases were referred to the State's Attorney's Office to be reviewed for contempt; 230 of those cases referred were approved to be brought before the court for contempt.
- 4279 active cases (581 pending location and court order establishment + 3698 under court order)
- 1029 Child Support Interstate cases
- 750 Child Support applications received (07/01/2021 to 06/30/2022)
- In FY23, the Holiday Gift Drive served 69 seniors, 69 children in out-of-home care, and 42 children with Family Preservation involvement. The funds came from both the Bar Association of Frederick County and The Community Foundation of Frederick County.
- 36 children used Generous Jurors funding this year for a variety of items including but not limited to driver's education, camps, sports registrations and equipment, therapeutic tools, school activities, electronic equipment, and formal wear for school functions.



In FY23, several initiatives were developed through the Faith Community Partnership (FCP), a partnership between FCDSS and the local faith and business communities. A new online platform called The Bridge was implemented in July of 2022 which allows FCDSS workers to submit needs on behalf of clients and those needs are responded to by volunteers within the faith and business communities. FCDSS submitted 146 requests through The Bridge for our clients. 100 of those requests were met. Requests met included needs for diapers, furniture, Costco memberships, food, clothing, strollers, bedding, pre-paid cell phones, and baby items. We also created the Child Welfare Pantry, which is kept stocked through donations from the FCP. These items include diapers, wipes, cleaning supplies, hygiene products, window and door alarms, smoke detectors, first aid kits, formula, and vacuum cleaners. Items from the Child Welfare Pantry were given to child welfare clients as they were needed. The FCP also provided laptops to nine FCDSS child welfare clients.

## Program Highlight/Success Story



The first time I had to apply for assistance through Social Services was in 2019 after entering an in-patient recovery program for substance use disorder. I was homeless, pregnant, newly enrolled in a women and children's long-term treatment program to begin rebuilding my life in sobriety.

The women and children's program required patients to withdraw most of their TCA benefits to be put back for when they graduated the program to have money saved for the next steps in their sober lives. Leaving treatment, I had enough money to cover a security deposit and first month's rent at an apartment in the Frederick area. Having this assistance was invaluable because the COVID 19 pandemic began when I was leaving sober housing. I was a newly sober first-time mother with a 9-month-old baby, looking for work when everyone was required by law to stay at home and all but essential businesses were closed.

A DHS employee suggested I apply for the Child Care Scholarship Program to help me pay for my daughter's daycare so I would be able to get back to work. I got a job at a grocery store and was able to enroll my daughter in a daycare facility nearby. Making only minimum wage, I relied heavily on the Religious Coalition for rental assistance and my TCA and SNAP benefits to help me survive during the pandemic until I could find a better job to support myself and my child.

My TCA worker Rick Mayhew then referred me to Frederick County Workforce Services local American Job Center to help me find a job that would give me some financial independence. I was able to enroll in the Resilient Frederick County pilot program, Recovery to Work Academy for individuals impacted by substance use disorder and was able to take my remaining class to finish my bachelor's degree in communications remotely from Salisbury University. After taking four buses a day to and from daycare and work for over a year I was finally able to be a program car recipient through Frederick's Second Chance Garage.

I was offered a three-month temporary work experience position at FCWS as a Communications Administrative Assistant for the head of the RFC program. For the first time I was able to support myself and my daughter without TCA and other welfare benefits that I had depended on so much when first getting sober.

After finishing my temporary work experience, I was recommended for an opening position as a contractual Workforce Development Specialist for the State of Maryland. After being a contractual state of Maryland employee for 18 months I was offered a permanent position with the Department of Labor starting December 27th of 2023. I am now in a fully benefited position and able to start saving for retirement and my daughter's future, something I haven't ever been able to do.

The many programs created to support people like me in my sobriety have been essential to my success as a mother in recovery. In addition to helping people find jobs I often refer customers to programs that I have had to use throughout these past 5 years--knowing what a difference any extra help makes when you have nothing, or you are on the verge of losing what little you do have. I'm forever grateful for the assistance I received when I was at a very uncertain time in my life, and that includes all the help I received from the Department of Social Services in Frederick, MD.

Written by Shelby Ranalli, a former TCA recipient.

