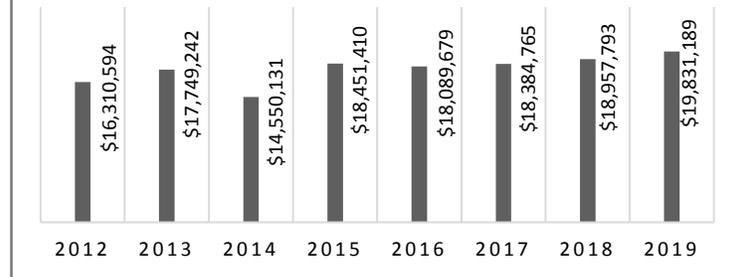


CHILDREN, YOUTH and FAMILIES

2960, 4046, 4059, 6071, 6110, 6119,
6120, 6129, 7310

DCYF - COUNTY SHARE



MISSION

Albany County Department for Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) is committed to excellence, professionalism, integrity and is uniquely structured to deliver an integrated, diverse, holistic set of services in collaboration with families and communities to empower families to create a safe, nurturing environment in which children can grow, thrive and reach their full potential.

WHO WE SERVE

DCYF serves the Children and Families of Albany County. Albany County is a System of Care community, which subscribes to the Child and Adolescent Service System Program (CASSP) Core Principles--child-centered, family-focused, community based, culturally competent, least restrictive and coordinated services for children and their families. A system of care is a coordinated network of effective services and supports for children and families, which are culturally and linguistically competent, build meaningful partnerships with families and youth, and have supportive management and policy infrastructure.

ABOUT OUR DEPARTMENT

DCYF is unique within New York State, in that services for children from other County departments are consolidated into an independent agency that focuses on integrated services, and strengthening and supporting families.

The **Children and Family Services Division** strives to ensure that all children live in safe and nurturing environments by providing State mandated Child Protective Services and prevention, adolescent, foster care and adoption services. Caseworkers are the frontline staff directly involved with ensuring the health and safety of children, especially those who are involved with Child Protective Services (CPS), Foster Care or Prevention Services.

The *Preventive Services Unit* provides rehabilitative and supportive services to families with children at risk for foster care or detention placement to avoid placements and to shorten placements for those in foster care. The *Healthy Families Home Visiting Program* is a comprehensive prevention program for children prenatal to 5 years old that builds on families' strengths with the goal of creating safe homes for children.

The **Youth Bureau** plans and manages a variety of programs for youth under the age of 21, including youth development, recreation, delinquency prevention and mandated services to run away and homeless youth.

The **Division of Children's Mental Health Services** houses the licensed Children's Mental Health Clinic, Children's Single Point of Access (SPOA), Case Management Services, and the Forensic Psychologists.

The **Division for Children with Special Needs** provides comprehensive evaluation services and administers the mandated Early Intervention and Preschool Special Education Programs. Additionally, provides the Physically Handicapped Children's Program to evaluate and serve children who have chronic illnesses, developmental delays and/or disabilities.

The **Division of Staff Development and Community Programs** are responsible for coordinating, delivering and managing the Department's staff training and educational programs. The Division also works with a variety of community programs in order to engage the broader community in promoting the safety and well-being of children and their families.

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The **Division of Administrative Services** is responsible for the fiscal operations of the Department. Due to a number of changes to state reimbursement streams, capped allocations and the continuation of a number of unfunded mandates, the Division has taken steps to review fiscal processes and claiming strategies in an effort to maximize revenue to the Department.

2018 ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND CHALLENGES

- In the Children and Family Services Division, the following accomplishments occurred:
 - 5,586 SCR reports investigated by Child Welfare staff, involving 10,191 children
 - Ongoing Monitoring Assessments (OMA) conducted in collaboration with NYS OCFS showed improvement in investigative practices during the course of 2017-2018.
 - 26 adoptions were approved by Family Court in 2017.
 - 15 families participated in Model Approach to Partnerships in Parenting (MAPP) training for foster parent certification, which will help to meet the increased need for foster homes.
 - Life Unplugged event provided 19 youth with “real life” experience in a structured, educational setting.
- In collaboration with DSS, Probation, and the Youth Bureau, the 5-year Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP), covering the period of April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2023 was completed. The CFSP is required by New York State. It is a local, multi-year plan for the provision of services and the allocation of resources. Specifically, the Children services Division has focused on permanency and re-entry in the child welfare section of the plan. Strategies identified to improve outcomes for children and families include assigning a foster care worker at the time of removal to expedite permanency work and the implementation of Re-integration services at the time that a PINS or JD youth is placed.
- The Prevention unit managed 21 contracts with 10 voluntary agencies delivering an array of clinical services, specialty services and juvenile justice services. A total of 938 families and 2949 children were provided preventive services, an important intervention to reduce the risk of foster care placement and/or expedite permanency for children.
- Juvenile Justice Reform efforts include the continued Annie E. Casey Foundation Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative (JDAI) work in Albany County. This work continues to focus on data analysis related to detention admission and strategies to reduce such. JJ Reform efforts also included work by the Capital Region Youth Justice Team (CRYJT) of which Albany County is a strong partner and participant. The CRYJT was recognized in 2018 with a Human Rights award for the work that has been accomplished.

