

# **Madison County Department of Social Services**

## **2010 Annual Report**

*Michael A. Fitzgerald  
Commissioner*

March 28, 2011

John Becker, Chairman  
Madison County Board of Supervisors

John Salka, Chairman  
Social & Mental Health Services Committee

Mark Scimone, Assistant to the Chairman of the Board  
Madison County

Dear Gentlemen:

It is my honor to present the 2010 Madison County Department of Social Services Annual Report. It is once again an opportunity for the department to highlight our successes in the past year, to chart what we have done in the community, and to set our sights for the next year.

Challenges for the citizens of this county were numerous. The economic decline continues to have our least-resourced citizens seeking the help they need to survive. The troublesome economic news from the state, country, and world continued to impact the citizens of Madison County. From skyrocketing food stamp applications, near record numbers of child protective reports and the continued increases seen in nearly all programs, all were related to tough financial times and increases in costs that families in poverty could no longer bear.

The economic struggles most clearly played out in the number of families seeking food stamps this past year. We closed out 2010 with over 4,000 families receiving food stamps – an increase of 400 families from the previous year! We should also point out that this program puts \$12 million into our local economy annually (an increase of \$1 million from 2009) through the food purchases at local retailers, including two of the county's local farmers markets and the local farm product purchasing program, Madison Bounty.

An area that continues to cause great economic troubles for counties is Medicaid. New York continues to be in the minority of states that has their political subdivisions pay a portion of this expense. Also, in New York, we have the dubious honor of having the most expensive program in the country. This has lead to more and more resources being used to pay for Medicaid, leaving less available to counties to offer services for residents. This was partially offset in 2006 with the passage of the Medicaid cap legislation, but, even in Madison County, the Medicaid share eats up a full third of the tax levy of property taxes. In the coming year, we face the daunting challenge of the loss of Federal

Medicaid Assistance Payments (FMAP), which has afforded the county to reduce actual expenditures in the last two years compared to budgeted costs.

This past year also saw the passage of legislation that would move the administration of the Medicaid program from local counties to the state. Firstly, there are many good things that could be accomplished with this initiative, including lowering local taxes, running a more efficient healthcare program, and better services for many of the state's residents. However, the reality exists that the actual costs of counties administering the program is two percent of the total. Additionally, there is little discussion of relieving the counties of the fiscal obligation to support the program and many of the residents who most need the services will remain the responsibility of the local district. In essence, we lose decision making, retain responsibility and do not get fiscal relief. That adds up to bad policies and areas that, hopefully, can be overcome in the final implementation.

One area that always causes great concern for the department is the increasing number of children reported to the State Central Registry (SCR) alleged to be neglected, maltreated, or abused. In 2010, Madison County saw another year of high reports (1,500) a slight decrease of 73 reports from 2009. We are hopeful that with the implementation of Family Assessment Response (FAR) in early 2011, we will see long-term family issues be resolved so that they can safely care for their children without the involvement of CPS.

We again received information from the state agency that oversees our child welfare activities this past year. We believe it is essential that once we identify a child as abused or neglected, we should strive to prevent that same child from further abuse. Our recurrence rate is now at half of what it was just two years ago (10.8 percent compared to 23 percent). We had 31 children placed in foster care in 2010, which is consistent with the number we placed in 2009, and much lower than previous years. We are now ranked 13<sup>th</sup> out of 64 counties in New York State for placement rate. With this reasonable number of children in foster care, we have been able to focus on the safety concerns and reducing future risk. We have seen three quarters of the children in foster care reunited with their parents or other family members within 18 months, which is a 12 percent increase from the year before. Our median length of stay for children in foster care is less than 9 months which ranks us as 9<sup>th</sup> in the state.

Other updates from DSS that you either have heard about throughout the year or will read in further detail in this report include:

- The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) ended in May and proved to be one of the most successful years ever (judged by citizens served and efficiency of the program) only to begin this past season under a cloud of uncertainty. Federal funding was cut in half and there were predictions that the HEAP program would close by mid-December 2010. Continuing

resolutions at the federal level have kept the program operational until early 2011 but this funding shortage is a bad omen for the future of this essential program;

- Public assistance cases finally leveled off in 2010 suggesting that the worse of the economic freefall has passed. We were fortunate to have a Colgate Intern examine our new applications from the previous year (those who had never applied for public benefits previously) and determined that we are meeting the needs of most of our citizens;
- Despite the historic low numbers of foster care placements, the cost of care for our most troubled youth is staggering, which is increasing the costs of the program. There were several national stories about the quality of New York State care we are paying for in addition to maintaining facilities at less than half capacity (or some kept empty). Several counties and New York City have sued the state over their rate-setting methodology and child welfare financing faces enormous challenges in the coming year. Most of the funding that pays for foster care, preventive services and protective services will be subject to reauthorization in less than a year. The fiscal challenges will be enormous, but the cost of keeping children safe should not be a county cost alone. The state and federal government, together with local counties, must see the partnership as equals and promote the safe and permanent placement of children as a priority.

It is always with distinct honor that I write to you annually to highlight the accomplishments of the department. Throughout the remainder of this report, you will find additional information about the services and programs provided by DSS. It is my hope that this report is read and that it helps begin a dialogue about how to address the problems facing our community today, including poverty, homelessness, child abuse, and other social concerns. The department looks forward to a challenging year ahead and stands committed to meeting the needs of our county.

Sincerely,

Michael A. Fitzgerald, MPA  
Commissioner



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## PERSONNEL/ADMINISTRATION

At the end of 2010, there were 126 fulltime, one part-time, and three seasonal positions within the Department of Social Services, plus six Sheriff's Deputies (one Lieutenant, one Sergeant, three Investigators, and one Deputy), 3 Mental Health Department staff, and 1.5 Information Technology staff provided through contracts with the various county departments. The Sheriff's Office provides fraud investigations and building security, the Mental Health Department provides mental health treatment for children and their families who are at risk of foster care or are in foster care, and the IT Department supports the computer systems within DSS.

In 2010, a total of eight employees left the Department of Social Services, compared to five the previous year. Two employees retired, four staff members resigned, and two were removed due to not successfully passing a probationary period of employment.

The vacancies that resulted from persons leaving the department occurred at many levels. Of the two retirees, one was a Principal Account Clerk and one was an Office Assistant II. The other vacancies included four Caseworkers, one Senior Support Investigator, and one Office Assistant I.

### **P r o m o t i o n s**

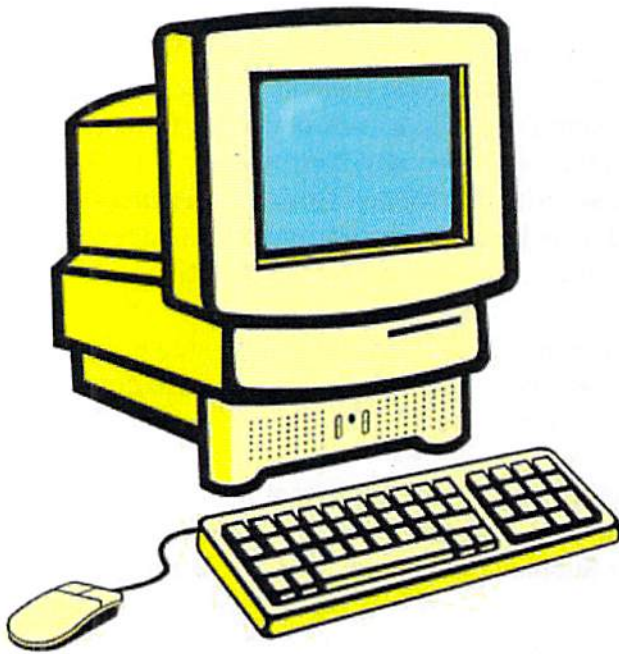
There were a total of eight promotions within the Department during 2010, compared to 16 the previous year. Promotions included two Office Assistant I employees who were promoted to Office Assistant II (Loveless and Relyea), one Office Assistant I promoted to Social Welfare Examiner (Dye), one Support Investigator promoted to Senior Social Welfare Examiner (Andrae), one Support Investigator promoted to Senior Support Investigator (Smith), and two Senior Social Welfare Examiners promoted to Caseworker (Canning and Orsino). One Social Welfare Examiner Trainee was hired open competitively from within the agency for a Caseworker position (Martilotta).

Two positions were abolished during 2010 – both were Office Assistant I positions in the Accounting unit. Those were replaced with Office Assistant II positions.

Ten new employees were hired in 2010. Positions hired were an Office

Assistant I (Duncan), Social Welfare Examiner Trainee (Martilotta), two Support Investigators (Conley and Stepanski), one Principal Account Clerk (Hembach), two Caseworkers (Bowe and Schneider), and three Energy Resource Aides (Foster, Myers, and Saunders).

Thirty employees of the department qualified for the attendance bonus in 2010, compared to 24 in 2009, in accordance with bargaining unit agreements. To be eligible for this, employees must be on full pay status for the entire previous year and not incur more than three days of sick leave in that 12-month period. Sixteen employees qualified for the incentive by using no sick leave during the year (Bright, Butler, Coye, Gaut, Kent, Kratz, LaGasse, Lagoy, Loveless, Lusher, Palmer, Palmer, Proctor, Reeder, Smith, and White).



The department ended the year with the same number of fulltime employees as in 2009 despite facing large increase in all program areas throughout 2010. The staff at DSS and our community partners went above and beyond to ensure the neediest of our community received the services and programs that kept families meeting their basic needs.

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*Submitted by Michael A. Fitzgerald, Commissioner*

## STAFF DEVELOPMENT

### **T R A I N I N G**

One of the areas that the Confidential Secretary is responsible for is the scheduling of mandatory and professional-development training for the DSS staff. This includes state-sponsored training and training provided by the Personnel Office, along with other locally-offered classes. Children's Services Caseworkers and supervisory staff are required to annually attend at least six hours of New York State approved CPS in-service training.

Training is conducted in a range of settings, including classroom, electronically through the Internet, or through a televised "teleconference." New York State offers its training at various venues across the state and usually in multiple locations to accommodate counties by minimizing travel time. Madison County is fortunate to be located closely to the Center for Development of Human Services (CDHS) training center in Liverpool, New York, which is one of the state's contracted training providers. If state training is unavailable at that location, employees typically travel to Albany or Rochester. Other contracted providers include Brookdale Center on Aging, SUNY Albany, and SUC at Buffalo.

Employees can access the Internet training from their work PCs. The "iLinc" classes are scheduled interactive "classrooms" involving participants from across the state. The "TrainingSpace" sessions are generally previously televised teleconferences that can be viewed at the trainee's convenience.

In 2010, the department experienced eight promotions and 10 new hires. All new positions, whether promotional or new hire, are given at least 75 hours of in-house new worker training, which is conducted by the directors and supervisors. Some titles; i.e., Social Welfare Examiner and Children's Services Caseworker, also require a minimum number of hours of state-sponsored training.

The largest training investment is that of the Children's Services Caseworker. The "common core" training was newly designed in 2009. The core training team includes one or two supervisors and the Confidential Secretary, along with the common core trainer. Between the initial pre-core meeting and the ending post-core meeting with the trainer, there are 14 weeks of in-house, classroom, and electronic training. Since being implemented, two Caseworkers have completed core training – one in 2009 and one in 2010.

#### Training

State training attendance	529 attendees
Local training attendance	574 attendees
<b>Total training attendance</b>	<b>1,103 attendees</b>

State training hours	3,908 hours
Local training hours	1,546 hours
<b>Total training hours</b>	<b>5,454 hours</b>

State training costs*	\$5,600.00
Local training costs	\$10,969.06
<b>Total training costs</b>	<b>\$16,569.06</b>

*\*Official total unavailable at publishing*

Pending the agency-wide conversion to Microsoft Office 2007, training was conducted in house by SUNY Albany-PDP to prepare staff. Fifty-six employees participated in that training. Unfortunately, the conversion occurred weeks later than expected, but the training still proved beneficial and staff was able to adjust quickly.

Also included in staff development duties is new worker orientation. The orientation is spread out among the Confidential Secretary, the Director of Administrative Services, and the director and supervisor overseeing the new employee. The new employee will initially meet with the Confidential Secretary who will review personnel and agency information, including the new staff member's appointment and probationary period, building access policy, agency-specific policies, needed contact information, training and county orientation schedule, and the importance of maintaining confidentiality. The new worker will then meet with the Director of Administrative Services to complete necessary payroll and related paperwork. Finally, the worker's supervisor and director will review all other policies and procedures related to the employee's position and initiate the new employee's internal training.



The orientation process continues to evolve. Past practice had always been for the Staff Development Director to take the new employee throughout the building to introduce him/her to staff. The problem with this procedure was that not everyone would be available at the time of the introductions and some staff would be skipped. Per the suggestion from staff, the new employee is now photographed and an agency-wide email is

sent out containing the photo, along with some employee background information. Upon recognizing the new employee in the course of business, current staff will now introduce themselves. This system was so well received that now a mass email is sent out to staff when employees are promoted or moved within the building (without the photo).

In the year ahead and with the current economic climate, we will continue to explore new cost-effective training opportunities. With the ever-changing workforce and impending budget cuts – statewide and locally – our training methodology will be to continue to look at the best training value, whether it be in terms of money or time expended.

## O R I E N T A T I O N



*Submitted by Linda Jackson, Confidential Secretary (Training Coordinator)*



## TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE

Throughout the annual report, caseload numbers will be utilized to reflect the services the department provides to Madison County residents. Caseloads and changes within the temporary assistance/food stamp information follows; however, it is important to look at several additional numbers associated with providing assistance that have a direct impact on the agency/employees/applicants/recipients in the form of time and service delivery and will not be reflected in caseload numbers.

### *Determining the applicant's needs*

Many people, feeling as they are in a hopelessness state, come to the department seeking assistance for food, rent, heat, daycare or medical assistance to meet their unfilled needs. Upon requesting to apply for temporary assistance, an individual is asked to complete an application summary sheet. The application summary sheet assists the department to identify what sources of supports the individual may need and continues on with the application process. While reviewing the application summary sheet with the individuals, at times it may be determined by the individuals that their needs would be more effectively met by resources other than the services the department offers. The department will then assist them in locating other agencies/resources in the community to meet their needs. This process can be time consuming and yet will not be reflected in the ongoing case numbers.

During 2010, Examiners reviewed **2097** application summary sheets – a 35 percent increase from the 1544 sheets during 2006.

### *Methods applicants/recipients use to communicate with staff*

Applicants/recipients travel to the department to apply, reapply, provide information, discuss their case, etc. Rather than travel into the department, many applicants/recipients choose instead to call the agency regarding their assistance.



**34,152** phone calls were received by 12 temporary assistance/food stamp Examiners during 2010.



**7,098** individuals came to the department to see a temporary assistance/food stamp Examiner regarding eligibility or redetermination of their eligibility during 2010.

## Temporary Assistance

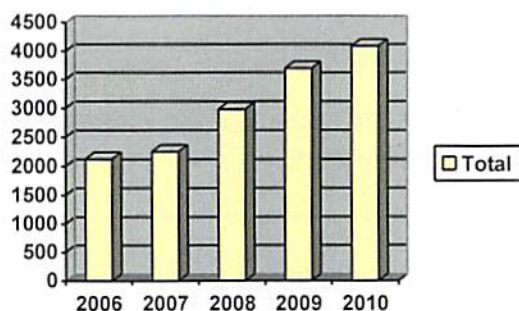
### Resources available through partnership with Community Action Program, Inc.

The department has two contracts with Community Action Program (CAP), Inc., to assist low-income households. Both contracts provide supportive services in areas that assist to stabilize households. The first program helps individuals to help themselves to avoid homelessness and facilitates the transition from homelessness to permanent housing. The second program helps provide transportation services to assist individuals to maintain or obtain employment.

**1631** families received assistance with housing services from CAP and **2306** families received transportation assistance during 2010.