## SERVICES TO ADULTS:

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

**Workforce Development** - FCDSS partners with Frederick County Workforce Services, 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. During 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 redeterminations for this assistance. Not to Frederick County residents who are not 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** - Emergency Assistance provides cash assistance payments to help families with children resolve a specific emergency such as an eviction, foreclosure, or 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)** - TDAP is 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 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**

- 47 Adult Protective Services Responses
- 126 Adults served in Social Services to Adults/Senior Care
- 87 Adults served by In-Home Aide Service (IHAS)
- 13,016 hours of (IHAS) service
- 4 Temporary adult guardianship assessments
- 10 Adults under Public Guardianship with the agency as of June 30, 2023
- 10 Project Home individuals placed with 8 Project Home providers (Adult Foster Care) as of June 30, 2023
- Funded 1,212 State Respite Hours.

### **Workforce Development**

- 76 total job placements with 68 employers
- 72 TCA customers placed in employment with 31 full-time/\$12.50+ per hour jobs

### **Medical Assistance**

- 413 new applications approved for Medical Assistance
- 480 new applications for Long Term Care
- 132 SSI medical cases were approved
- 6,030 monthly Medical Assistance recipients

### **Emergency Assistance**

- 7 applications approved for Emergency Assistance to Families with Children totaling \$5,350 of funds disbursed.
- 1 application approved for Burial Assistance totaling \$650 of funds disbursed.

### **Temporary Cash Assistance to Disabled Adults(TDAP)**

- 556 new applications approved for TDAP
- Average TDAP recipients per month was 271
- \$1,532,773 issued in TDAP benefits

### **PA2E**

- 5 participants for PA2E for the Fall 2022 and Spring 2023 virtual classes

### **Walk-in and Online Support**

- 5,924 online program applications and 2,046 online redetermination submissions were received via the myMDTHINK Consumer Portal
- FIA responded to 5,758 work orders generated by the Call Center
- 20,048 walk-in customers were assisted by FIA staff



## Senior Care Program - Ms. Ruth Onley

The Senior Care Program offers services to eligible seniors living in Frederick County. To be eligible for the Program, an adult must be 65 years or older, moderately, or severely functionally disabled, and meet specific financial criteria. The purpose of the Senior Care Program is to enable participants to maintain independence in their home and prevent premature institutional care, which usually takes place in a Medicaid-funded facility.

Ms. Ruth Onley has been a participant of the Senior Care Program since 2020. Ms. Onley is 109 years old, and her caregivers are her four adult children who are all now in their eighties. Through the Senior Care Program, Ms. Onley has received case management for linkage to services in the community, gap-filling funds for financial assistance with purchasing incontinence supplies and other medical equipment, and in-home aide services for assistance with personal care and chores. With the assistance of the Senior Care Program, Ms. Onley has successfully maintained her independence and remains in the house that she has called home since 1967.



Ms. Onley's daughter, Mary Hoy, stated the following about how the Senior Care Program has benefited both Ms. Onley and her children/caregivers:

*"I would say [the Senior Care Program] has had a great impact on our lives. We have gotten a lot of assistance through the Program. Mom's case worker has been instrumental in purchasing incontinence supplies and connecting her to necessary services. The Program helped mom purchase hearing aids so she can now better communicate with everyone around her. The support of the [in-home aide services] has been very helpful. That's a biggy for us as caregivers because we are all senior citizens ourselves and are going through our own health issues. We are all trying our best to juggle caregiving with medical appointments and our own personal needs. We all do what we can do, and the [Senior Care Program] fills in the gaps. This Program has been such a blessing. I really feel like it's a favor from God. I can't even think about how things would be without these services."*

Ms. Onley's son, Bob Onley, added:

*"We all work so well as a family unit, and it is very rewarding to be able to care for mom here in her home. [The Senior Care Program] has allowed us to do this."*



## **AGENCY INITIATIVES:**

**PQI (Performance Quality Improvement)** - In FY23 the PQI team continued to make progress on our goals, and we identified the areas that needed strengthening from our experience getting accredited through COA. From July 2022 – June 2023 the following activities occurred:

- Committee meetings were held monthly throughout the year.
- Data dashboards were created, and we had continued discussion about data with each division.
- Activities were identified as a part of our Agency's strategic planning goal: FCDSS will use data-driven indicators to guide change.
- We began presenting data to division teams for the planning and improvement process to be full circle.

**Integrated Practice Model (IPM)** - The IPM for Child Welfare and Adult Services 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 our community and state partners, regardless of jurisdiction. 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.