Special Needs Division

- Continued implementation of Single Point of Entry (SPOE). As a result of increased community awareness, SPOE has seen an increase in referrals received over the past year. Pediatricians, hospitals, and a growing number of community based organizations are relying exclusively on the SPOE fax line for submission of their referrals to programs for the 0-5 population.
- The Evaluation Team continues to be utilized by multiple counties and has a high level of respect from counties and school districts they serve. For Early Intervention (EI), the evaluation team facilitated 180 core evaluations, 11 supplemental evaluations, and 1 screening. For the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE), there were a total of 184 children evaluated and the following evaluations were facilitated: 113 initial evaluations, and a total of 73 transitional and psychological evaluations.

Children’s Mental Health Clinic

- The Children’s Mental Health Clinic’s continues to expand its footprint into the community. In addition to the satellite clinic in the Berne Knox Westerlo school district, the clinic is also now co-located at Harmony Mills Pediatric clinic in Cohoes, NY. This supports the model of co-locating behavioral health services with primary care offices, to provide more comprehensive and holistic services and supports for families.
- Through services and supports provided through Vital Access Provider (VAP) funding, the clinic has seen increased revenue and productivity. One strategy was adding open access hours to the clinic on Wednesday mornings.
- The Care Management Team continues to support and coordinate services for families who have transitioned into to Health Homes. This was a significant change in delivery of services for both the families we serve and our staff. Staff participated in hours of training to make this a successful transition, all while completing their normal required work duties and ensuring children and family’s needs were being met.

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Youth Bureau Division

- The Youth Bureau managed 55 community-based programs using the Positive Youth Development approach which engages youth within their communities, schools, organizations, peer groups, and families in a manner that is productive and constructive; recognizes, utilizes, and enhances young people’s strengths; and promotes positive outcomes for young people by providing opportunities, fostering positive relationships, and furnishing the support needed to build on their leadership strengths. Over 20,000 youth in 13 municipalities will benefit from these services.
- To facilitate integration of the Youth Bureau with child welfare, the Youth Bureau executive director is a member of the Capital Region Runaway and Homeless Youth Advisory Committee, vice president of the Capital Region Youth Bureau Association, participates on the Youth Bureau 2.0 committee, a member of NYS Association of Youth Bureaus training team, participates on the JDAI Special Populations Workgroup and is a member of the Albany County Human Trafficking/CSEC Critical Team.
- Runaway and Homeless Youth Services have been expanded with the opening in June of St. Anne’s Institutes Hubbard Hall which will provide temporary shelter and counseling services to run away, homeless youth less than 18 years old.

Staff Development

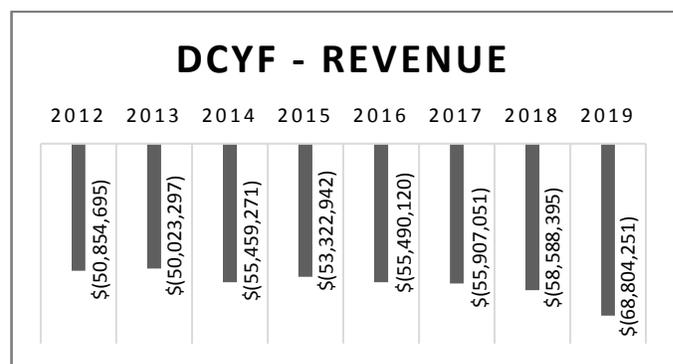
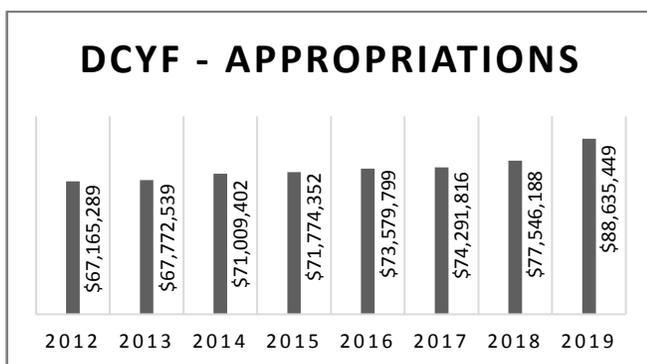
- A well-trained and skilled workforce along with opportunities for professional development is important for DCYF. There were over 300 training presentations facilitated by Staff Development.
- Since the beginning of the year Staff Development has participated in 10 outreach or engagement activities in the community. We have completed our Child Abuse Prevention Month Poster Contest and have begun preparation for the Back to School Supply Drive along with the Adopt A Family Program. Last year’s adopt a family was very successful. We were able to recruit 296 donors that served 330 families.
- The Healthy Families Albany County Home Visiting Program is a strength-based program, committed to providing education and supporting parent-child interaction. The Healthy Families program served 252 families this year. The program was highlighted at this year’s Prevent Child Abuse Awareness event in recognition of the outstanding work achieved by the program.

