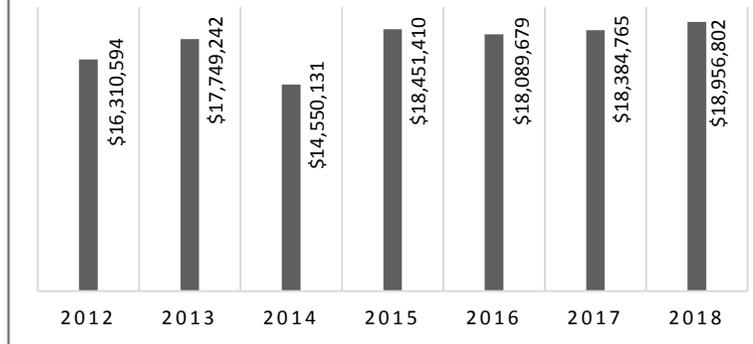


CHILDREN, YOUTH and FAMILIES

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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.

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.

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ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- In the **Children and Family Services Division**, the following accomplishments occurred:
 - 5,092 SCR reports investigated by Child Welfare staff, involving 10,085 children
 - CPS Quarterly reviews conducted in collaboration with NYS OCFS showed improvement in investigative practices during the course of 2016.
 - 18 adoptions were approved by Family Court in 2016.
 - 19 individuals participated in Model Approach to Partnerships in Parenting (MAPP) training for foster parent certification, which yielded 10 new foster homes, the result of the dedication and hard work of the foster home adoption unit.
 - Life Unplugged event provided 19 youth with “real life” experience in a structured, educational setting
 - 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 846 families and 1683 children were provided preventive services, an important intervention to reduce the risk of foster care placement and/or expedite permanency for children. This represents an increase of 21% increase from 2015.
- During 2016, NYS Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) partnered with Counties to focus on the Safety and Permanency Outcomes related to the Federal Child and Family Services Review. The Albany County data, related to permanency, revealed impressive results: 45.3% of children in Foster Care were discharged to permanency within 12 months of entry into foster care, with the NYS calculated performance of 34.2%; 63.3% of all children in Foster Care who have been in care between 12-23 months were discharged to permanency within 12 months, with the NYS calculated performance of 28.5%; and 52.4% of all children in Foster Care who have been in care 2+years were discharged to permanency within 12 months, with the NYS calculated performance of 29.2%.
- Juvenile Justice Reform efforts included the continued Annie E. Casey Foundation Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative (JDAI) work in Albany County. This work focused on an assessment of the Conditions of Confinement of Secure Detention and best practice recommendations as well as the continued focus on data analysis related to detention admission. JJ Reform efforts also included work by the Capital Region Youth Justice Team (CRYJT) of which Albany County is a strong partner and participant and became the Co-Chair to the Team in 2017.

Special Needs Division

- Continued implementation of Single Point of Entry (SPOE). As a result of increased community awareness, SPOE received 1280 referrals 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 254 core evaluations, 6 supplemental evaluations, and 3 screenings. For the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE), the evaluation team facilitated 80 initial evaluations, 22 transition psychological evaluations, and 23 supplemental evaluations.

Children’s Mental Health Clinic

- The Children’s Mental Health Clinic’s greatest accomplishment was the opening of the long awaited Berne Knox Westerlo “satellite” clinic which was achieved and opened on 10/31/16. This clinic is currently in operation at the BKW Middle-High School, one day per week.
- For several years we have been preparing for the transition from Targeted Case Management (TCM) i.e. ICM and SCM services to Health Home Care Management. All legacy TCM children were transitioned into Health Homes in January 2017. This was a significant transition 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.

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

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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.