**Family2Family Events** - In our last Annual Report - we highlighted the Center for Excellence in Resource Parent Development (CfE) grant. While the CfE grant period officially ended in September 2023, an impactful initiative that developed out of this work are our Family2Family events, allowing resource parents and birth families an opportunity to connect informally and build relationships. In FY 23, we coordinated 3 Family2Family events:

- On August 6th, 2022, we kicked off our first Family2Family Event at Green Meadows Petting Farm. In addition to the families enjoying lunch and roaming freely around the farm/animals, we partnered with a photographer who captured wonderful photos for the families to keep. One special moment was seeing a father be able to enjoy the event with all of his children in attendance, especially the newborn who was only a few months old.
- On November 13th, 2022, we hosted a Family2Family event at our local movie theater, Warehouse Cinemas. We reserved an entire theater to allow our families to enjoy an exclusive viewing of Sing2. Families enjoyed a social hour prior to the movie to enjoy snacks and opportunities to converse and share updates about the children. A mother who attended this event shared the highlight of being able to have her daughter sit in her lap and enjoy the movie. The resource parent had also brought a photo book to provide to the mother. It was a heart-warming event for all who attended.
- On June 17th, 2023 we hosted a Family2Family event to highlight National Reunification Month. Our families were invited to enjoy lunch and some fun at the indoor playground, MeLand. During this family time, we had two fathers who were able to attend and expressed their gratitude to be able to spend time with their children during Father's Day weekend, sharing it was the best gift possible!

**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Task Force** – Now in operation since 2019, the FCDSS DEI task force is positively impacting the culture at FCDSS. Here are some highlights of this year's work:

We've broadened our knowledge as individuals committed to justice and equity by engaging in learning and conversations about the deeply rooted American issue of racism and the need for social justice.

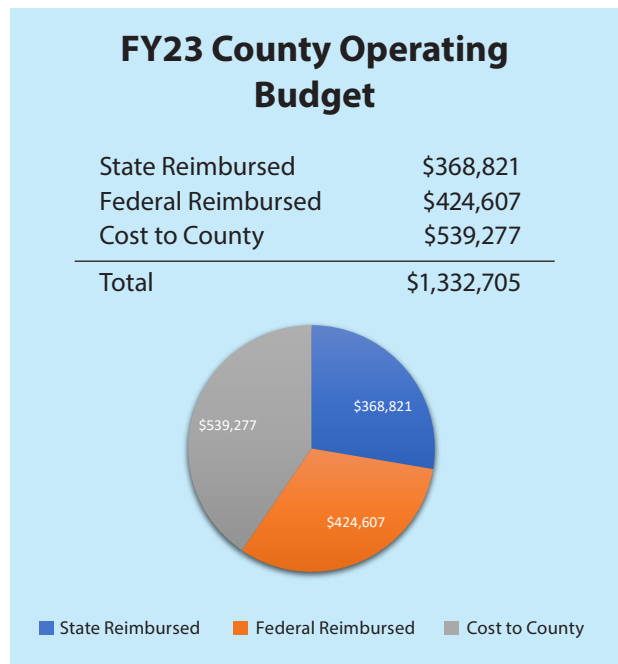
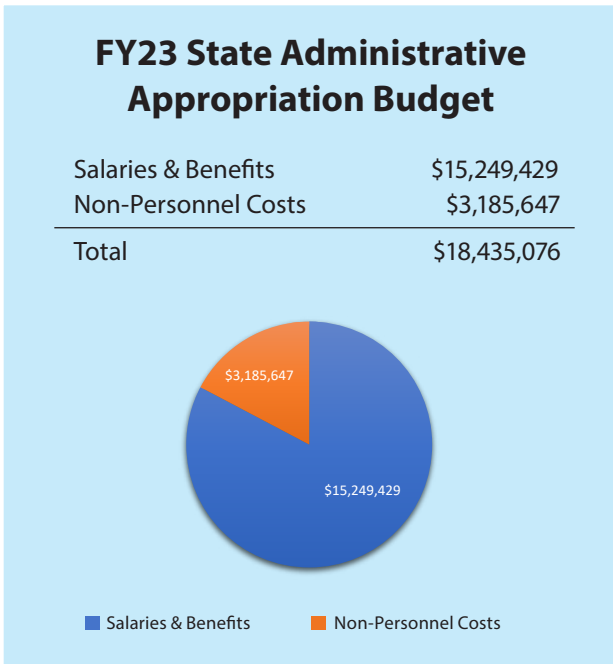
- We have collected data for our PQI dashboard on things like staff diversity, staff satisfaction with DEI related issues, staff retention, and survey results on things like inclusion, small group discussions etc.
- We've consistently produced a quarterly DEI newsletter and hosted a brown bag lunch & learn where topics are openly discussed (implicit bias, microaggressions, etc.).
- We began strategizing on how to attract and retain a more diverse workforce.
- We hosted our first World Heritage Day and staff enjoyed food and culture from around the world.

