

**Madison County  
Department of Social Services**

**2005  
Annual Report**

*Michael A. Fitzgerald  
Commissioner*



## MADISON COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

Phone: 366-2248

*Michael A. Fitzgerald, Commissioner*  
Madison County Complex, Building 1  
North Court Street  
P.O. Box 637  
Wampsville, New York 13163

Fax: 366-2553

April 19, 2006

Honorable Rocco DiVeronica, Chairman  
Madison County Board of Supervisors  
Wampsville, New York 13163

Dear Mr. DiVeronica:

The Madison County Department of Social Services is proud to present the 2005 Annual Report.

In looking back over the past 12 months, this could well be the most changes in one year to have affected the Department of Social Services in the history of the department. Since 1935, when the Social Security Act was first passed, there have been notable highlights of federal and state changes that have impacted the local delivery of services to the impoverished. In that first year, Aid to Dependent Children (ADC later to become AFDC, Aid to Families and Dependent Children) was the first federal form of welfare in the country. During the sixties, the federal Food Stamp program and later, Medicaid, were created to meet the demands of the hungry and those without health insurance. In the seventies, separation of services meant a drastic change from "one caseworker" to specialized service delivery based on the needs of the family. Several cost cutting programs were started in the eighties, including the JOBS Act (Job Opportunity and Basic Skills) as well as DEFRA (Deficit Reduction Act). Finally, in 1996, the complete overhaul of social welfare programs came under the TANF Act (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families). All of these federal programs have highlighted the response of

government to those unable to care for themselves and all are regarded as substantive changes in the delivery of services down to the local level.

The year 2005, while not evidencing tremendous federal change, certainly had many state and local changes that will be viewed over the next several years as significant points of change.

The most dramatic change was one that Madison County was very involved in as you served in your role as the President of the New York State Association of Counties (NYSAC). Medicaid has been the burden that broke the taxpayers of many counties for countless years. The program expanded in both benefits and beneficiaries without control until counties could no longer bear the financial strain on limited resources. Madison County had repeatedly seen double-digit percentage increases in costs for several years with no end in sight. NYSAC, fearing the eventual demise of counties, sought for the state to control the costs and provide fiscal relief. As part of the adopted State Budget for 2005-06, the state put a cap on Medicaid local expenses. What had become an unpredictable, giant liability has become a limited growth, manageable program. While the costs are still enormous (over \$11 million budgeted for Madison County alone for 2006), the growth has been slowed by controlling the rates of increase to 3.5 percent in 2006, 3.25 percent in 2007, and 3 percent in 2008 and in years thereafter. Time will tell if the state can continue to meet its obligation of financing the program, but it was a tremendous benefit for the department, Madison County, and the citizens of New York.

Other events in 2005 that bear mention, and are highlighted further in this report, are the Persons in Need of Supervision (PINS) changes, a Permanency Bill that was passed, the establishment of a Flexible Fund for Family Services (FFFS), and finally, the highlight of my year as Commissioner – the opening of the county's first Agency Operated Foster Home for boys.

The PINS changes mandated that each county must provide for "diversion" services to prevent the filing of PINS petitions in Family Court. Often, families, schools, and others in the community, when faced with an incorrigible youth, would file a PINS petition seeking to adjust the youth's behavior. Outcomes could include a sentence of probation, mandated services such as drug/alcohol treatment, mental health counseling, etc., or simply a harsh word from the judge to correct the behavior. Oftentimes, however, the child would end up removed from the care of the parent or guardian, placed in a facility that taught him/her improved behavior, and then returned to the family in a year. The outcomes for this service were not helpful to the child, the family, or the community. The expense of the placement was exorbitant. Since the passage of this landmark legislation, the number of children placed has plummeted, services to families have improved, and agencies are working together to plan for better, more long-term outcomes for those involved. While there have been growing pains, and sometimes continue to be, the end result is far superior to what we had for too many years.

The Permanency Bill is a technical state piece of legislation that finally aligned New York State with the federal regulations governing child welfare services. Every child should be guaranteed a safe, permanent home and the Permanency Bill, together with the federal statutes, finally does that in this county and for New York. Whereas children might have been in the foster care limbo for years, the bill now requires a court review every six months as well as a “permanent plan” no later than 12 months after a child is in foster care. No longer will children have to wait, sometimes years, until the parent decides to “change” and make a safe plan for his/her child. The law requires social services agencies to do the right thing for children, their families, and the community. This bill will have long-term positive effects for children throughout the foster care system and we are already reaping benefits as children are moved home sooner, adopted quicker, or returned to another responsible adult more swiftly.