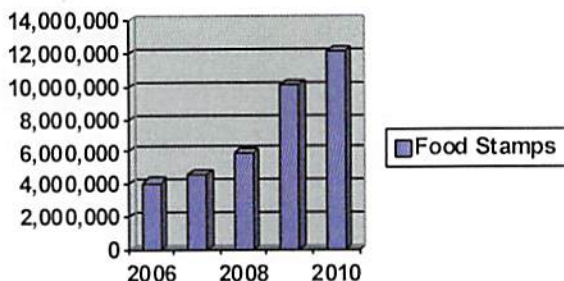
## Food Stamps

Chart reflecting food stamp caseload increase



At the end of December 2006, there were 2123 food stamp cases. December **2010** ended with **4088** – an increase of **93 percent** over the last five years.

Chart reflecting food expenditures from 2006 to 2010



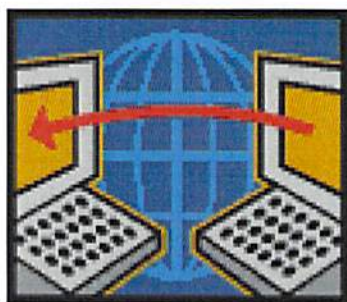
The 2006 food stamp expenditures of \$4,111,801 have increased to **\$12,140,645** in **2010**, resulting in a **195 percent** increase of food stamps issued since 2006.

### Description of food stamps

Administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the New York State Food Stamp (FS) Program, known federally as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), issues monthly electronic benefits that can be used like cash at authorized retail food stores. Eligibility and benefit levels are based on household size, income, assets and other factors.

### Availability to apply for food stamps through the Internet

The Food Stamp Program has made it easier for many working households to apply and gain access to these critical nutrition supports by applying for food stamps online. After the application is filed, the department will review the information, conduct an interview, and determine the household's eligibility for food stamps. In the majority of Internet food stamp applications, households are able to avoid having to travel to the department to receive their food stamps, which is a significant cost and time savings to the households.



**686** Food Stamp applications were submitted to Madison County DSS via the internet in 2010.

### Additional assistance in applying through the internet

The Community Action Program provides an outreach worker to help households get and complete an application via the Internet for the Food Stamp Program.

**OTDA My Benefits Website – [www.mybenefits.ny.gov](http://www.mybenefits.ny.gov)**

### Another resource through the Internet

New York State provides a website that may be used as a prescreening tool to people who live in New York State to find out if they might be able to receive:

- Help with buying food
- Temporary Assistance (TA)
- Special tax credits
- Home energy assistance (HEAP)
- Various health insurance programs for individuals, families, children
- WIC – Women, Infants and Children
- Prescription drug insurance coverage for seniors

The website takes about 10 minutes to use. Participants are asked to tell about people in their home, money received from a job or other places, their housing costs, and a few other bills. The advantages of using myBenefits include: the privacy of working at home, the ability to use any



Internet-connected computer anytime or anywhere, the flexibility to work at an individual pace, and it can easily accommodate a person's busy schedule.

In addition to the prescreening tool, there are several links to various resources available to the public.

In 2010 there were **1,896** prescreening tests started and **1,716** completed on my benefits website by Madison County residents.

## EMPLOYMENT

The Employment unit manages welfare-to-work activities to facilitate temporary assistance and food stamp applicants and recipients in obtaining their goal of becoming self-sufficient. Employment assessments, individual employability plans, job search/placement, vocational training, and work experience are some of the services used in assisting the participants in obtaining their goals.

With the economy slowly turning around (unemployment rate started 2010 at 9.7 percent and ended at 7.9 percent), the Employment unit has seen a slight decrease in the number of employable participants. The unit began 2010 with 304 individuals. This number has decreased to 277 as of December 2010.

The unit continued working in cooperation with the Madison County Employment and Training Department and the Transitional Jobs program to support subsidized employment and education for up to 12 months. This program provided opportunities for the customers to demonstrate work skills to a current or prospective employer. It also provided the opportunity for customers to achieve educational gains, such as obtaining a GED or a new job skill through training. The unit also continues to work in conjunction with the workforce development counselor (WDC) who provides intensive, individual services such as job search, guidance in job interviewing skills, and many other job-readiness skills.



The unit continues to offer intensive case services for noncompliant and/or other at-risk families receiving temporary assistance. If a customer is at risk for a sanction for non-compliance with employment activities, the department will initiate a home visit to identify any unknown barriers that the customer may have. With the home visit, the Employment worker may be able to identify something that is going on in the customer's home that the customer may not acknowledge during the initial employment assessment in the office.

The department contracts with Liberty Resources to provide intensive case management services for TANF customers in identifying possible barriers to employment or those needing extra help in keeping focused on their employment goals. The caseworker also facilitates the customer in the social security disability process if needed. The Liberty Resource worker has worked with an average of 16 customers per month in 2010.

In addition, the department contracts with Liberty Resources to provide an intensive case manager to work with our Safety Net population who have a disability. This worker helps these customers with their application for Social Security Disability, which can be a daunting task for any individual. The case manager has worked with an average of 12 customers per month. Unfortunately, the funding for this valuable program ended in June 2010.

The department continues to have worksite agreements with three not-for-profit agencies to provide work experience for our customers. There is currently one customer at the YMCA in

Oneida who helps with cleaning and maintenance. At the City of Oneida Parks and Recreation Department, we have one customer who helps with maintenance.

For the second year in a row, over the summer, six customers were assigned to the City of Oneida where they provided a much needed crossing guard service at the city pool. The city was extremely satisfied with the service provided by the customers.

The work crew continues to provide services to Madison County and its townships. There are currently two customers assigned to the Town of Sullivan to help with park maintenance. The work crew frequently provides services to the Madison County Landfill. Because of the need to have the work crew more frequently, a part-time work crew leader was hired to supervise customers at the landfill.

### **Day Care**

The Day Care program is an important component for customers who are currently employed, seeking employment, attending educational programs, or are participating in our work experience program. Based on the family's income, the children's ages, and individual needs, the day care worker determines the amount of day care subsidy a family may be eligible for.

We currently have two representatives from the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Oneida County, previously known as Mid-York Child Care Coordinating Council, stationed onsite at the agency. One of the services Cornell provides is a referral service for customers who are seeking availability of day care in a particular region. With the representatives in the agency, we can immediately refer a customer who may be in danger of losing employment due to lack of day care and ultimately eliminating the risk of job loss.



This year, due to decreased funding, the Day Care unit was forced to create a waiting list for day care applications. This was particularly difficult with the economic climate.

The Day Care unit provided child care subsidies for 145 families at the beginning of 2010 and ended 2010 with 105 families, totaling more than \$704,167.00 in payments.

### **Mobile Work Crew**

The mobile work crew provides an essential service in helping to meet the federal participation rate. Customers are assigned to mobile work crew to gain work experience and development of time management skills, organizational skills and work ethic.



Currently, and in 2010, there are three-to-four customers assigned to the work crew in our agency. While in the agency, they provide much needed assistance to various units. They perform duties such as filing, typing, and scanning. All of these customers will be able to list this experience on their resumes, which will aid in their continued job search efforts.

Once again this year, the work crew performed a record number of hours. The total number of hours for 2010 was 14,412, reflecting an increase of 1,325 hours. The work hours provided by the work crew has afforded many Madison County agencies to complete projects that otherwise may have been too costly.



### Major Projects

- CAC – Poured driveway, sidewalks and finished wheelchair ramp.
- Madison County Landfill – Painted dumpsters. Helped side and put counters in residential dumping station.
- Village of Morrisville – Repaired and painted exterior of village hall.
- Smithfield Fire Department – Repaired and painted exterior of building.
- Madison County Landfill – Helped build new scale house.
- Clockville Church – Installed new bathroom, painted front and wheelchair ramp. Put drainage around basement wall. Cleaned, repaired, and painted basement. Repaired, painted, and stained main church.
- Canastota Little League – Did site work and helped install sod on baseball field.
- ARC – Helped build new building at landfill.
- CAP Morrisville – Installed new floor in front office, painted, and moved furniture.
- Town of Lincoln – Installed wall, moved door, repaired and painted interior.
- Canastota Industrial Park – Installed ceiling, repaired sheetrock, and painted interior of building.
- Bridgeport Fire Department – Painted fences and outer buildings.

### Minor Projects

- Madison County DSS – Detailed cars.
- Madison County DSS – Removed snow from cars.
- Madison County Public Health – Removed snow from cars.
- Madison County DSS – Moved furniture, files, paper, etc.
- OHG Fishing Derby – Helped set up and tear down.
- Tri-Valley Pop Warner – Cleaned and moved cheer mats.
- Canastota VFW – Helped with cleaning and minor repairs.



Oneida Recreation Department armory renovation by the MC Work Crew.



Canastota Little League dugouts constructed by MC Work Crew.



## MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

2010 brought many changes to both the Medicaid program and the way clients access Medicaid in Madison County.

### Medicaid Program Changes:

Effective January 1, 2010, clients who are not aged (age 65 or over), certified blind, or certified disabled are exempt from declaring their resources. Those who are required to disclose their resources are subject to a resource level of \$13,800 for a single individual. The elimination of the resource test is a major change for the Medicaid program that historically required individuals to meet both income and resource guidelines.

On April 1, 2010, another major change in the Medicaid program became effective – the elimination of the personal interview requirement for Medicaid and Family Health Plus applicants. Although this may indeed assist a person when filing an application, the process is less convenient for staff. Applications may now be dropped off or mailed in and often arrive partially completed and lacking documentation. Staff then must follow up with the applicant via telephone or mail to obtain information that previously had been reviewed during the personal interview. The lack of personal interview also results in applicants' inability to explain their need for Medicaid benefits; i.e., severity of their medical need. The Medicaid Examiner does not have the opportunity to explain the application process, including timeline; answer program questions; and refer applicants to other available programs and services.

Effective September 1, 2010, federal, state, county, municipal, and school district employees previously excluded from participating in the Family Health Plus program are now eligible to participate.

### Access Change:

Medicaid Managed Care, previously available for client enrollment on a voluntary basis, became mandatory October 1, 2010. Clients are required to enroll in a Managed Care plan at application or renewal. Three health plans provide Managed Care in Madison County – Excellus, Fidelis, and United Health Care. These same plans also participate in the Family Health Plus program.



A person may be excluded from enrolling in Managed Care if he/she has access to comprehensive private health insurance, including Medicare. If not excluded from participating in Managed Care, an applicant/recipient must choose a Managed Care plan or risk being auto-assigned to a plan. Once enrolled, recipients are guaranteed coverage for a minimum of six months, regardless of program eligibility. Managed Care plans include all Medicaid-covered services and often have a larger field of physicians available, along with a larger selection of specialists. Prescription costs are carved out of Managed Care and covered through the Medicaid program. Fidelis also does not cover Family Planning benefits, which are

covered by Medicaid for those plan enrollees. The Medicaid program pays a monthly premium per client that averages \$129 for non-disabled children, \$314 for non-disabled adults, and \$428 for disabled adults or children. There is also a newborn 'kick' payment that averages \$2,492. Enrollment numbers have increased from 696 enrollees in September, prior to mandatory enrollment, to 1,451 enrollees in December – an increase of 115 percent.

#### **Additional Medicaid Information:**

- Caseloads are at an all-time high of 6,316 cases, covering 9,745 individuals, which is 14 percent of the total county population.
- 2,749 Medicaid applications were filed – an increase of 207 from 2009.
- The agency received notice that all Medicaid cases reviewed by New York State Department of Health staff for submission to the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services at the federal level for inclusion in a PERM (Payment Error Rate Measurement) audit were found to be correct and included no errors.

Medicaid staff continues to refer applicants/recipients that claim to be disabled to the New York State Department of Health Disability Review Team (DRT) for disability determinations. All medical records, along with a questionnaire detailing how the client's activities of daily living are impacted by their disability, are forwarded to the DRT team. This process is also impacted by the inability to require a face-to-face interview with this population. A disability determination will result in one of the following:

- Group I – permanently disabled, which may also result in the client being eligible for Social Security Disability benefits;
- Group II – temporarily determined disabled;
- Denial;
- No Action – there is not enough evidence to determine disability status.

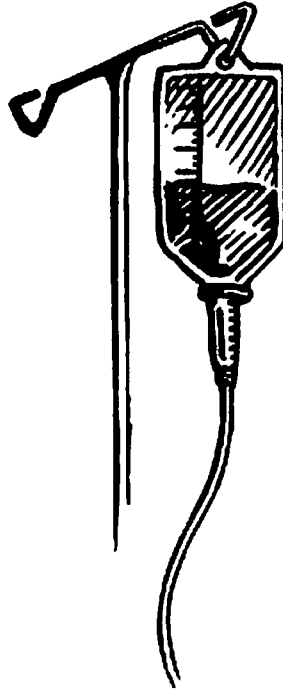
A Group I or Group II result allows a higher income level standard for Medicaid eligibility.

#### **Disability Determination Statistics for 2010:**

Total processed	Group I	Group II	Denied	No Action	Process stopped – no longer needed	Carried over to 2011
66	10	43	1	5	2	5

*"Hazel" was a 60-year-old woman who was suddenly taken ill with headaches so severe she could barely function. She had to stop working and had no medical insurance. It was discovered through a CT scan that Hazel had a brain mass and the cancer had metastasized in her lymph system and lungs and she started chemotherapy and radiation treatments. As medical bills mounted, she and her husband became increasingly worried about how they would be able to pay them. Hazel was not Medicaid eligible due to excess income and a disability review was completed. The result was a Group I approval, eligibility was re-determined, she was Medicaid*

*eligible, and the mounting bills would be paid. Sadly, Hazel succumbed to her illness. Her husband called to notify the agency of her passing and recounted their positive experience with the agency and his gratitude for easing their worries about how they could possibly pay for her medical care.*



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*Submitted by LuAn T. Judd, Director of Medical Assistance/Financial Aid*



## ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES

The Adult Protective Services unit has a key role within the Madison County Department of Social Services in helping the vulnerable adult population. The staff works closely with other units within Social Services, including, but not limited to, the Temporary Assistance unit, the Children and Family Services unit, and the Medicaid unit. Also, the Adult Services workers work closely with outside agencies such as hospitals, fire departments, police departments, Madison County Public Health, Madison County Office for the Aging, and Madison County Mental Health Departments.

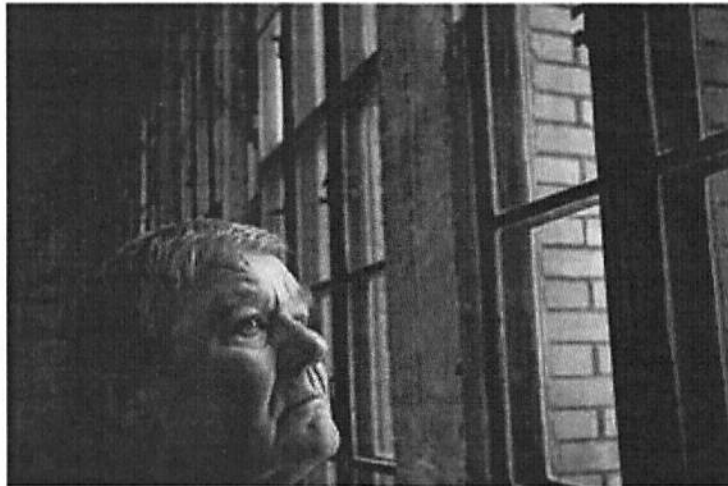
The Adult Services unit consists of three Caseworkers and one Casework Assistant. One of the Caseworkers oversees the Medicaid homecare programs. That report is included separately. The other two Caseworkers investigate the referrals that the unit receives from the general public or official agencies as mentioned above. During 2010, the unit received 157 referrals. This was an increase of 34 from 2009 and a record high number.