Staff Development

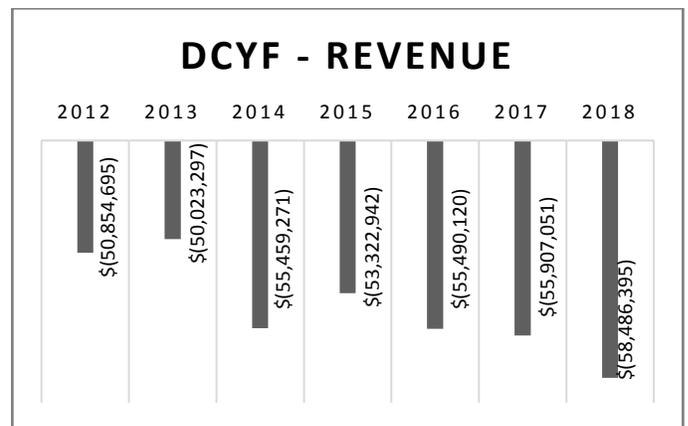
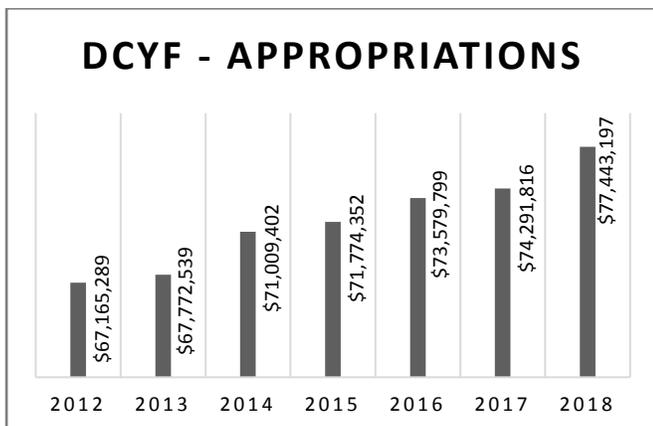
- A well-trained and skilled workforce along with opportunities for professional development is important for DCYF. There were over 300 training presentations facilitated by Staff Development.
- Since the beginning of the year Staff Development has participated in 18 outreach or engagement activities 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 300 donors that served 331 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 \$74,291,816 budget and managing 215 contracts. Across the accounts, there is a targeted overall reimbursement rate of 75%.
- Due to the DCYF's success in the most recent Title IV-E audit, the System Supports supervisor facilitated a collaborative workshop at the 2017 NYPWA conference to provide technical assistance for other local districts in preparation for the upcoming 2018 Title IV-E audit.

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, and Committee for Special Education (CSE) placements presents a significant challenge in how to meet programmatic costs without necessitating the need for increased appropriations.
- Our fiscal challenges are further compounded by the 2017-18 State fiscal year Executive budget which saw a cut of the Foster Care Block Grant (FCBG), which has resulted in a net cut in funding of \$768,101 for DCYF along with a loss of Title XX funding (SS block grant) in the amount of \$42,004 for a total of \$810,105 in decreased funding for the DCYF budget.



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2018 GOALS AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS

- NYS OCFS has tasked each county with forming County Planning Teams to focus on the Child and Family Services Review Safety and Permanency Outcomes and perform a factor analysis during 2017 with the goal of developing and implementing strategies in these targeted areas as part of the 5 year Child and Family Services Plan (2018-2022). The Children's Services division is well underway in delving into data with a focus on ultimately improving the safety and permanency of children and youth.
- Albany County DCYF, in collaboration with our juvenile justice partners, including Albany County Probation, 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, in general, enter this system.
- 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.
- Due to a number of anticipated retirements in 2018 , DCYF has contracted with SUNY-CHSR to develop Succession Planning
- 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.

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 collaboration of DCYF and the Wendy's Wonderful Kids (WWK) initiative

AM (16) was in a group home and was very withdrawn. When this recruiter met AM he refused to come out of the bathroom for the first half hour. When his group home staff convinced him to meet with myself and his County Worker, he kept his head down and only nodded to a few questions. This recruiter and AM's County Worker were very concerned with AM's detached demeanor. AM had refused to participate in therapy, was struggling with his family visits and was getting in trouble at school. AM was wary of any Foster Family and has stated many times that he does not want to move around. AM was at court with his County Worker and a Court Clerk approached AM's County Worker to inquire about AM's permanency plan. At that time there was no perspective Foster Family. The Court Clerk felt a connection to AM and began the process of becoming certified as a Foster Mother. Soon visits started with AM and the Court Clerk. AM felt the connection that the Court Clerk expressed and he began opening up to her. AM expressed a strong desire to be a part of the Court Clerks family. After many successful visits, all parties agreed that AM was ready to move in. AM and the Court Clerk have been getting along very well and AM has revealed to his County Worker that he feels right at home.