The Flexible Fund for Family Services (FFFS) is a block grant given to local counties to utilize, at the county’s discretion, for the prioritization of programs to supplement the needs of the low-income in the community. It offers an incentive for the local social services department to coordinate with our community partners and provide needed services to move families to a higher level of self-sufficiency. Fortunately, the FFFS came at a time when funding for child welfare services was going to be cut due to a state retraction of support for children’s services a year before (the state had cut \$122 million from child welfare financing in the 2004-05 state budget, and that impact would have hit us in 2005). Unfortunately, the use of much of the FFFS for the loss of the child welfare financing meant that we could not be as creative as we would have liked. In the end, we were able to continue many programs that we had funded in the past, create some new innovative services, and finally, to think about the possibilities as this “flexible fund” is maintained in future state budget years.

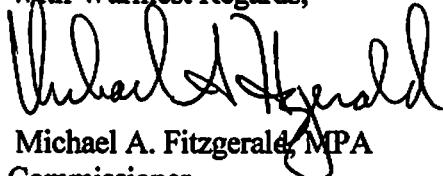
Last, and certainly not the least, the Madison County Department of Social Services was able to open our first Agency Operated Foster Home (AOFH) in the county. Through the hard work of many individuals, the dream of having our children, who could not continue to live with their parents, remain in the county has been realized. For too many of our youngsters, the opportunity to work alongside their families on the issues that separated them from their families was often not available. This was often because the placement for these children was an hour or more away from their homes. Reuniting a child with his/her parents was made more difficult because of the distance between them. And in the end, the child was brought home and services were difficult to set up because he/she had “been away” and the parents were unprepared to handle the new responsibility. Having a facility in the child’s home county offers unique opportunities for the child, the parents, and all community partners to work together to address the problems.

The home is a gem, having undergone several months of reconstruction to enable its use as a foster home. Most of the work was completed by our own Mobile Work Crew and used the skills of recipients of social services, as well as those of inmates

housed at the Madison County Jail. Supplies were purchased locally and the contractor running the day-to-day operations is our very own Madison County Community Action Program (CAP). We are anxious to fill the home with boys who are looking to change their lives and, together with CAP, we are anticipating not only better services for these needy children and their families but also a cost savings on the care.

As we look forward to continuing to implement the exciting program changes of 2005 into the new year, I am hopeful the support you have provided the department, as well as that of the entire Board, will continue. We have truly had a great year and I believe the remainder of this annual report will only support that assertion. We face many challenges in the coming years but the staff of this department and I are committed to effectively and efficiently providing services for residents of Madison County while strengthening the networks of community service for all.

With Warmest Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael A. Fitzgerald".

Michael A. Fitzgerald, MPA  
Commissioner

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER .....	1
ECONOMIC SECURITY .....	3
MEDICAL ASSISTANCE .....	10
ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES .....	16
CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT .....	19
EMPLOYMENT .....	24
ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES .....	29
RESOURCES .....	54
STAFF DEVELOPMENT .....	55
BURIALS .....	59
TRANSPORTATION .....	60
SYSTEMS .....	63
CHILDREN'S SERVICES .....	66
FOSTER CARE .....	70
FOSTER CARE/ADOPTIVE PROGRAM .....	74
PREVENTIVE SERVICES .....	80
CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES .....	84
CHILDREN'S SERVICES SOCIAL WORKER .....	90
PARENT AIDES .....	93
INDEPENDENT LIVING .....	95
TRANSPORTATION AIDES .....	97
SCHOOL SERVICES COORDINATOR .....	98
TEENAGE SERVICES ACT PROGRAM .....	101
LEGAL .....	103
INVESTIGATIONS .....	106

## **DEPUTY COMMISSIONER**

### **Staffing**

In 2005, a total of eight employees left the Department of Social Services. Three employees resigned and five retired. Five employees requested, and were granted, leaves of absence. Two were medical and three were maternity leaves.