A referral means that someone in the community or from an agency has concerns about an adult aged 18 and older. These concerns could include physical abuse by a caretaker, sexual abuse by a caretaker, neglect by a caretaker, living conditions that are substandard, self neglect, and financial exploitation. Often, resolution to these situations includes involvement from outside agencies or from appropriate family members or friends. This can ensure that the person is safe and that his/her needs are being met, which is the ultimate goal.

The Casework Assistant has a variety of jobs within the unit. She assists the Caseworker who does the Medicaid homecare programs by sending out paperwork and monitoring its return. She opens cases for the Caseworkers. She arranges transportation to shelters for the homeless population. When the unit receives shut off notices from the utility companies, the Casework Assistant will make contact with the residents to assist them in the HEAP application process. Whenever a person comes to DSS for assistance, but has a limitation that hinders the completion of an application, the Casework Assistant will assist the applicant. The Casework

*An example of one of the issues that the Adult Services will investigate occurred when the unit received a referral for a woman who was reported to have dementia and was being taken advantage of financially by her son. The Caseworker assigned to the case was able to determine that the lady was demented. He was able to determine that the son was trying to take his mother's money due to his own financial problems. However, the Caseworker was able to speak with the bank that had frozen her accounts until the situation could be investigated. The Caseworker worked closely with the lady's daughter and the bank to help resolve the issue. As a result, the son was not able to get control of his mom's finances. The lady was able to stay in her home with her daughter assisting her with her daily living needs.*

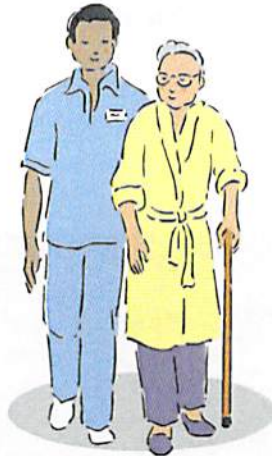
Assistant also oversees the Recipient Restriction program. Recommendations to restrict a client to a single provider are issued by the New York State Office of the Inspector General as a result of program misuse. The Casework Assistant enters coding on the Medicaid billing system that prevents undesignated providers from billing Medicaid.



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*Submitted by Timothy Collins, Case Supervisor Grade B*

## MEDICAID HOME CARE PROGRAMS



Included in the Adult Services unit is one Caseworker who works exclusively with Madison County Public Health Department, contracted nursing agency, to coordinate the Medicaid Home Care Programs, which include the Long Term Home Health Care Program, Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program, Personal Care Program, Care At Home Waiver Program, and Limited Licensed Home Care Services Program. Madison County's Medicaid Home Care Programs provided in-home care to 122 individuals in 2010.

The Long Term Home Health Care Program provided 55 clients with expanded home care services. The program admitted 15 individuals in 2010 and discharged 12 people due to nursing home placement and 4 were discharged due to death. The age range was 56 to 98, with the average age being 77. The DMS-1 scores ranged from 103-415, with the average DMS score being 259. Eighty-five percent were female and 15 percent were male. Forty-five percent of individuals receiving Long Term Care services met the skilled nursing care monthly allowable cap of \$4,511. Fifty-five percent of individuals met the health-related care monthly allowable cap of \$3,046. The Long Term Home Health Care Program continues to maintain residents of Madison County in their own homes in a cost effective manner.



*One example of the success of the Home Care unit within Madison County happened under the Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program. One consumer was admitted under the program after a referral from his primary care physician due to change in household composition and declining health. This person became quadriplegic after an accident and has required constant care ever since. When he was initially assessed for this program, he was visibly unhealthy and his ADL's (activities of daily living) were not being met. He was authorized for the most personal care hours CDPAP had ever authorized in this county, but the level of his needs warranted this requirement. At the next reassessment, this person was visibly healthier and his DMS-1 score of 548 remained constant, giving evidence that this program had kept him safe at home and aided in increasing his quality of life. This program was also meeting his needs in a cost-effective manner by keeping him stable to remain out of a skilled nursing facility.*

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The Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program provided personal care services for 49 individuals. There were 12 new clients admitted into the program and 19 clients discharged from the program in 2010. Three individuals discharged due to death, five discharged due to no longer being eligible, four moved out of county, three went into a skilled nursing facility, two transitioned into the Traumatic Brain Injury Waiver, one discharged client request, and one transitioned into the Nursing Home Transition and Diversion Waiver. There were 18 males (37 percent) and 31 females (63 percent). Age range was 13 to 94, with the average age being 53.5.

The Personal Care Program provided personal care assistance to three individuals and one was discharged due to skilled nursing facility placement. Two were female and one was male.

The Care at Home Waiver Program provided services to three minor children in 2010 – one male and two female. One child was discharged from the program due to aging out at the age of 18 in April 2010. This client was transitioned into other programs to continue her necessary care. Two other children were accepted into the CAH I waiver in 2010 to help in their necessary care and continue to receive Medicaid benefits.

The Limited Licensed Home Care Services Program provided personal care assistance to 12 residents of Hamilton Manor. There were four individuals discharged from this program in 2010 – three were due to skilled nursing facility placement and one was due to death. There were seven females and five males.

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*Submitted by Tiffany Canning, Caseworker*

## MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION

### 2010 Medical Transportation Expenses Paid

<u>Ambulance</u>	<u># of Trips</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u>
Vineall Ambulance, Inc.	1,231	\$135,810
Eastern Paramedics, Inc.	709	63,189
Greater Lenox Ambulance Service, Inc.	568	43,504
Cazenovia Area Volunteer Ambulance Corp	161	12,034
Southern Madison County Volunteer Ambulance Corp	165	11,355
Kunkel Ambulance Service	162	9,267
Village of Madison	101	7,600
Mercy Flight Central, Inc.	9	7,574
Smithfield/Eaton Volunteer Ambulance Corp	84	7,418
Amcare Ambulance Service, Inc.	84	6,144
TLC Emergency Medical Service	76	4,975
Smith Funeral Home Ambulance Service	42	3,211
Edwards Ambulance Service, Inc.	62	3,130
Minoa Ambulance	49	2,438
All Others	301	27,297
<b>Total Ambulance</b>	<b>3,804</b>	<b>\$344,946</b>
<u>Invalid Coach (Wheelchair, Van, etc.)</u>		
Michael F. Ilacqua, Inc.	980	\$53,629
Central New York Wheelchair	177	22,340
TLC Medical Transport Service, Inc.	126	11,053
Nabil S. Guindy	136	10,734
Able Medical Transport, Inc.	148	7,454
Best Comfort Care Transportation	29	3,608
St. Camillus	23	2,052
Katherine Luther Nursing Home	16	1,188
Michael William Osterhout	8	833
Monroe Medi-Trans, Inc.	2	191
Serafini Transportation Corp	3	180
Access Transportation, Inc.	1	160
<b>Total Invalid Coach</b>	<b>1,649</b>	<b>\$113,422</b>



<u>Taxi</u>	<u># of Trips</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u>
Birnie Bus Service	5,034	\$159,182
Richard C. Bielby	2,324	156,738
Shawn Perrigo	2,849	121,718
City Cab, Inc.	489	89,499
Oneida Taxi	2,101	81,207
Dorothy Edick	2,094	57,654
Maria Altimonte	758	53,000
Michael F. Ilacqua, Inc.	582	48,037
Michael Petros	549	26,875
Fiore Funeral Home	471	17,215
AA Taxi	63	8,869
Bellavia Transportation	3	150
USA Taxi	2	12
Yellow Cab Co. of Syracuse, Inc.	<u>2</u>	<u>9</u>
<b>Total Taxi</b>	<b>17,321</b>	<b>\$820,165</b>

**Day Treatment Transportation**

Gregory P. Collis	2,148	\$76,723
Michael William Osterhout	<u>1</u>	<u>125</u>
<b>Total Day Treatment Transportation</b>	<b>2,149</b>	<b>\$76,848</b>

**Reimbursed through Voucher System**

**\$27,581**

**Office for the Aging**

Reimbursed at \$5/trip + \$.75/mile + tolls & parking

**\$2,875**



## **CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT**

The year 2010 proved to be very challenging for the Child Support Enforcement unit. Three positions – one Senior Investigator and two Investigators, all with many years of experience within the unit – were promoted to other positions, resulting in vacancies needing to be filled. This created a lengthy transition period, lasting several months, during which time we took the opportunity to reorganize and restructure the unit.

*On October 21, 2010, the Child Support unit was notified that the New York State Department of Tax and Finance (DTF) had seized an individual's 2006 Chevrolet truck with work tools included. His account showed a balance of \$15,099.90, due to both the client and the Department of Social Services. On November 5, 2010, the individual paid \$15,099.90 to DTF to purchase back his truck and work tools. This paid his account in full. The client received \$4,751.87 and the Department of Social Services received \$10,348.03. This is a great example of how successful the different methods of enforcement can be.*

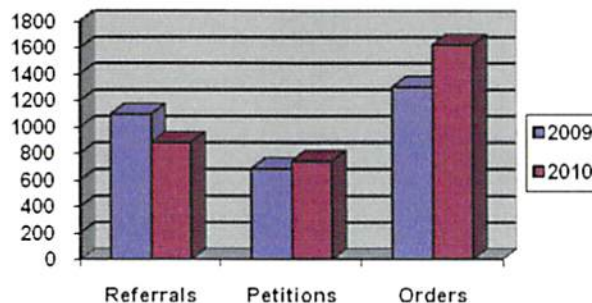
As part of the restructuring, we formed a workgroup to look at all aspects of the Child Support Unit from cooperation and paternity establishment to support enforcement and collections, along with our accounting processes. The workgroup will focus on current procedures and look for ways to improve efficiency within the unit. We will also focus on ways of improving communication and discuss common goals and objectives with other units in the department, such as Temporary Assistance and Medicaid.

The Child Support Enforcement unit continues to work diligently in assisting custodial parents in obtaining financial and medical support for their children. We provide assistance with locating parents, establishing paternity, establishing support orders, and collection and monitoring of child support payments. We also provide assistance with enforcement of court orders, which is accomplished through many different methods, such as income execution when an employer is available, suspension of New York State driver's license, collections from federal and state tax refunds and lottery winnings to name just a few. We are also able to make referrals to the New York State Department of Tax and Finance for collection and seizure of assets, which targets individuals over four months in arrears in their child support payments.

### **Other 2010 Unit Accomplishments**

- 878 referrals were received from the Temporary Assistance, Medical Assistance and Foster Care units, enabling the Child Support unit to build cases to establish or enforce child support and/or medical support.

- 1,016 cooperation interviews were conducted and processed by the unit as a result of individuals applying for temporary and/or medical assistance. Investigators must interview and request cooperation from each applicant in order to seek child support and/or medical support from absent parents of children receiving assistance.
- 47 cases were scheduled for genetic paternity testing by the Child Support unit to be conducted at DSS. Nineteen of the orders were issued by the court and 28 were administratively issued by the director.
- 738 petitions (private and DSS) were prepared and filed by the unit – an increase of 8 percent from 2009.
- 1,618 child support/medical support orders were received and processed by means of building new accounts or adjusting and/or closing existing accounts – an increase of 24 percent from 2009.
- 95 percent of open Child Support cases have child support and/or medical support ordered.
- There were 3,094 open Child Support cases as of December 2010.

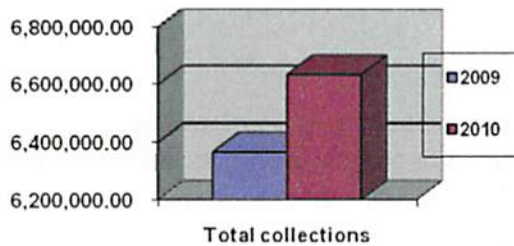


### **2010 Collections**

- \$1,223.95 in child support collected from respondents' lottery winnings.
- \$212,342.29 in child support collected from respondents' federal income tax refunds – an increase of 22 percent from 2009.



- \$83,544.69 in child support collected from respondents' New York State income tax refunds – an increase of 26 percent from 2009.
- \$501,602.46 in child support collected from respondents' UIB (Unemployment Insurance Benefits) – an increase of 6 percent from 2009.
- The total amount of collections for child support in 2010 was \$6,636,479, which was an increase of 4.23 percent from 2009.



The Child Support Enforcement unit is looking forward to 2011 and will work diligently to achieve our many goals for the coming year, which include increasing the number of petitions filed monthly and continuing to utilize the workgroup discussions to ensure the unit is working efficiently.

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*Submitted by Patricia Platt, Director of Child Support Enforcement/Financial Aid*

## **BURIALS**

Fifty-eight applications were taken in 2010. Of these, five were denied due to being over the income guidelines for eligibility. The total amount paid for these burials was \$142,104, an average of \$2,681 per burial, which is a total increase of \$29,984 from the previous year. Below is the amount paid to our local funeral homes:

### **Funeral Home Payments**

<b><u>Funeral Provider</u></b>	<b><u>Number</u></b>	<b><u>Cost</u></b>
Ayer and Zimmer Funeral Home	2	\$ 2,772.77
Burgess and Tedesco Funeral Home	5	12,264.49
Butler-Badman Funeral Home	1	1,800.00
Campbell-Dean Funeral Home	9	28,895.00
Coolican-McSweeney Funeral Home	1	2,160.00
Dakin Funeral Home	1	3,075.00
Enea Funeral Home	1	2,693.82
Fiore Funeral Home	3	7,668.00
Garland Brothers Funeral Home	1	3,272.00
F.F. Zimmer Funeral Home	5	14,415.00
Heintz Funeral Home	1	2,470.55
Ironside Funeral Home	2	3,644.00
J. Homer Ball Funeral Home	7	20,575.40
Kloster-Northup Bentz Funeral Home	1	2,041.56
Newcomer Funeral Home	1	1,740.00
Nunn and Harper Funeral Home	2	4,918.00
Owens-Pavlot Funeral Service	1	2,290.00
Paul Funeral Home	2	5,575.00
Russell H. Schepp & Son Funeral Home	1	3,160.00
Sisskind Funeral Home	1	3,261.80
Smith Funeral Home	2	6,370.00
Tait Funeral Home	2	4,000.00
Trainor Funeral Home	1	<u>3,041.61</u>
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$142,104.00</b>

*Submitted by Pamela Heintz, Director of Temporary Assistance/Financial Aid*

## **HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) assists individuals with the cost of heat and energy-related expenses. Through the HEAP program, households can receive a one-time regular benefit payable to their vendor. Households may also qualify for a one-time emergency benefit if they have below a quarter tank of fuel or a disconnect notice on their electric bill.

The 2009/2010 HEAP season was one of the best seasons we have had in quite some time. The season opened on November 2, 2009, and ran very smoothly despite changes to the program, an increase in applications, and high caseloads.

### **2009/2010 Program Changes:**

In previous years, a HEAP application was mailed out to only those households containing a vulnerable individual (under age 6, age 60 or older, or disabled). All other applicants needed to apply in person at the Department of Social Services. In August 2009, the New York State HEAP Bureau mailed applications to everyone who received a regular HEAP benefit during the previous season. The applications were divided into four categories: senior gold (age 66+), senior silver (age 60-65), vulnerable (child under 6 or disabled individual in household), and all other households. Local districts were required to begin processing these applications no later than September 7, 2009, and were mandated to have a minimum of 50 percent completed with payments authorized by November 2, 2009.

With our two fulltime HEAP Examiners, we were able to begin processing applications before September 7 and were fully staffed with 3 additional seasonal Energy Resource Aides by the end of that month. A total of 2,151 applications were mailed as part of the early mail out. The HEAP unit had 90 percent of those applications processed by November 2, 2009, far surpassing the state mandated minimum of 50 percent.

The early mail out of applications definitely contributed to the success of the 2009/2010 HEAP season. Applicants were allowed to mail back their applications and information without coming to the agency for a face-to-face interview. This dramatically cut down on the long lines, waiting, and usual chaos at the agency on opening day.