Administrative Services

- The Administrative Division was responsible for operating a \$77,546,000 budget and managing 215 contracts. Across the accounts, there is a targeted overall reimbursement rate of 75.5%.
- There have been significant changes by NYS regarding Title IV-E claiming, Candidacy requirements for Prevention programs and services, and the impending Families first prevention. These changes have come amid staffing changes in the Administrative Services division. Notwithstanding these challenges, the Division has banded together to implement and facilitate the needed changes while identifying ways to improve efficiency and productivity.

CHALLENGES

- Staffing was one of the biggest challenges for DCYF. Across the entire Department, there were vacancies due to retirements, resignations, and/or changes in circumstances. While we have successfully worked with Civil Service, HR, and the County Executive’s office to fill these vacancies, there is still a significant impact to work flow and processes.
- Managing our fiscal budget. A rise in the number of foster care placements, pre-school and related services referrals, associated transportation costs, and Committee for Special Education (CSE) placements presents a significant challenge in how to meet programmatic costs without necessitating the need for increased appropriations.



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2019 GOALS AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS

- Albany County DCYF will be focused on assessing the anticipated impact of Raise the Age on the juvenile justice service delivery system. We will also be exploring how best to support the numerous youth and families who will be in need of services and supports, as 16 year olds arrested for a crime as of 10/1/18 will enter this system.
- In conjunction with the County Executive's office, participating in Countywide initiatives including the Equity agenda, Foster Care Task Force, and the infant Mortality Initiative.
- Our Prevention RFP was issued in May 2018. The goal is to have established a comprehensive network of prevention programs services to meet the needs of children and family as of January 1, 2019.
- Continued planning for changes as Managed Care comes into effect for all Medicaid recipients as well as the implementation and roll out of Health Homes for Children. These changes will continue to impact DCYF in three key divisions: Children Services with our foster care population/ prevention population, Division of Special Needs with our Early Intervention services, and our Children's Mental Health Clinic for the provision of clinical as well as case management services. Developing contracts with managed care entities as well as identified children's health homes continues to be an integral part of this preparation.
- Continued collaboration with Albany County Family Court through the Court Improvement project (CIP) in order to assess ways to continuously improve court processes to achieve permanency for children in a timely manner, with a focus on trauma informed practice.

SUMMARY OF BUDGET CHANGES

Overall, the Department has been diligent over the last several years to reduce our expenditures and appropriations. We have continually examined and projected our spending to produce a responsible budget. In spite of this, there are a number of factors out of the Department's control. Decreases in state funding as well as increases in the number of foster care placements, Committee on Special Education (CSE) placements, and the increased number of pre-school and related services needs which correlates to an increase in transportation costs, have all had significant impact upon the DCYF budget.

Example of the services and support provided by Healthy Families Albany County

The mother of the baby (MOB) joined the Healthy Families Albany County (HFAC) program. At the time she and was residing at a shelter and going through drug court. Mom had some mandated services, which she followed through with and completed successfully.

Mom engaged very quickly with her HFAC family support worker (FSW). She looked to her FSW for support and called her when she had questions or needs. Mom would call the FSW each month to set up her appointments instead of waiting for the FSW to reach out to her. FSW provided mom with various services and resources including: information on housing; assisted her with setting structure to help support her sobriety; child development; and other goals she had in place.

Mom is able to read and respond to her child's cues and is very affectionate. This has continued to grow as the FSW works with her. The FSW continues to utilize a reflective strategy called Accentuating the Positives (ATP's) with this mom with to increase her confidence, follow through and independence.

Mom moved to Bleeker Terrace after the shelter and set a goal to move into housing. FSW followed through with all needs and resources with the mom and supports her with housing applications and looking for employment. Mom obtained a job and was able to move into housing, buy her own furniture and make a home for her child. This mom is thriving with the set structure in the home and continues to utilize the FSW as resource and asks for other resources as needed. The FSW has been able to reflect on mom's progress she has made to help her build her own resiliency and continues to move forward with her other goals. The mom stated this program comes first and is thankful for this program. This mom is currently pursuing going back to school to gain better employment in the future.