# ADMINISTRATION

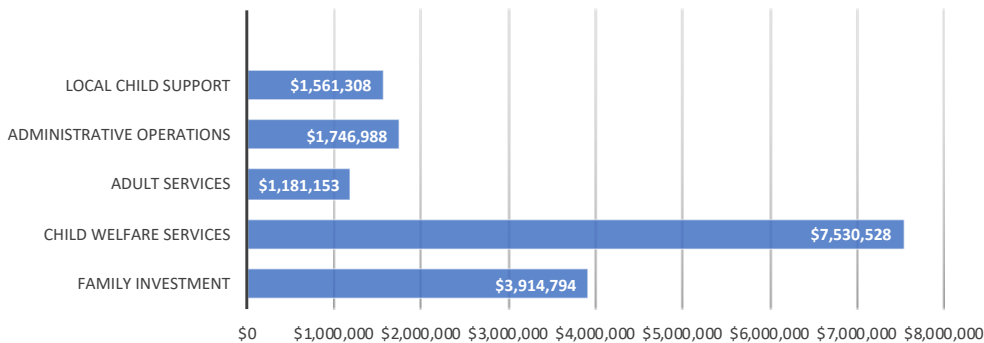
The FCDSS Administrative Operations Division provides systems and services that sustain and support safe, efficient, and effective work. The division consists of Administrative Services, Facility Management, Information Technology, Financial Services, Fleet Management, Procurement, Safety, and Emergency Preparedness Management.

The Administrative Operations Division relies on project management, lean principles, and continuous improvement to ensure the on-time and efficient delivery of outcomes. Operations professionals are dedicated to supporting the mission of the agency, our colleagues, and the greater Frederick community. Our teams work closely with the other divisions and community as business partners to accomplish the following objectives:

- Provide a safe and secure environment in which everyone can perform at their best.
- Maintain and enhance the physical, data, and technological infrastructure of the agency.
- Ensure resource development and stewardship of existing and future assets with a clear focus on fiscal responsibility.



## FCDSS FY2023 Expenditures



## FY2023 Expenditures

Family Investment	\$3,914,794
Child Welfare Services	\$7,530,528
Adult Services	\$1,181,153
Local General Admin	\$1,746,988
Local Child Support	\$1,561,308
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$15,934,771</b>

# COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Our agency is happy to report that we participated in many outreach events throughout the year some are listed below.

National Night Out  
Children's Festival  
YMCA Kids Day  
Asbury United Methodist Church Community Block Party  
In the Street  
Frederick Pride Festival  
Out of the Darkness  
AACF - Community Health Fair  
Love for Lochlin Flu/Covid Vaccines and Food Distribution  
City of Frederick Food Distribution and Turkey Giveaway

## PARTNERSHIPS

Asian American Center	Frederick County Sheriff's Office
Child Advocacy Center	Frederick County Public Schools
Crossed Bridges	Frederick County Senior Services
Department of Juvenile Services	Frederick County Workforce Development
Faith Community Partnership (Various Faith Partners)	Frederick Health Hospital
Families Connected	Frederick Rescue Mission
Family Partnership	Head Start
Frederick City Department of Health and Human Services	Heartly House
Frederick City Police	Local Food Banks
Frederick City Public Housing Authority	Love for Lochlin
Frederick Community College	Mental Health Association
Frederick County Citizens Services	Beyond Shelter Frederick
Frederick County Continuum of Care Collaborative	SHIP
Frederick County Government	Trauma Responsive Frederick
Frederick County Health Department	United Way of Frederick County
	Sheppard Pratt



## 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](https://www.facebook.com/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
- 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?**

- 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?"

## Social Media Information:



### Facebook – Like us at:

Frederick County Department of Social Services

## Contact Us:

### General Phone

(301) 600-4555

### Adult & Elderly Services

Project Home (301) 600-4504, IHAS (301) 600-2481

### Child & Adult Protective Services

1(800)91Prevent, 1(800) 917-7383

### 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**  
Wes Moore, Governor  
Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor

**Maryland Department of Human Services**  
Rafael López, Secretary

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