### **Additional HEAP Components:**

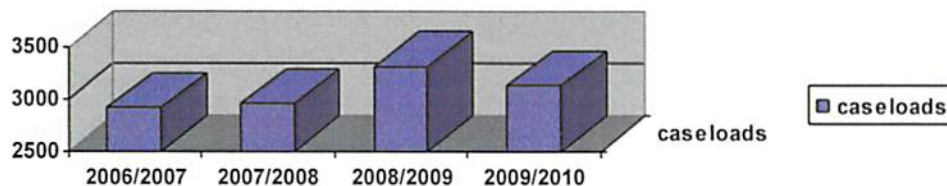
The HEAP program also includes assistance with furnace repair and replacement services. Applications for repair and/or replacement of furnaces are offered throughout the year. There is also a cooling component to assist with purchasing and installing air conditioners for individuals with medical conditions that are exacerbated by extreme heat. Applications for the cooling component are offered usually between June and August. Madison County was allotted eight air conditioner units, six applications were approved and two were denied.

## Outreach:

In addition to the state's early outreach mail-out process, the local district is responsible for informing the general public about the availability of the HEAP program and benefits. For the third year, our HEAP staff attended the Oneida-Madison Electric Co-op's annual meeting and provided their members and the public with information regarding the HEAP program. Information was also provided during the Madison County Fair. The director and supervisor of the HEAP unit also meet annually in September with the director of the Office for the Aging and her staff to discuss program changes for the new season and our common goals in providing Madison County residents the resources they need to apply for HEAP benefits.

## 2009/2010 HEAP Season Accomplishments:

- HEAP staff processed 5,891 applications for regular and emergency benefits.
- Madison County issued \$2,514,231 in the form of regular benefits and \$758,229 in the form of emergency benefits.
- 4,153 second regular benefits were authorized for a total amount of \$608,700.
- 76 furnaces were repaired at a cost of \$36,088.22.
- 60 furnaces were replaced at a cost of \$157,407.90.



The HEAP program is a tremendous benefit to many low-income households who are struggling with the high costs of heating their homes. Families have come to rely on this program to help pay a portion of their fuel and/or electric bill so they can keep their heat on and remain safe and warm during the cold winter months.

Looking ahead, the 2010/2011 season promises to be very challenging with further program changes and a potential decrease in federal funding, which may result in a shortened HEAP season, thus affecting the services we are able to provide to Madison County residents.

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*Submitted by Patricia Platt, Director of Child Support Enforcement/Financial Aid*



## CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Overall, we feel we have had a very productive and effective year in Children's Services – we have been able to provide families with the services they need to be successful, despite the bleak economic situation, without an increased drain on the economy or a reduction in services. My role in this report is to give you an introduction to Children's Services and an update of the broad picture. After that, you will read more detailed descriptions of the services that we have provided with statistics and personal stories from the supervisors and staff who provide these services.

Everything we do in Children's Services is designed to help keep children safe in their families. We strive to reduce the risk of problematic behavior both in parents who abuse and/or maltreat their children and the children who are incorrigible and/or delinquent. Our overall goal is to ensure that families have the tools they need to build strong, healthy foundations for their children in developmental, physical and emotional wellbeing. Our primary concern must always be safety, because if children are not safe, either from their caretakers or themselves, they cannot possibly achieve other necessary life milestones.

If safety cannot be established in the child's family of origin, then we must look to out-of-home placement – either in a foster home or congregate care setting – at least temporarily. Once safety is established, then, working alongside the family and other community partners, we focus on what risks may be present and what services can be provided to reduce those risks. This may be in the way of parenting education so that parents have a better understanding of how to communicate with and discipline their children; substance abuse treatment so that parents and youth can focus on productive matters and not on a need for a substance; mental health treatment so individuals can care for their own emotional needs in a healthy manner; or casework counseling to provide some guidance with everyday life issues, just to name a few. As mentioned above, in order for safety to be established for some families, out-of-home placement is necessary. In that case, the same types of risk reduction services are provided to help reunite the children with their family of origin.

In a small number of these cases, it becomes clear that the family of origin will not be able to provide a safe environment for the child. We then look for an adoptive placement to meet the child's needs or, in the case of an older adolescent, help that young person develop the skills and support systems necessary to live as a productive young adult in the community. This may sound neat and easy, but in reality, it is a complex system of coordination among individuals, families, government services and community services to meet the needs of our most precious and valuable resource – our children.

Regarding the broad picture of Children's Services, we have continued to have success with a relatively stable workforce, a steady influx of Child Protective Services reports, a constant level of foster care placements, and an increase in services to help families. In 2010, we had four members of the casework staff leave employment with Madison County. This gives us a slightly higher turnover rate (15 percent) than the last few years. A staff retention rate of 85 percent is still considered very good and we believe has helped us to better accomplish our goals. By having a stable workforce, we have handled a large number of Child Protective Services (CPS)

reports – 1500 for the year, which is a fairly steady amount compared to 2009 – with better efficiency that included more timely safety decisions and case determinations.

One issue our CPS staff has worked hard on over the past year was our recurrence rate for child abuse and maltreatment. Our recurrence rate is now at 10.8 percent, which is our lowest rate in four years. Just two years ago, it was at 23 percent. We believe this is a strong indication of the excellent services being provided to families by our staff. Another example of excellent work is our placement rate – 31 children placed in foster care in 2010 – which is consistent with the number we placed in 2009 and much lower than previous years. This means that for every 1,000 children in Madison County, only 1.1 children are placed in foster care, a rate that only 2 years ago was 3 children for every 1,000. We are ranked 13<sup>th</sup> out of 64 in New York State. Safety has not been compromised by this lower placement rate since the number of indicated Child Protective reports has not increased nor has the number of Persons in Need of Supervision (PINS) or Juvenile Delinquency (JD) petitions to Family Court. With this reasonable number of children in foster care, we have been able to focus on the safety concerns and reducing future risk to where 75 percent of children are reunited with their parent or some other family member within 18 months. This is a very good rate and an improvement from a rate of 63 percent the year before. Our median length of stay for children in foster care is presently 8.9 months, which ranks us 9<sup>th</sup> in the state – another indication of excellent services.

We did not achieve these goals alone. We continue to provide mental health services to children and their families through Memorandum of Understanding agreements with the County Mental Health Department. We also contracted for domestic violence, placement diversion, family reunification and TASA services with Liberty Resources, Inc.; detention prevention services with KAG consulting; and mentoring services with Community Action Partnership (CAP). We expanded services this year by contracting with CAP for home-based case management services for families at risk of recurrence of abuse and neglect and by adding a small additional contract with KAG consulting to increase the number of youth who can receive services through that program. We also put in two separate requests for funding to New York State Office of Children and Family Services and received funding from both requests. We obtained \$60,460 to be used for detention prevention services, which includes one contract with KAG consulting as well as flexible wraparound services, and \$24,400 to be used as enhanced funding for Child Protective Services to pay for overtime to complete the voluminous amounts of paperwork necessary for each report.

In 2011, we look forward to two major changes in Children's Services. One will be the transformation of the New York State Child Welfare computer system, known as Connections. This system has been complicated and difficult to work with since its inception several years ago. New York State is attempting to make the system easier to work with, thereby improving efficiency by making it a web-based system. We do not yet have an implementation date, but we expect it to be sometime this summer and there will be training required for all staff to use the new system.

Our other major change in 2011 is much more exciting to us. We will be participating in a pilot program in New York State known as Family Assessment Response (FAR). This program is an alternative method for handling reports of child maltreatment. It is not meant to be used with all

reports and will not be used for reports involving serious allegations of abuse or physical harm. One analogy for FAR is we would not expect a police agency to respond in the same manner to someone driving at a high rate of speed as we would to a report of an armed robbery in progress. We would expect different approaches and different types of resources to be used for those two situations. Up until now, in Children's Services, by state statute, we have had only one response to reported concerns for children. With the implementation of FAR, we will have the ability to determine, on the local level, which cases will be handled by a traditional investigation and which cases will be handled by an overall assessment of family functioning and child wellbeing through engagement and partnership with families, their supports, and the community. We believe this approach will help contribute to the family's readiness for change, if necessary, and will prevent the development of more serious problems later on so children will have a strong foundation for growth and development.

We thank you for the opportunity to serve the children and families of Madison County and look forward to continuing to provide excellent services in the year to come.

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*Submitted by Melissa M. Maine, LCSW-R, Deputy Commissioner for Family Services*

## **FOSTER CARE AND INSTITUTION PLACEMENTS**

During 2010, a total of 31 children were placed in Department of Social Services (DSS) custody. Along with 37 children that were discharged from custody, we ended the year with a total of 54 children in foster care. Twenty-nine of these were in Madison County foster homes and 25 were in higher levels of care, such as therapeutic foster care, group home, or a residential treatment center. These figures include one young adult who was attending college. Although these numbers indicate a continuation of a trend in recent years of fewer older children being placed in foster care, the mental health and behavioral problems of those children who have been placed are more serious, resulting in a higher percentage of these children needing to be placed in one of the higher levels of care.

The Children and Family Services unit becomes involved in the lives of many different families due to their difficulties in caring for their children. These families come to us with multiple problems that require coordination and cooperation among various service providers and family members in order to assist families in making their home situations safe for their children across the age spectrum. Families also have a variety of strengths, which can be called upon for them to help ensure healthy development of their children. There are many stories that can be told of the many ways that DSS works in partnership with families and service providers to return children to their families in as timely a manner and as safely possible.

*The story of one of the families that we have worked with over the past year is illustrative of how by working in collaboration, family members, DSS staff, service providers, and foster parents can achieve positive outcomes regarding permanency for children. This year's story is particularly illustrative of the multitude of players that interact to assist families with reunification. "Rita" is a 30-something mother of twin 12-year-old boys from a previous relationship and two daughters ages 7 and 8 years with her present husband, from whom she is estranged. Rita has a mental health diagnosis of bipolar disorder, which was untreated, and she was abusing prescription medications. She did not properly supervise her children after taking some pills and was asleep when they returned from school. She had also utilized excessive corporal punishment with them. In order to address immediate safety concerns, the girls went to live with their father while the boys were placed by court order with their maternal grandmother.*

*Rita initially resisted DSS intervention and took awhile to understand her role in the situation. Once she began her court ordered evaluations and treatments, she started on the road to recovery for herself and her children. During this time, her mother became unable, for various reasons, to continue to care for her grandsons. Rita, her mother, and the DSS Caseworker worked together on a plan for the boys and they were placed in a foster home where treatment continued to address their needs. Rita moved to a neighboring county and the family services unit in that county took secondary responsibility to monitor her compliance with the court order, assess the safety of her home, and help her access services in that area. In the meantime, the boys' behaviors had improved sufficiently, so they no longer needed the level of structure or care provided by the therapeutic foster home. Rita knew that she was not yet ready to provide for what the boys needed, so in collaboration with the Caseworker, they developed a plan for the boys to live with a family friend in kinship foster care. A few months later, Rita had addressed*



*her mental health and substance abuse issues to the point that her service providers recommended reunification and the boys were discharged to her care and custody.*

*This snapshot of one family's life, from start to finish, stretched over a period of 21 months and was necessarily shortened in order to be told here. It is, however, a nutshell look at the many varied ways and the wide cross section of people that DSS workers interact and engage with in order to help families address safety issues and reduce risk in order to raise their children in today's complex world.*

One service provider we have very regular contact with is the Madison County Mental Health Department (MHD). In 2010, DSS continued its Memorandum of Understanding with the Mental Health Department to provide clinical counseling services and psychological assessments and evaluations for the families with whom we work. The program has two fulltime therapists and a program supervisor. The program received 121 referrals and provided assessments and ongoing treatment services for families that have open Preventive or Foster Care cases with Children and Family Services. The program is based in the DSS building. These services are provided free of charge to the families with whom we work. Medicaid and private insurance plans are billed for services. The program, being an exclusive agreement between DSS and Madison County Mental Health, allows families in need to access mental health services in a timelier manner. It also results in clearer and more efficient communication between the caseworkers and therapists resulting in improved service delivery for our families.

The Madison County Department of Social Services Children and Family Services Foster Care/Preventive unit has continued its commitment to provide quality case management services to families in need and to do their best to keep children safe. We have worked hard to help families resolve their respective issues that have placed their children at risk and, where possible, reunite them so that they can provide a safe and nurturing environment in which their children can not only grow to adulthood, but also to thrive on the way there.



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*Submitted by Timothy Brown, Case Supervisor Grade B*

## **ADOPTIONS**

The Caseworkers in the Children and Family Services unit at Madison County work diligently to reunify children who are placed in foster care with their parents or other appropriate family members. In some cases, this goal is not possible, so the Caseworkers work diligently to free these children so they can be adopted by other appropriate families. Once a child is freed for adoption, he/she is placed in the custody of the Commissioner of Social Services and that child's case is transferred to the Adoptions Caseworker or Senior Caseworker.

The Adoptions Caseworker's primary goal is to locate a safe and permanent home for that child. After a child is freed for adoption, the child's foster parents have the initial opportunity to adopt the child. If they opt not to adopt the child and another adoptive family is not identified, then the child is listed in The New York State Adoption Album (NYSAA). The NYSAA is an Internet site that provides information about any child in New York State who has been freed for adoption and does not have an adoptive family. Further information on this site will be provided later in this report.

Along with the NYSAA, there are several other private not-for-profit agencies available in New York State to assist in locating an adoptive family for a child. A few of them are Family Focus, Wendy's Wonderful Kids Program, and Children Awaiting Parents. There are also several state-run functions to help adoptive parents meet children who have been freed, such as the Heart Gallery, the annual Adoption Exchange, and the annual Adoption Festival.

Besides locating safe and permanent homes for children who are freed for adoption, the Adoption Caseworker completes several other tasks. In collaboration with the Homefinder, the Adoption Caseworker also provides the adoptive parents with a 10-week Group Participation and Selection II/Model Approach to Partnership in Parenting (GPS II/MAPP) program. This program is offered twice a year and is designed to assist applicants to become certified adoptive parents. Also, in conjunction with the GPS II/MAPP program, the Caseworker completes an accurate home study on each adoptive family. The Adoptive Caseworker also assists our adoptive parents to inquire on children who have been freed for adoption outside of our county.

The Adoption Caseworker also meets with the children who have been freed for adoption and their adoptive parents regularly to discuss any services that are needed to make the adoption an easy transition and to help them decide when they are ready to finalize the adoption. The adoption worker also arranges visitation between the freed child and the possible adoptive parents and helps everyone decide when the time is appropriate to transition the child into the residence. After both the child and the adoptive parents decide they are ready to finalize the adoption, the parents can petition the Family Court for finalization of the adoption. The Adoption Caseworker also prepares subsidy applications and other documentation for the Family Court Judge. He helps to recruit and retain adoptive parents in conjunction with the foster home Caseworker and arrange any post-adoption services, such as individual and family counseling for adopted children, if needed.

In 2010, there were three children freed for adoption and there are currently seven children in Madison County who are freed for adoption and not yet adopted. Of these seven children, five

of them are in pre-adoptive placements, so they are in the process of being adopted. In 2010, there were a total of 10 freed children in Madison County who were adopted. Eight of them were adopted by their foster parents and the other two were adopted by another Madison County foster family. One of the children who was freed in November 2010 was adopted in December 2010. The adoption, including state adoption subsidy, was finalized in about 31, days just prior to the holiday season. The adoptive family had already adopted the sibling to this child, so this adoption made it possible for the siblings to remain together.

### **Adoption Subsidy Program**

#### **New York State Adoption Album**

The New York State Adoption Album ([www.ocfs.state.ny.us](http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us)) is the main reference to locate children freed for adoption and possible adoptive families in New York State. Any child who has been freed for adoption and is not in an adoptive placement is listed on the NYSAA within 10 days. Information concerning each child and adoptive parent's strengths and needs are profiled on this website. Possible adoptive families can read about these children and decide if they were interested in being an adoptive family for them. In 2010, we did not need to photo list any newly freed children, because all three of the children who were freed for adoption were or will be adopted by their foster parents.

The Adoption Subsidy program is a legal agreement between the adoptive parents and New York State for financial and medical support for most children who are adopted through local social services agencies. These subsidies continue until the child reaches the age of 21, as long as the adoptive parent is providing some financial support for him/her. In 2010, New York State made several changes to its Adoption Subsidy Program.

With these recent changes to the regulations regarding subsidies, most foster children qualify for a subsidy. One of the primary administrative changes to the subsidy process that made the application and approval timelier was that the process was transitioned to an electronic database through NYSAA. Because of this change, the application and approval process can be completed in a matter of a few days instead of several weeks. The Adoption Caseworker is responsible for completing the subsidy applications in collaboration with the adoptive parents.

The applications are based on the needs of the child and NYSAA is responsible for making final approval on each subsidy. In 2010, the department completed 11 subsidy applications and all were approved. All these subsidies are completed prior to the finalization of the adoption of the children, but an adoptive parent is able to request a subsidy after the adoption is finalized (post-adoption subsidy). The parent would have to verify that there is evidence that the child had a handicapping condition that existed prior to finalization and that the condition was not discovered until after the adoption was finalized. These post-adoption subsidies are difficult to get approved, but we were able to get one post-adoption subsidy completed in 2010.

### **Bridges to Health Waiver Program**

This year was the second year that Bridges to Health Waiver Services Program (B2H) was available to foster children in Madison County. B2H is a Medicaid Home and Community Based Waiver Program that provides opportunities for improving health and wellbeing to children in foster care. This program was created to help children in foster care with special needs return home sooner than if the service was not available. It provides home-based services to the child and his/her family until the child is 21 years old, if eligible, so that the child is able to live at home with a lower risk of re-placement into foster care. It also helps a child in an institutional program to transition to a foster home setting easier. There are three types of B2H waivers available – Severe Emotionally Disturbed (SED), Developmentally Delayed (DD), and Medically Fragile (MedF).

In 2010, the department was allotted two additional SED slots for a total of five slots. The MedF and DD slots were available for the entire region. After 2009, we had two children enrolled in B2H. One child was in a SED slot and the other was in a MedF slot. Both of these children were determined to be ineligible in 2010. The child in the MedF slot was determined to be no longer medically fragile and the child in the SED slot was replaced into foster care.

This year, there were seven children referred or re-referred to the B2H waiver program. One referral was for a DD slot and this child is enrolled and now receiving services. The other six referrals were for SED slots and of these six referrals, two of them were re-referrals on the same child. Of the four children referred to B2H for the SED slots, three of them were enrolled in B2H and one referral is pending approval. The child enrolled in the DD slot and one of the children enrolled in an SED slot were foster children who were adopted by their foster parents this year. Initially, only the child in the SED slot was referred for B2H services, but later it was determined that the other child would qualify for a DD slot. That application was approved the day the adoption was finalized, which was the last day of eligibility, because these services are not available to a child who is not already enrolled in them prior to the finalization of the adoption.



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*Submitted by Andrew Hoffman, Senior Caseworker*



## **HOMEFINDING**

In 2010, the Homefinding unit opened five new foster/adoptive homes. We recertified 23 homes and closed nine.

*When "John and Jane" heard that their niece "Emily" was placed in a foster home, they stepped forward to see what they could do to help. Very shortly after the placement of the youth in care, this family received a phone call from one of Emily's foster parents. The experienced foster parent had been made aware that "Jacob," Emily's older brother, was in an unsafe environment, which she discussed with John and Jane. Together with the Caseworker they made a safety plan for Jacob. As a result of the foster parent's action and the concern and love of the relatives, Jacob moved in with his aunt and uncle. They assisted him in re-enrolling in school where he continues to progress. Jacob is flourishing in the family home environment. John and Jane then completed the requirements for relative foster care approval and Emily was moved to their home where she has reunited with her brother and is also thriving. Both children are a blessing to the family.*

## **Foster/Adoptive Parent Training**

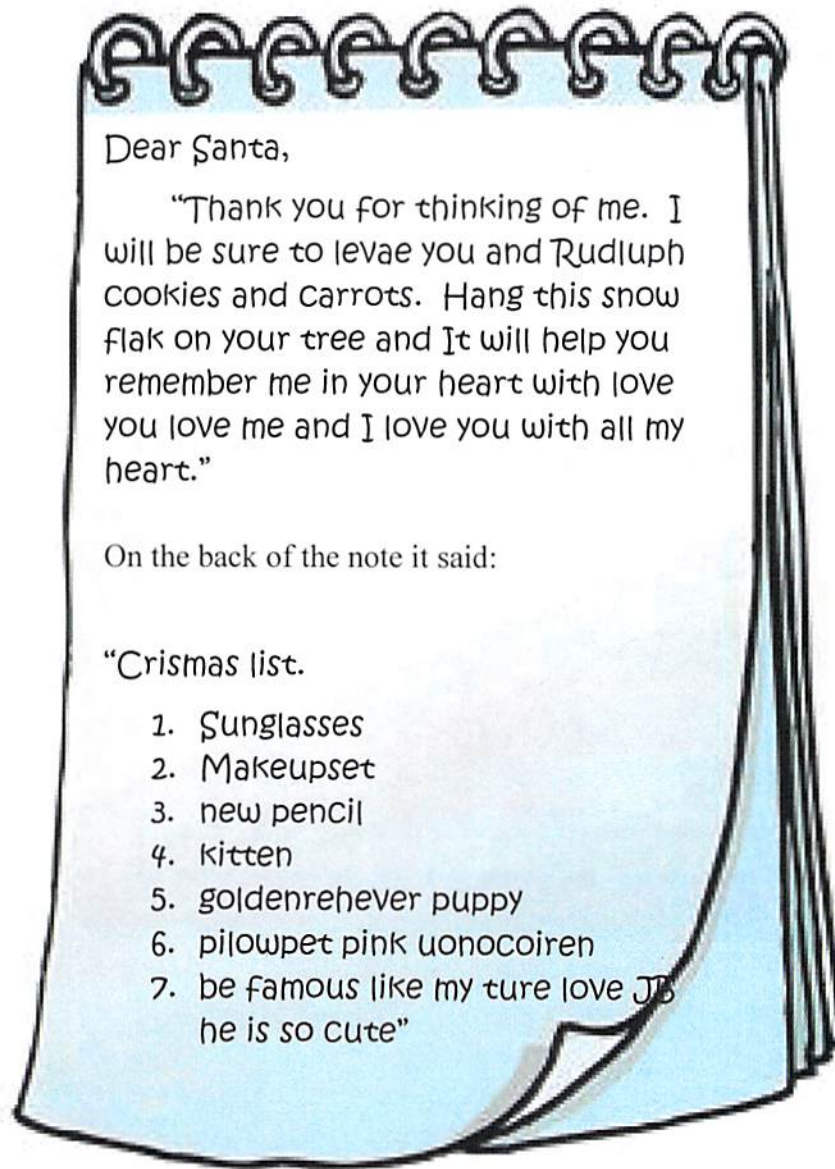
Precertification training is accomplished with the use of the 30-hour Group Preparation and Selection II/Model Approach to Partnerships in Parenting (GPS II/MAPP) program, which was offered twice during the year. The Homefinder and Adoption workers had 17 families begin the training during the 2010 calendar year. Eight of those families completed the training. Of the eight families that completed the program, only one has met all of the requirements for approval and their foster home was opened in 2010. The other four homes opened in 2010 were from previous MAPP groups or child specific homes.

*"Elaina and Jeff" are not new to Madison County, but are new to our foster care and adoption program. This is a wonderful family who has plenty of space and love in their hearts. They came to Madison County to fill a void, an empty nest, as all of their birth children are on their own. They have always wanted to provide foster care to children in need. Elaina and Jeff aspire to help troubled teens. They will begin as new foster parents with our agency with the coming of the New Year.*

## **Christmas and Beyond**

Our beginning balance for Christmas 2010 was \$907.52. Donations were acquired through community agencies, individuals in the community and Madison County employees in the amount of \$1106.50. A total of \$1350 was spent on gifts for our children.

Precious was one Christmas wish list received by the Department of Social Services this year. It read:



It took a few minutes, but we figured out that uonocoiren spells unicorn to a 6 year old. What a beautiful Christmas Wish List!

#### Recruitment and Retention

Madison County's new Recruitment and Retention Plan was completed in 2010.

We continue to receive steady inquiries from prospective foster/adoptive parents to Madison County Department of Social Services. At the close of 2010, our inquiry list contained 33 families interested in foster care and/or adoption.



We look positively forward to 2011 with the anticipation of recruiting, certifying and approving additional resource homes. In addition, our efforts will continue to focus on retaining the valuable resources we currently have.



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*Submitted by Theresa Snyder, Caseworker*

## PREVENTIVE SERVICES

Preventive Services Caseworkers work with families who have been identified as needing child welfare services to prevent at-risk children from being placed outside the home. They are also responsible for helping families to transition children back into their homes when they are returned from a foster care or relative/kinship care placement. Ten Caseworkers work with these families to establish a professional helping relationship. In 2010, this unit worked with an average of 117 families, involving an average of 210 children per month.

Preventive Caseworkers also handle foster care cases. Please refer to the Foster Care Annual Report for further information on foster care services provided by this unit. Two Parent Aides, a Casework Assistant, and four clerical staff assist these workers. Please refer to a separate report regarding the work that the Parent Aides contribute. The clerical staff supports and assists the entire Children and Family Services staff to complete the voluminous amount of paperwork and other office duties required to run such an operation efficiently. The Casework Assistant performs many invaluable assignments for Madison County families, such as supervising visitation between parents and their children, providing transportation, acting as a second person on home visits, etc.

Madison County DSS also has a contract with Madison County Community Action Program for their Family Action Program. This program consists of a Caseworker and a supervisor who provide preventive services on a voluntary basis to families at risk of having a child placed in foster care. This program is under the tutelage of a Senior Caseworker at DSS who is the case manager for all the cases and monitors the program for compliance

*One of the many stories of the past year revolves around a family consisting of a married mother and father, their two daughters, and mom's son from a previous relationship. When DSS became involved two years ago, there had been a history of domestic violence between the parents and excessive corporal punishment by the stepfather toward the son, age five. The son was very afraid of his stepfather, as one would expect. DSS initiated family court intervention and the parents were required to participate in services designed to reduce the risk to the child. Initially the father denied the incident and the mother minimized the severity. With an order of protection in place to help the mother protect the children, the father began treatment for anger management. The son also participated in mental health treatment for his victimization and fears. With the Preventive Caseworker assisting the family and ensuring the family's compliance with the court orders, over the past year, the father and son began joint counseling allowing the father the opportunity to apologize to his stepson. This joint counseling prepared the family for reunification, which occurred this past fall, upon all family members' completion of their court ordered services and improved family relationships. DSS was able to close their case safe in the knowledge that they'd helped another family.*

with state and local policies and regulations. He also reviews the cases for issues or concerns that would warrant CPS intervention. During 2010, this program worked with 16 families. In 2011, this program will be adding a Caseworker position and the supervisor will also have a small caseload.

### **Independent Living Skills**

Independent Living services are provided for children in foster care and children in households receiving preventive services who are at least 14 years old. The department contracts with The Peacemaker Program to provide a portion of these services. In addition, two Preventive Caseworkers work with The Peacemaker Program to empower children to learn the skills necessary to live on their own once they become adults. Youth are given the opportunity to learn and practice skills such as how to navigate the community for services they will need, personal finances, meal planning and preparation, housing, continuing education, etc. Other activities are planned to help increase understanding of cultural identities, enhance communication and conflict resolution skills; increase understanding of healthy risk-taking; and offer career and education exploration. Fifteen youths participated in planned IL activities in 2010.





## **PINS DIVERSION PROGRAM**

Madison County Department of Social Services had a successful year for providing PINS Diversion Services in 2010. A Person in Need of Supervision (PINS) is a youth less than 18 years of age who meets the following criteria: is incorrigible, ungovernable or disobedient, truant, or who is alleged to be in possession of or using marijuana. A parent/guardian or school district may file a petition in family court alleging PINS behaviors. Prior to filing a PINS petition, petitioners must prove that they have exhausted all services and resources to divert the PINS petition. A referral to the PINS Diversion program is the first step in the diversion process.

The PINS Diversion Program is supervised by a Senior Caseworker and case management responsibilities are shared between a Caseworker assigned to a primary caseload of PINS Diversion cases and the supervisor of the program. This program incorporates intensive and preventive services on a voluntary, short-term basis. The main goal of the PINS Diversion Program is to provide an immediate, efficient and accurate assessment of a child and family's needs in an effort to prevent judicial intervention by facilitating referrals to community-based services.

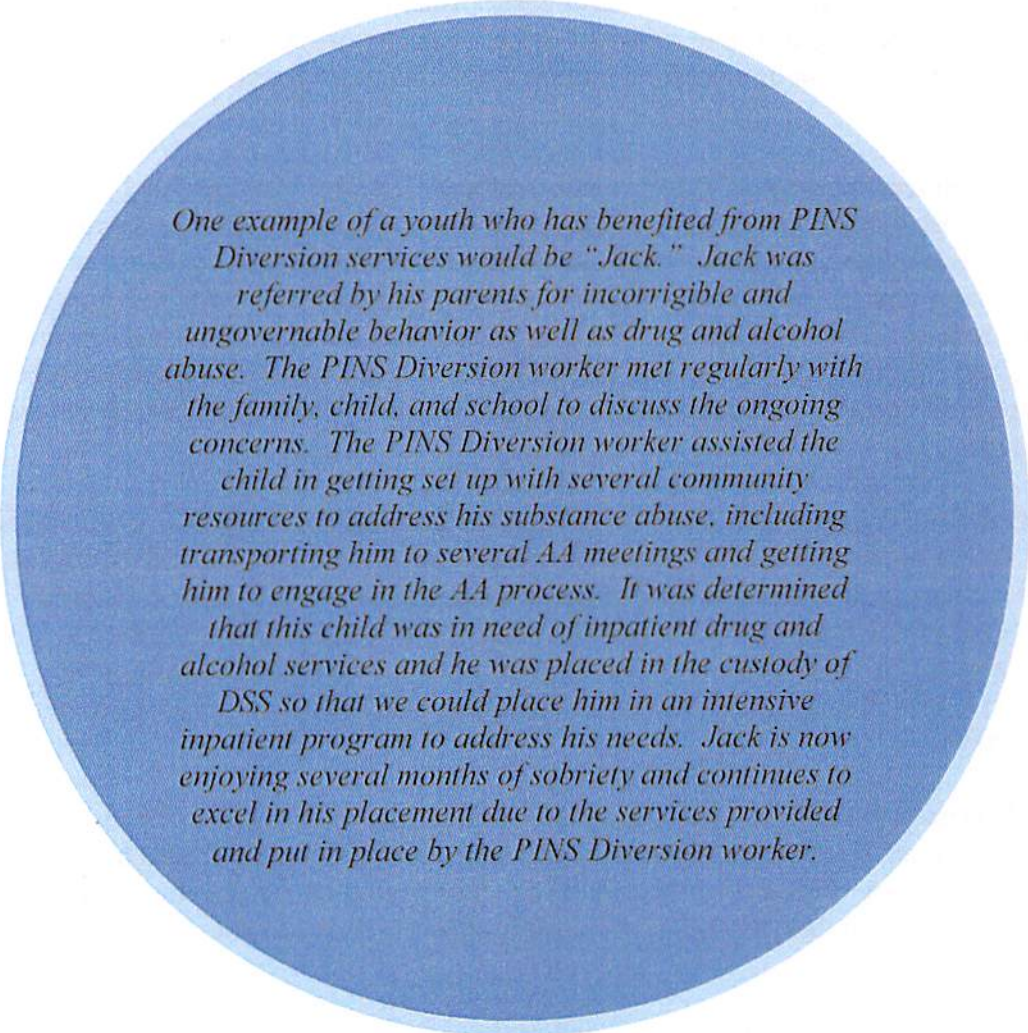
Once the Department receives a PINS Diversion referral, the family is contacted immediately to discuss crisis intervention options and services available to meet the family and youth's needs. The PINS Diversion worker will meet with the children and the families regularly to assess the situation, gather information from all involved services providers, and make recommendations for further services and plans of action. If it can be established that all diversion services have been exhausted and the child's behaviors in question have not improved, a parent or school may then attempt to file a PINS petition with the assistance of the PINS Diversion workers and the DSS Legal unit.

In 2010, there was an intake of 109 PINS Diversion referrals, an increase of one referral from 2009. School personnel made 29 of these referrals, 52 came from parents, and 28 referrals come from other sources such as community services providers. The average age of the youth referred to PINS Diversion continues to be 15 years old. Only 11 of these referrals resulted in a PINS petition being filed in Madison County Family Court, with only 7 children being placed out of their home in 2010. This compares to 17 PINS petitions filed and 8 out-of-home placements due to PINS in 2009.

The PINS Diversion Program is consistently and successfully diverting the placement of children outside of their home by providing intensive casework counseling and referrals to community services and resources. The needs of the Madison County youth are being met by the community resources so that they may continue to remain in their community and with their families.

A focus of the PINS Diversion Program in 2010 was to get information out to parents so that they could find the appropriate tools to assist their children with the problematic behaviors. This was a productive goal evidenced by the increased number of parental referrals to the program, with a 27 percent increase in the number of referrals to PINS Diversion from parents in 2009 to 2010.

An emphasis continues to be on a teamwork approach to servicing Madison County youth. The PINS Diversion workers, parents, schools and service providers are all a part of the team. This teamwork approach is valuable in assisting the youth in achieving the acceptable behaviors required to be safely maintained in their family setting and to avoid placement at a higher level of care. The PINS Diversion Program also works in conjunction with Madison County Probation, Madison County Child Protective Services, Community Action Program, Madison County Mental Health Department and Consumer Services. The service most commonly used by PINS Diversion is Liberty Resources Placement Diversion Program. This is a program contracted for services through DSS that incorporates intensive, home-based family therapy for families who have children at risk of out-of-home placement.



*One example of a youth who has benefited from PINS Diversion services would be "Jack." Jack was referred by his parents for incorrigible and ungovernable behavior as well as drug and alcohol abuse. The PINS Diversion worker met regularly with the family, child, and school to discuss the ongoing concerns. The PINS Diversion worker assisted the child in getting set up with several community resources to address his substance abuse, including transporting him to several AA meetings and getting him to engage in the AA process. It was determined that this child was in need of inpatient drug and alcohol services and he was placed in the custody of DSS so that we could place him in an intensive inpatient program to address his needs. Jack is now enjoying several months of sobriety and continues to excel in his placement due to the services provided and put in place by the PINS Diversion worker.*

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*Submitted by Jesica Prieto, Senior Caseworker*



## CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES

The Child Protective Services (CPS) unit is responsible for investigating allegations of child abuse and maltreatment. The New York State Central Registry maintains a hotline from which CPS reports are generated and assigned to the county where the subject child resides. Often, multiple counties are involved in the same investigation. Madison County CPS workers collaborated with 22 different counties throughout New York State in 2010. Madison County CPS workers also coordinated with 18 other states.

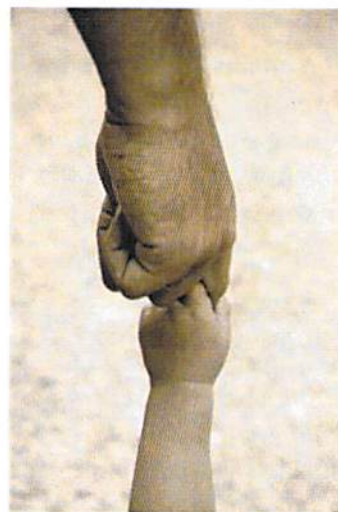
The CPS unit ended 2010 with 14 CPS Investigators, one Senior Caseworker, and two Grade B Supervisors.

Anyone concerned for the wellbeing of a person under the age of 18 may call the New York State Central Registry. If a report is accepted by the registry, it is transmitted via the Connections computer system to the county in which the child resides. Caseworkers must call the source of the report and interview all children and subjects listed on the report. Most interviews with children are conducted in the school setting. This allows the children a neutral environment in which to speak freely.

The major role of CPS is to assess the safety and risk of future maltreatment to children. CPS Caseworkers must make an initial assessment of safety within 24 hours. Continuous safety assessments are conducted both informally and in written form throughout the investigation. During the 60 days allotted for an investigation, additional information is often gathered through discussion with other agencies and reviewing of any applicable records. The home environment of the children is also observed during each investigation.

All new Children and Family Services Caseworkers must attend 22 days of New York State mandated and administered training. Additionally, any Caseworker with Child Protective duties must attend an additional 10 days of Child Protective Response Training. All Caseworkers performing Child Protective duties are now required to attend six hours of state-approved training per year.

CPS must be able to respond to calls from the New York State Central Registry 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. On-call Caseworkers respond to any after-hours issues of child abuse and neglect. All Children's Services Caseworkers are responsible for on-call coverage three or four weeks per year. On-call Caseworkers respond to after-hours reports, often making the necessary initial assessments of safety. A total of 345 CPS reports were received by on-call workers during 2010. This is a decrease of 16 reports from 2009.



*An immediate response is vital in protecting children. On-call Caseworkers are able to help families make temporary plans for their children's safety. One on-call situation involved the children staying with a family member for the weekend until the home could be cleaned to meet minimal safety standards. The case was assigned to a Caseworker on Monday morning, who followed up to assure the home was safe prior to the children's return*

Occasionally, multiple reports are received on the same family. For example, five separate reports were made on a situation that was observed by several different mandated reporters, as well as family members. Each time a report is received, the Caseworker must have additional contact with the family and address the allegations. However, in these multiple report situations, the Caseworkers do not need to complete each section of paperwork multiple times. These reports are consolidated into one case per family, if the allegations are similar in nature.

Of the 1,500 Child Protective reports received during 2010, 172 reports were investigated jointly with law enforcement by members of the Madison County Multidisciplinary Team (MDT). This is an increase of 13 reports from the 159 investigated by MDT members in 2009. This team is comprised of specially trained members

of Child Protective, law enforcement, the District Attorney's Office, DSS Legal staff, victims of violence advocates, and mental health service providers. Specialized training is funded through grants as opposed to local budget money. The team meets monthly to discuss specific cases, overall techniques, and best practices. Cases designated as MDT cases are those involving allegations of sexual abuse or severe physical injury to a child. Using a multidisciplinary approach assures that the most skilled professionals in each discipline work closely together to reduce the trauma to a child.

*One of the child protective reports received during the year alleged a newborn infant was not receiving proper care. The allegations were that the infant was left in dirty diapers; was being fed formula out of dirty bottles; was wearing dirty, smelly clothing; and was living in filthy conditions. The Caseworker made an initial home visit and found the conditions of the home were not as it was reported. The home was clean, the bottles were clean and sterilized, and there were no concerns for the infant's safety at the initial home visit. This Caseworker did not immediately close the investigation just because the first home visit did not show any safety concerns. The Caseworker continued to gather additional information from other sources regarding the ability of the mother to care for the infant. There were some safety concerns noted by the other sources, so the Caseworker continued to make home visits and check on the safety of the infant.*

*Over the next couple of weeks, both announced and unannounced home visits were made to check on the safety of the infant. During this period, the mother's mental health status started to decline and she missed several medical appointments for the infant. The Caseworker spent a lot of time working with the mother to engage her in services with other community agencies. At one point during the investigation, an alternative plan to care for the infant was needed, as the mother was not able to meet the needs of the infant due to her own mental health status. The*



*Caseworker was able to help the mother to make a plan and identify a resource who was able to care for the infant.*

*Due to the mother's inability to care for the infant adequately and her refusal to work with community agencies, a Preventive Services case was opened and the Family Court process was initiated to mandate services for the mother. The Caseworker's diligence in doing a complete and thorough investigation helped this mother receive the services needed while keeping the infant safe.*

Child Protective Caseworkers consistently collaborate with other professionals to assess and maintain the safety of a child. Community agencies, such as Madison Business Development, work with CPS Caseworkers to subsidize housing when necessary to prevent children from being placed out of their homes. When a Caseworker encounters a family who may be in need of ongoing assistance, many referrals can be made to community agencies. Child Protective Caseworkers can sometimes transfer a case to Community Action for monitoring as opposed to opening the case to the Madison County Preventive unit. Recently several families have benefited from this service. The collaborations between these agencies and Madison County Child Protective help assure the ongoing safety of the children of Madison County.



# Monthly Child Protective Reports Sorted by Township

January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total
0	4	3	4	7	2	2	4	2	4	5	4	41
2	3	3	4	1	5	3	1	2	3	3	1	31
1	2	3	2	4	3	0	1	3	1	2	4	26
4	8	5	5	10	4	2	3	5	2	0	4	52
0	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	6
1	1	4	2	0	2	0	0	1	1	0	1	13
4	4	11	9	6	3	4	0	6	12	8	7	74
0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	6
15	15	21	31	27	27	13	24	33	19	18	16	259
1	1	6	1	1	1	3	3	1	4	3	0	25
16	4	7	6	10	11	2	3	5	5	4	5	78
1	0	1	2	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	2	9
33	33	36	35	34	35	29	31	32	17	33	23	371
0	1	1	1	0	1	1	5	1	2	1	1	15
4	2	4	3	5	6	5	1	5	2	1	5	43
25	20	23	19	20	19	14	8	20	24	17	17	226
22	11	16	23	27	27	14	19	12	22	15	17	225
129	110	146	149	153	147	94	105	129	120	111	107	1500

*Submitted by Catherine Fowler, Case Supervisor Grade*

## **PARENT AIDES**

During the year 2010, the Parent Aides received 24 new referrals, a slight increase from the previous year, giving the Parent Aides an average of 11 and 13 cases per worker per month. These referrals are generated when a case is opened for services through the Foster Care/Prevent unit and there is a need for ongoing parenting assistance. A referral may be due to neglect issues or the parents' need for ongoing support to address other parenting issues related to the safety of children.

Madison County Department of Social Services currently has two Parent Aides who assist parents with a variety of tasks. These tasks include, but are not limited to, teaching appropriate forms of discipline, helping families to find appropriate housing, supervising visits between children and their parents when needed, transporting clients to/from necessary appointments, role modeling, and teaching parents how to interact with their children in a healthy, loving, and nurturing manner. The Parent Aides assess the strengths of each family through observation and discussion. They work collaboratively with these parents to enhance the skills they already have and build up the ones they may be lacking. Parent Aides meet with families in their homes, usually one-to-four times per month, depending on the needs of the family. In 2010, the Parent Aides made a total of 504 home visits and supervised approximately 48 visits.

The Parent Aides also teach a "Parenting Skills" class four times per year for 12 weeks per session at the Department of Social Services. This year, a summer parenting class was added to the schedule due to a need for a number of parents to complete the DSS parenting class. The timing was beneficial to the parents who were court ordered to complete the class instead of having to wait for the fall class to begin in September. Those who participate in these classes are usually referred by Family Court or their Caseworker. However, self referrals from individuals in the community are also accepted. This program educates parents, giving them the skills and knowledge they will need in order to effectively and safely parent their children. A total of 81 parents were invited to participate in these classes, with a total of 51 parents attending the classes. Fourteen parents received certificates of completion, 10 received certificates of attendance, and the remainder did not complete the class.

In addition to the regularly held parenting classes at DSS, the Parent Aides have continued teaching the Parenting Workshop, which is currently being held at the public safety building in Wampsville. This program was developed in 2008 and was very successful. The purpose of this program is to reach out to incarcerated parents – men and women – who could benefit from learning a healthy approach to parenting, as well as educating these inmates on basic living skills and anger management.

The Parent Aides use an interactive approach through role play and provide printed materials for the inmates to use as a reference point. In 2010, the class began on April 20, 2010, and ended on May 25, 2010, for a total of six weeks. Seven men and three women participated with a total of 10 that completed the class. This class is a relatively condensed version of the regular parenting



class held at DSS; therefore, it does not satisfy court orders that stipulate the completion of a parenting class. The participants who attend all classes do receive a participation certificate.

In 2010, the Parent Aides continued to assist families in need of food through the food cupboard, as well as providing hygiene products to those in need. Approximately 21 people/families were provided food and 35 people/families were provided with hygiene products.

The Parent Aides continue to dedicate their time and energy coordinating with community agencies. In 2010, those agencies were The First Congregational Church in Munnsville, St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Chittenango, and individuals within our community who have graciously donated to children in need. Items donated were various Christmas gifts, which were provided to many of our families in need. The commitment shown by these agencies and individuals in our community has helped to reduce the added stressors parents often feel due to financial limitations.

*The Parent Aides work very closely with the families referred to them. Over time, they are able to build a strong rapport that is essential when trying to influence positive change. In one of these instances where positive change occurred was with a grandmother who obtained custody of her four grandchildren. With her son and daughter-in-law having serious life issues, this grandmother took in her four grandchildren because they were on the verge of going into foster care. She was not prepared, but she was more scared by the idea that her grandchildren would be separated. In an emotional moment, she agreed to a vague court order stating the kids would live with her until her son got his life in order and she would provide transportation for visitation. This happened to be a recipe for disaster.*

*She moved them all into her small two-bedroom apartment, enrolled the older kids into school, and began a new adventure. Her son and daughter-in-law did not make things easy for this grandmother. She tried making things easy by being nice, although she learned she was only being taken advantage of. She was called at hours of the day and night, expected to bring to various places for visitation with no set schedule. She received numerous violent calls, threats, and intimidation by her own son. her son stopped calling to see the kids at all. grandmother was heartbroken by her son and of interest in his own kids.*

*Working with her Parent Aide and service providers, Grandma was able to get a detailed custody/visitation order providing her specific and times for visits. It also outlined that she responsible for many of the things her son tried her to provide. Also, with the help of her Parent Aide and service providers, she was able to get a larger living space, she engaged the kids in counseling, and has provided a safe stable environment for these children.*



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*When the Parent Aide first started working with this grandmother, she was fearful of her son, crammed into a two-bedroom apartment with a vague court order, and was taking care of four kids that each had behaviors from their previous environment. Currently, she is much more confident, has a whole house for the kids to play in, has learned new ideas to deal with some of the behaviors, and is making great strides in providing the kids the safety and security they need.*

The ongoing support, skills and information provided to our families by the Parent Aides in Madison County has lead to this success story and many more.

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*Submitted by Marcie Soule, School Services Program Coordinator*



## TRANSPORTATION AIDES

Last year the Transportation unit employed three Transportation Aides, one fulltime position and two part-time positions. These three Transportation Aides provided a combined total of 888 transports of children in foster care and their families to appointments for counseling, medical treatment, court or other various destinations. The Transportation Aides traveled a total of 34,690 miles in 2010 for a total costs savings of \$21,372.

In September of 2010, the Transportation unit received the resignation of one of the part-time Transportation Aides and, as a result of the decline in requests for transports, the unit decided not to refill this position at this time. Should the number of transportation requests increase, the unit will ask that the position be refilled in the future.

There are many hazards associated with the transportation position at Social Services. Some of these include animals; other drivers; distractions inside the vehicle; and, most of all, driving conditions. Driving conditions vary day to day so drivers have to be prepared for any weather that occurs and devote their complete attention to the road and their surroundings. We are fortunate here at Madison County to receive proper safety training in order to combat these hazards.

*One day, for example, the roads were slick due to snow. One of the Transportation Aides was transporting an infant to a visit with the parents. She was stopped in traffic at a stoplight on Route 5 in Oneida when she noticed a car skidding towards her. She had to think fast! Because she was near the McDonald's driveway and there was no one in her way, she quickly turned into the parking lot and avoided the collision the ensued. The Transportation Aide was relieved that she had avoided any injury that could have occurred to the baby. This is just one of many situations that may arise on any given day.*



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*Submitted by Dawn Hewitt, Principal Account Clerk, and Ruth Kline and Amber Cook, Transportation Aides*

## **SCHOOL SERVICES PROGRAM**

The School Services Program is a single point of contact for county schools needing assistance in accessing or coordinating services for children and their families facing difficulties in and out of school. The School Services Program Coordinator acts as a liaison among the school, family, and service agencies. Referrals may be made to the program by all school staff, community agencies, all Madison County departments, and self-referrals from families. The only requirement is that the child needing assistance must reside within Madison County's borders.

The objective is to provide those involved with youth a better opportunity to gain assistance in identifying available service options. By combining school supports with additional services directed at the home, a better chance exists of addressing the comprehensive needs of the child and family. The School Services Program works to prevent neglect, abuse, and teenaged delinquent behavior.

In the year 2010, this program received 132 referrals. The following is a breakdown of the referral sources:

31 - Madison County Departments PH, DSS, MH, or Probation	9 - PIP counselors
17 - School social workers	7 - BOCES Alternative High School
17 - Guidance counselors	5 - School psychologist
14 - Family/child self-referral	3 - School nurse
12 - Principals	3 - Teachers
10 - Other service providers	1 - BOCES Alternative Middle School
	1 - BOCES Pre-K/Head Start

The referrals reflected a variety of needs. Each referral usually consisted of several identified areas of need. The following is a breakdown of the number of times services were requested for certain areas of need:

32 - Individual/group counseling	7 - Transportation
25 - Assistance accessing services	7 - Case management services
20 - Education: academic	4 - Food
16 - Mental health assessment	4 - Depression
16 - Mentoring services	3 - Psychiatric services
15 - Health/medical/medication	3 - ADHD issues
15 - Anger control	2 - Homeless family/teenager
14 - Shelter	2 - Drugs and alcohol
13 - PINS/JD type behaviors	2 - Home sanitation/cleanliness
12 - Parenting skills/support	2 - Suspension
11 - Diversion services	1 - Physical safety
11 - Attendance issues/truancy	1 - Summer youth activities
11 - Financial/employment	1 - Unaccompanied youth
9 - Insurance	1 - Teenage parent
8 - Education: social	1 - Child care

The 132 referrals broken down into the following age groups:

(Ages 0 - 5) - 7  
(Ages 6 - 9) - 36  
(Ages 10 - 13) - 34  
(Ages 14 - 16) - 44  
(Ages 17 - 18) - 9  
(Age 19) - 2

Home visits and school-based contacts were made in order to develop a plan to address goals identified by the family and/or school. Once goals were identified, referrals could be made to public and private service agencies. The coordinator was able to support families and service providers at an early point to prevent escalating difficulties or conflicts in the classroom and home.

*For example, a seven-year-old boy was having behavioral issues at home. He was impulsive and very aggressive with his step-mother and siblings. This boy's behaviors got so extreme that he had become a safety concern to himself and his family. This boy was taken to CPEP on various occasions for evaluations due to threats to himself and his family, which sometimes resulted in placement at Hutchings Children's Psychiatric Center. I worked very closely with this family and we were able to present this boy to the local SPOA committee to seek out additional services for this child and get him and his siblings into counseling. This child was approved for home and community-based waiver services, which provided him with wraparound services including respite care coordination; skill building; family support; crisis intervention; and intensive in-home support, as well as linking the family to other community supports.*

*In addition to connecting this boy to services, I was able to help obtain services for his older brother who also had behavioral issues, but not to the same extreme. For his nine-year-old brother, I was able to help the family access the Mentoring Program through Community Action, as well as obtain Intensive Case Management Services through Consumer Services. Throughout working with this family, the father had always worked out of state and come home two-to-three times a year for a week-to-two weeks at a time.*

*Before the closure of this case, the step-mother and father had decided to end their relationship, causing the children to have to move in with a relative. Working with dad and giving him the encouragement to reach out to family members, he was able to arrange for all three of the children to move in with his cousin and her family. The three children are now residing with dad's cousin who has custody of them and is seeking sole custody. According to the seven year olds' Individualized Care Coordinator, the three children now have the support and stability that they need in their life and are continuing with their counseling and services.*

### **Community Action Program Intensive Mentoring Program 2010**

The goal of the Community Action Mentoring Program is to link Madison County youth, ages 8 to 16, with an adult member of the community. With support from the Mentoring Program, the mentor and mentee work together to enhance the youth's social, personal, and educational



growth. In 2010, there were 19 intensive mentors, each with the maximum capacity caseload of three children. The children must be TANF eligible (200 percent federal poverty level) and/or be at risk for teenage pregnancy/parenting. By the end of December 31, 2010, there were 25 active matches. The Mentoring Program enhances the Volunteer Mentoring Program, which had 26 volunteers by the end of December 31, 2010, and had 16 active mentor/mentee matches.

Outcomes that were to be met by the program appear to have been successful – none of the mentees became pregnant, there was no increased court or probation involvement, and there has been satisfactory school attendance and school achievement by the majority of the mentees. The children enjoyed activities such as visiting assisted living communities, learning about money management, hiking, baking/cooking, sailing, and horseback riding.

*For example, one of the mentees' struggles with her weight as well as a lack of exercise. The mentor has been doing a wonderful job of making it all about healthy choices and not "dieting." She takes every opportunity to have her try healthy good foods and has also introduced her to cooking where she can be in control of what goes into her food. Another way the mentor helps this mentee with her health is by incorporating physical activities into their mentoring. This mentee does not do any activities that allow her to get exercise. The mentor hopes that at the end of their time together, this young lady will continue to practice some of these things.*

#### **Life Skills Coaching – Dr. P. Scott Petosa 2010**

This program focused on providing services to Madison County youth and their families who were "at risk" for a placement in non-secure or secure detention. The program has been designed to serve both male and female youth from 10-to-17 years of age. The program is designed to help youth who mirror the profile presently placed through the courts on Juvenile Delinquency (JD) and Persons In Need of Supervision (PINS) petitions. The youth may be at risk of having a PINS petition filed against him/her or may be facing JD charges or probation. The youth may be experiencing school truancy, disruptive or incorrigible behavior, running away, aggression, vandalism, and substance or alcohol abuse. The youth may also be experiencing strained or stressed family relationships, a chaotic home environment, or poor peer relationships.

The goals for families and youth involved in this program are to decrease the rate of delinquent or disruptive behaviors, increase educational success, and increase positive family interaction. This program seeks to build upon the youth's strengths. The candidates for this program will have strengths such as a desire to form healthy relationships, possessing a need to have a positive adult role model in their lives, and the potential to succeed academically with the appropriate support and guidance. This program is voluntary for families and youth and requires a level of commitment to the treatment program.

Dr. Petosa met with individuals at the local YMCA in Oneida and other local venues. During sessions, he taught anger management, problem solving, and communication skills while incorporating various physical fitness and sporting techniques. Dr. Petosa also discussed positive parenting skills with parents and the importance of a positive adult role model in a child's life.

In 2010, 20 youth were actively enrolled in the life skills program. In addition to meeting with the children weekly at the YMCA, Dr. Petosa followed up on a weekly or bi-weekly basis, by telephone or home visits, to see how the children were doing at home and in school. He also met with case managers, PINS Diversion staff, Probation Officers, counselors, lawyers, the children at school, and school administrators in an effort to promote success.

*One example is a boy who was "constantly in transition," bouncing around to different family members who provided little or no security and modeled dysfunction. This 15 year old had very low self-esteem, was constantly bullied at school, and got into numerous fights at school and home. He experienced numerous bouts of depression and outbursts of anger, which he could not control. When asked why he **expressed** this dysfunctional behavior, his response was, "I don't know." At first, he was unable to make eye contact; talked in a monotone, low voice; and was uneasy around everyone, including Dr. Petosa.*

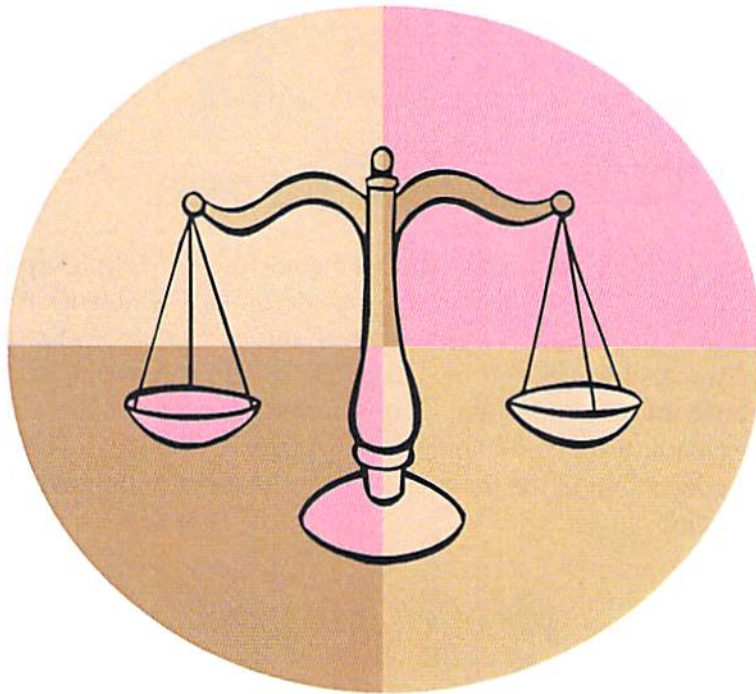
*By exploring respect, communication, and problem-solving issues, both instructionally and experientially, this young man has improved dramatically. His grades in school have improved significantly (he is passing all subjects with a B+ average). He tried out and made his high school football team and is planning to compete in a spring sport (track). He is constantly improving his social behaviors, both at school and home. He has received no referrals this school year.*

*At his recent Liberty Resources counselors' review meeting at his high school, all of his teachers raved about his marked improvement, both academically and socially. The vice-principal, who was passing by the meeting office, stopped in to praise this student for his exemplary behavior. His Liberty Resources counselor stated that it was a pleasure to see such improvement, wishing that all her clients could realize such extraordinary gains.*

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*Submitted by Marcie Soule, School Services Program Coordinator*

# MADISON COUNTY DSS LEGAL DEPARTMENT 2010



In 2010, the Madison County DSS Legal Department continued to strive to provide comprehensive legal counsel to all units within the agency. The Legal Department carries two major caseloads: Children and Family Services and Support Collection. In addition to Children and Family Services and Support Collection, the Legal Department provides representation to Adult Services, Medicaid, Temporary Assistance, estate matters, bankruptcy, property liens, foreclosures and other DSS-related matters. Each day, there are new legal issues presented to the legal staff for analysis and assistance. The Legal Department's staff consists of two Attorneys, one Paralegal and one Office Assistant II.



The Madison County DSS Legal Department continues to actively work with Children and Family Services to ensure that the Department of Social Services is in compliance with all laws and regulations. The DSS Legal Department continues to assist the Caseworkers with questions and concerns regarding investigations of neglect and abuse and to ensure enforcement and compliance with all current Family Court Orders. The two Attorneys and Paralegal regularly meet with Children and Family Services supervisors and Caseworkers on individual cases and for trial preparation. In 2010, there were 116 conferences between the legal staff and Caseworkers.



### **Multidisciplinary Team (MDT)**

The Legal Department is also a member of the Madison County Multidisciplinary Team (MDT). The Madison County MDT is a group of professionals who work together in a coordinated and collaborative manner to ensure an effective response to reports of sexual abuse and serious physical abuse of children. The MDT approach promotes well-coordinated child abuse investigations that benefit from the input of many different parties, including law enforcement, prosecution and Child Protective Services. This approach ensures a successful conclusion to the investigation and serves to minimize the additional trauma to the child victim.



### **Family Treatment Program**

The Madison County Family Treatment Program was established in August 2005. The Family Treatment Program is a specialized program that assists respondents in Madison County Family Court proceedings where drug and/or alcohol addiction or abuse contributes to child abuse or neglect. Since the program's inception, 76 individuals have been considered for the program. The Family Treatment Program, consisting of the Madison County Legal Department, DSS Caseworkers/supervisors, the participants' legal counsel, attorneys for the children, and other service providers, meet twice a month to report to the Family Court Judge who oversees the program. The Family Treatment participants are required to attend various treatment programs, such as drug/alcohol counseling, mental health counseling, and parenting classes, just to name a few. The average length of participation in the Family Treatment Program is one year, although that timeframe varies with each individual participant. The Family Treatment Program's goal is to continue to ensure that the participants' children have a safe, nurturing environment by focusing on healthy and sober parenting and permanency planning through the collaborative efforts of the team members.

### CCRS Legal Tracking

The Legal Department's Office Assistant II is responsible for tracking all foster children currently in Madison County's custody. This information is reported to the state and federal governments. Entries consist of all petitions and orders filed in a particular case. Accurate and timely entries are required to ensure that the Madison County Department of Social Services receives all state and federal reimbursements to which it is entitled. In 2010, there were approximately 701 transactions entered in the CCRS system.

#### Children and Family Services – 2010

<u>Active Cases:</u>	127
<u>Cases Opened:</u>	42
<u>Petitions Filed:</u>	82
<u>Court Orders Prepared:</u>	278
<u>Trials:</u>	20
<u>Permanency Hearings:</u>	75
<u>Permanency Reports Filed:</u>	72
<u>Court Ordered Investigations:</u>	21
<u>Total Court Appearances:*</u>	521

\*(Includes DSS noticed as Interested Party)



### Fair Hearings

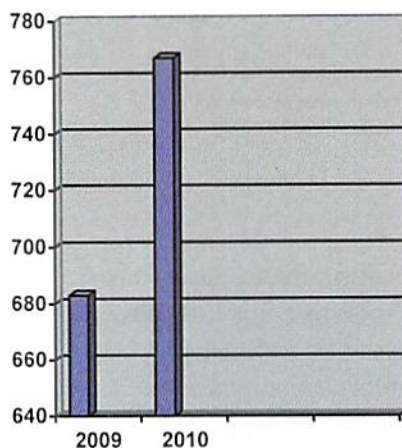
In addition to the cases that are filed in Madison County Family Court, there are those cases that are reported as child abuse/neglect, are investigated by Child Protective Services and a determination is made as to whether the allegations in the report should be indicated or unfounded. In other words, "Is there some credible evidence to support the allegations?" Oftentimes, when a report is indicated and closed, a parent requests a fair hearing seeking a determination from the State Office of Children and Family Services that the determination made by our local agency was correct. A Fair hearing is then scheduled with an Administrative Law Judge and the parent and the department each have the opportunity to present evidence. The Administrative Law Judge rules on the evidence and issues a determination at a later date. In 2010, the Legal Department represented the MCDSS in a total of 42 fair hearings.



## CHILD SUPPORT

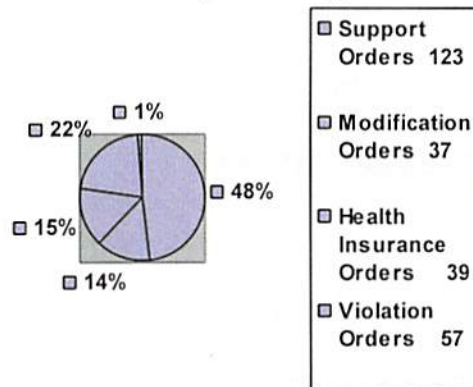
The Madison County DSS Legal Department works to establish child support orders when a child is in receipt of temporary assistance or is placed in foster care. In addition, the unit works to enforce child support orders, establish paternity when a child is in receipt of Medicaid or Temporary Assistance, and recoup reimbursement for confinement expenditures related to the birth of a child who is in receipt of Medicaid.

In 2010, the Madison County Department of Social Services Legal Department made 767 appearances before the Madison County Family Court Support Magistrate on child support petitions filed by the department. This number includes initial appearances, fact findings, hearings, and referrals to the Family Court Judges for confirmation hearings. The number of appearances by the Madison County Legal Department reflects an increase of 84 court appearances over the year 2009.



## CHILD SUPPORT ORDERS

In 2010, the Madison County DSS Legal Department drafted and submitted for filing with the Madison County Family Court a total of 260 child support orders. Submissions included a total of 123 original child support orders, representing 48 percent of the total; 39 medical support orders, representing 15 percent of the total; 37 modification orders, representing 14 percent; 57 violation orders, representing 22 percent; and 2 orders of filiation, representing the final 1 percent. The remaining 2 orders terminated existing child support orders.



## Voluntary Medical Support Agreements

In 2010, the Legal Department continued its efforts to alleviate unnecessary court congestion by continuing to identify individuals who would benefit from the opportunity to execute a Voluntary Medical Support Agreement. A Voluntary Medical Support Agreement contains the required medical support language required by state and federal law. It also provides the non-custodial parents an opportunity to fulfill their legal obligation to provide health insurance for their dependent children without the need for a court appearance. In cases where the agreement is not returned, the SCU will file a petition in Family Court for medical support. These petitions result in obtaining an order for medical support from Family Court.

### 2010 Voluntary Agreements

1. Clients Identified	93
2. Agreements Returned	35
3. Agreements Not Returned	41
4. Cases Resolved in Other Manner	17

## MONEY JUDGMENTS

In certain instances, money that is owed to the Madison County Department of Social Services for expenditures ranging from the birth of a child to child support arrears are set in money judgments. The money judgment is part of the final disposition by the Madison County Family Court Support Magistrate. Monies that are received by the Madison County SCU, which are in addition to child support payments received, are typically applied to any money judgment that may be on an account.

For the year 2010, the Madison County DSS Legal Department filed the following judgments and satisfactions with the Madison County Clerk's Office:

### Money Judgments Filed:

74

### Total Amount of Judgments:

\$121,344.63

### Money Judgment Satisfactions

#### Filed:

11

#### Revenue Collected:

\$23,488.75

2010



## UIFSA:



### Uniform Interstate Family Support Act

Pursuant to 18 NYCRR 347.17(Right to Recovery Act), custodial parents involved in child support matters who reside outside New York State are entitled to representation by a CSEU attorney as counsel. In 2009, the Madison County DSS Legal Department, together with the Madison County SCU, implemented a case tracking and billing system for these cases and maintained that system in 2010. In addition to assisting custodial parents throughout the United States through this system, the Madison County DSS Legal Department and SCU went international and were able to assist a client whose residence is in Sweden. The cost of this service is recouped by the SCU at a rate of 25 percent of each current child support payment received on behalf of the client.

## W.P.I

### Working Parent's Initiative

In 2010, the Working Parent's Initiative continued its goal of assisting non-custodial parents in obtaining employment. For 2010, 11 parents were identified as fitting the criteria for the program.



Although the employment crisis continues, the Madison County Department of Social Services looks forward to continuing this program with even more success in 2011.

*Submitted by  
Kelly Yonnick-Smith, Paralegal*

## **MADISON COUNTY SHERIFF'S** **INVESTIGATIVE UNIT**

The Madison County Sheriff's Office Investigative unit consists of two part-time Investigators that do background investigations and pistol permit investigations, three fulltime Investigators, one fulltime Sergeant and one fulltime Lieutenant. The Lieutenant also oversees the Transport unit, Court security, County Office Building security, Veterans Building security and Civil Department.

The Investigative unit is housed in the Department of Social Services Building and has the responsibility for the safety and security of the staff and clients in the building. Each day, a Deputy performs "desk duty" during business hour. The Deputy may also remain after business hours if requested by staff. Currently, we provide after-hours security for parenting classes when they are in session. While on "desk duty," the Deputy is responsible for the security of the building, as well as answering phones and assisting the Social Services staff and clients with any issues that may arise. In the absence of a Deputy, an Investigator is assigned to "desk duty."

The Investigative unit investigates major crimes, such as rape, arson, robbery, burglary, narcotics and homicide. We conduct internal investigations as directed by the Sheriff. The unit assists other local, state and federal agencies such as the New York State Police, local police departments and the Madison County District Attorney's Office.

The Investigative unit performs several other functions at the Social Services Building as well. This includes investigating fraud complaints, completing validations (front-end detection) and assisting the Child Protective and Adult Protective units. The validation process consists of an Investigator reviewing a client's application for services and verifying that the information is correct. This is done by doing a home visit or using other techniques to verify the information. The validation process helps eliminate fraud as well as create a savings if a case is denied. The Investigative unit completed 373 validations in 2010. This is down from 463 in 2009. In 2010, \$206,524 was saved from being paid out as a result of validation denials – this is down from \$215,968 in 2009.

The Investigative unit received 294 fraud complaints in 2010. This is up from 155 in 2009. The fraud investigations were received through tips from the public, case screening and leads developed in criminal investigations. Fraud cases, when received, are forwarded to a Senior Examiner to determine if a fraud exists. Due to numerous state regulations, most frauds are unfounded. If it is determined that a fraud does exist, the Sergeant assigns an Investigator to follow up on the case.

A Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) was formed in 2003 to investigate child abuse/sexual assaults. The purpose of the MDT is to minimize trauma to the victim and strengthen the prosecution of the defendant. The MDT cases are top priority for the Investigative unit and all of our Investigators continue to receive specialized training in this area. The Madison County Sheriff's Investigative unit investigated 54 MDT cases in 2010 – this is an increase from the 43 MDT cases investigated in 2009.



The Sheriff's Office Investigative unit, with the assistance of a DSS Caseworker, also transports juveniles sentenced to detention. The unit conducted 23 juvenile transports in 2010. This is down from 25 in 2009.

The Lieutenant is tasked with scheduling security for local courts that have requested a Deputy while court is in session. Local courts may request a Deputy as needed for a trial or other event at the court. In addition to scheduling security for local courts, the Lieutenant schedules Deputies that provide security for the county complex and the Veterans Building. The Deputy assigned to the county complex works 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and is responsible for parking complaints, accidents that occur in the parking lot, and any other issues that may arise. The Deputy assigned to the Veterans Building is responsible for security at the District Attorney's Office, Probation and Mental Health Departments. The post is manned from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Friday. In 2010, the security staff logged numerous complaints ranging from warrants of arrest and civil matters to disorderly persons.

The Investigations unit will continue to work diligently to serve the citizens of Madison County.



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*Submitted by Lieutenant William Wilcox, Madison County Sheriff's Office*

## **RESOURCES**

Resource recovery is the return of revenue to this agency. This includes ensuring the collection of money from probates, estates, assignment of proceeds, and accident liens. Area banks are checked for undisclosed assets, determinations are made for the availability of third party health insurance, and the collection of medical information for disability determination is done.

### **Recoveries for 2010**

Estates - PNA	\$ 75,910
Accident Liens	\$ 20,839
Medicaid Liens	\$ 65,011
Burials	\$ 790
Annuity Payments	\$ 2,075
Estates	\$ 87,888
Long Term Health Care Payments	<u>\$ 18,243</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$270,756</b>

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*Submitted by Steven Chaires, Deputy Commissioner for Administrative Services*



## ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

### FISCAL SUMMARY - 2010

	<u>Expenditures</u>	<u>Credits</u>	
General Administration	\$ 8,100,001	\$ 6,934,623	
Child Care Block Grant	\$ 715,856	\$ 784,044	
Title XX	\$ 762,996	\$ 508,975	
Medical Assistance	\$ 132,363	\$ 132,598	
MMIS	\$ 8,922,769	\$ 652,091	
TANF/Family Assistance	\$ 2,901,894	\$ 1,999,712	
Child Welfare	\$ 1,958,954	\$ 1,560,745	
Juvenile Delinquent	\$ 388,058	\$ 232,187	
Safety Net	\$ 885,783	\$ 587,718	
HEAP	\$ 21,815	\$ 20,245	
EAA	\$ 15,691	\$ 7,926	
Burials	\$ 137,932	\$ 27,790	
Title IV-D	\$ -	\$ 38,589	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 24,944,113</b>	<b>\$ 13,487,243</b>	
<b>NET LOCAL COST</b>		<b>\$ 11,456,869</b>	
	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>Increase/ (Decrease)</u>
<b>Gross Cost</b>	<b>\$25,798,980</b>	<b>\$24,944,113</b>	<b>(\$854,867)</b>
<b>Net Local Cost</b>	<b>\$12,022,165</b>	<b>\$11,456,869</b>	<b>(\$565,296)</b>

Please note that this financial report is based on a revenue/appropriation analysis dated 3/25/11. The Madison County Treasurer has not finalized the financial information for 2010; therefore, this information is subject to change.

**Modified Budgeted Amount vs Actual Adjusted Gross Amount - 2010**

	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Surplus/ (Deficit)</u>
General Administration	\$ 8,611,093	\$ 8,100,001	\$ 511,092
Day Care	\$ 574,853	\$ 715,856	\$ (141,003)
Title XX	\$ 822,115	\$ 762,996	\$ 59,119
Medical Assistance	\$ 160,000	\$ 132,363	\$ 27,637
MMIS	\$ 9,754,240	\$ 8,922,769	\$ 831,471
Family Assistance	\$ 3,617,402	\$ 2,901,894	\$ 715,508
Child Welfare	\$ 2,368,554	\$ 1,958,954	\$ 409,600
Juvenile Delinquent	\$ 752,685	\$ 388,058	\$ 364,627
Safety Net	\$ 862,500	\$ 885,783	\$ (23,283)
HEAP	\$ 25,000	\$ 21,815	\$ 3,185
EAA	\$ 14,000	\$ 15,691	\$ (1,691)
Burials	\$ 115,500	\$ 137,932	\$ (22,432)
Title IV-D	\$ (37,967)	\$ (38,589)	\$ 622
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 27,639,975</b>	<b>\$ 24,905,524</b>	<b>\$ 2,734,451</b>

\*Burials paid out of Department A6140.

Please note that this financial report is based on a revenue/appropriation analysis dated 3/25/11. The Madison County Treasurer has not finalized the financial information for 2010; therefore, this information is subject to change.

# NET LOCAL COST - 2010

	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Surplus/ (Deficit)</u>
General Administration	\$ 2,828,991	\$ 1,165,378	\$ 1,663,613
Child Care Block Grant	\$ (150,355)	\$ (68,187)	\$ (82,168)
Title XX	\$ 276,269	\$ 254,020	\$ 22,249
Medical Assistance	\$ -	\$ (235)	\$ 235
MMIS	\$ 9,754,240	\$ 8,270,678	\$ 1,483,562
TANF/Family Assistance	\$ 1,588,237	\$ 902,183	\$ 686,054
Child Welfare	\$ 1,146,875	\$ 398,210	\$ 748,665
Juvenile Delinquent	\$ 522,534	\$ 155,871	\$ 366,663
Safety Net	\$ 335,100	\$ 298,064	\$ 37,036
HEAP	\$ -	\$ 1,569	\$ (1,569)
EAA	\$ 7,000	\$ 7,765	\$ (765)
Energy Fund	\$ 5,500	\$ -	\$ 5,500
Burials	\$ 95,250	\$ 110,142	\$ (14,892)
Title IV-D	\$ (37,560)	\$ (38,589)	\$ 1,029
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 16,372,081</b>	<b>\$ 11,456,869</b>	<b>\$ 4,915,212</b>

Please note that this financial report is based on a revenue/appropriation analysis dated 3/25/11. The Madison County Treasurer has not finalized the financial information for 2010; therefore, this information is subject to change.

**2009 - 2010 REIMBURSEMENT COMPARISON**

	2010	2010	2010	2010	2010
	FEDERAL SHARE	STATE SHARE	REFUNDS	LOCAL SHARE	TOTAL COST
General Administration	\$ 4,753,569	\$ 2,151,094	\$ 29,960	\$ 1,165,378	\$ 8,100,001
CCBG	\$ -	\$ 761,038	\$ 23,006	\$ (68,187)	\$ 715,856
Title XX	\$ 285,225	\$ 223,573	\$ 177	\$ 254,020	\$ 762,996
Medical Assistance	\$ (161,053)	\$ (176,237)	\$ 469,888	\$ (235)	\$ 132,363
MMIS	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 652,091	\$ 8,270,678	\$ 8,922,769
FA	\$ 1,419,592	\$ 423,034	\$ 157,086	\$ 902,183	\$ 2,901,894
Child Welfare	\$ 368,771	\$ 1,060,570	\$ 131,404	\$ 398,210	\$ 1,958,954
Juvenile Delinquent	\$ -	\$ 230,653	\$ 1,534	\$ 155,871	\$ 388,058
Safety Net/Burials	\$ 19,466	\$ 331,762	\$ 236,490	\$ 298,064	\$ 885,783
HEAP	\$ (82,972)	\$ -	\$ 103,217	\$ 1,569	\$ 21,815
EAA	\$ -	\$ 7,864	\$ 62	\$ 7,765	\$ 15,691
Burials	\$ -	\$ 27,000	\$ 790	\$ 110,142	\$ 137,932
Title IV-D	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 38,589	\$ (38,589)	\$ -
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 6,602,598</b>	<b>\$ 5,040,351</b>	<b>\$ 1,844,294</b>	<b>\$ 11,456,869</b>	<b>\$ 24,944,113</b>

	2009	2009	2009	2009	2009
	FEDERAL SHARE	STATE SHARE	REFUNDS	LOCAL SHARE	TOTAL COST
General Administration	\$ 4,443,384	\$ 2,226,579	\$ 35,765	\$ 1,068,852	\$ 7,774,580
CCBG	\$ -	\$ 929,901	\$ 957	\$ (104,733)	\$ 826,124
Title XX	\$ 240,996	\$ 316,104	\$ 176	\$ 120,456	\$ 677,732
Medical Assistance	\$ (210,190)	\$ (226,489)	\$ 584,496	\$ 99	\$ 147,916
MMIS	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 779,874	\$ 8,341,858	\$ 9,121,732
FA	\$ 1,674,380	\$ 408,786	\$ 250,555	\$ 1,279,645	\$ 3,613,367
Child Welfare	\$ 373,111	\$ 985,998	\$ 133,618	\$ 745,408	\$ 2,238,134
Juvenile Delinquent	\$ -	\$ 241,252	\$ 3,773	\$ 199,041	\$ 444,066
Safety Net/Burials	\$ -	\$ 322,836	\$ 117,009	\$ 342,559	\$ 782,403
HEAP	\$ (83,652)	\$ -	\$ 135,197	\$ 2,275	\$ 53,820
EAA	\$ -	\$ 2,918	\$ 484	\$ 2,913	\$ 6,314
Burials	\$ -	\$ 24,174	\$ 3,758	\$ 84,859	\$ 112,791
Title IV-D	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 37,329	\$ (37,329)	\$ -
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 6,438,029</b>	<b>\$ 5,232,059</b>	<b>\$ 2,082,989</b>	<b>\$ 12,045,902</b>	<b>\$ 25,798,980</b>

<b>2009-2010 Comparison Increase/(Decrease)</b>	<b>\$ 164,569</b>	<b>\$ (191,708)</b>	<b>\$ (238,695)</b>	<b>\$ (589,033)</b>	<b>\$ (854,867)</b>
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Please note that this financial report is based on a revenue/appropriation analysis dated 3/25/11. The Madison County Treasurer has not finalized the financial information for 2010; therefore, this information is subject to change

*Submitted by Steven Chaires, Deputy Commissioner for Administrative Services*