The vacancies that resulted from persons' leaving the department occurred at many levels. Retirements included two Senior Keyboard Specialists, one Caseworker, one Case Supervisor Grade B, and one Resource Assistant. Vacancies due to resignations included one Attorney, one Social Welfare Examiner, and one Office Assistant I.

One of the Senior Keyboard Specialist vacancies, which were reclassified as Office Assistants II, was filled by promoting an Office Assistant I and the other was filled through the transfer of an employee from another County department. The Attorney vacancy was filled with the hiring of a new employee. The Caseworker vacancy was also filled with the hiring of a new employee. Promoting an Office Assistant II filled the Social Welfare Examiner vacancy. The Case Supervisor Grade B vacancy was filled by promoting a Senior Caseworker. The Office Assistant I vacancy and the Resource Assistant vacancy, which was reclassified as an Office Assistant II, were filled by hiring new employees.

There were a total of six promotions within the department during 2005. Three Office Assistant I employees were promoted to Office Assistant II. One Office Assistant II was promoted to Social Welfare Examiner. A Senior Caseworker was promoted to Case Supervisor Grade B and a Caseworker was promoted to Senior Caseworker.

Two positions were eliminated during 2005 and one fulltime position was created, while two part-time positions were created from one fulltime position. Upon becoming

vacant due to a retirement, the Resource Assistant position was eliminated and an Office Assistant II position was created to replace it. This was done in response to changing duties within the Supportive Services (clerical) unit. One fulltime Transportation Aide position was eliminated and two part-time Transportation Aide positions were created to replace it to allow for more flexibility in transportation scheduling. One of these part-time Transportation Aide positions remained vacant throughout 2005.

One position was reclassified in the 2005 Budget. An Office Assistant II position in the Children's Services section was reclassified to a Principal Account Clerk due to a determination that the duties of the position more closely fit the Principal Account Clerk Civil Service Job Specification.

Twenty-one employees of the department qualified for the attendance bonus in 2005, compared to 17 in 2004, 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.

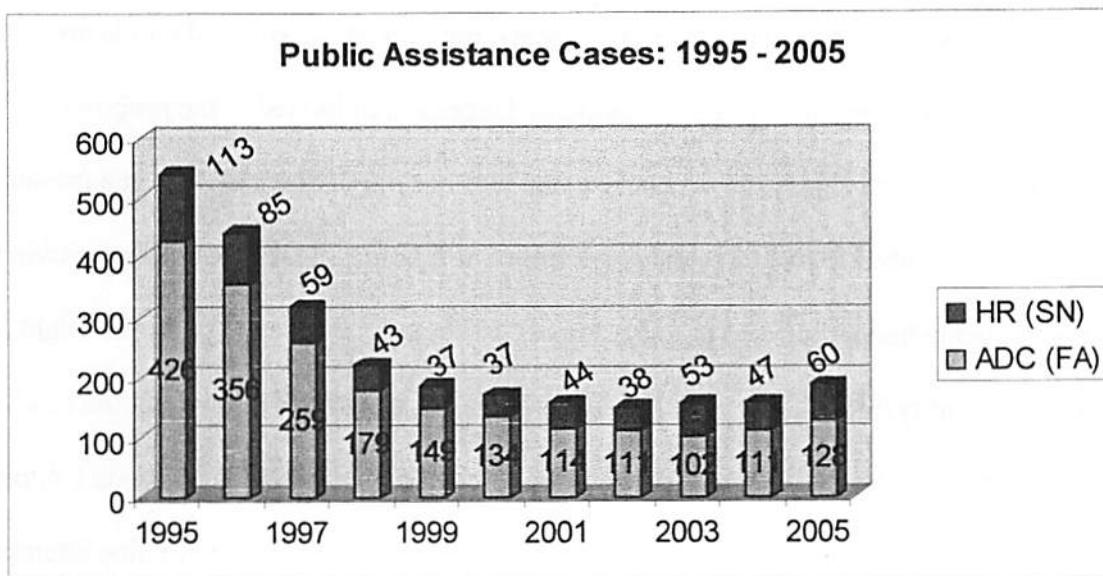
At the end of 2005, there were 115 positions within the Department of Social Services plus four Sheriff's Deputies provided through a contract with the Sheriff's Department to conduct fraud investigations and provide building security.

---

*Submitted by Stephen Garneau, Deputy Commissioner*

## **ECONOMIC SECURITY** (Temporary Assistance)

The year 2005 consisted of the Madison County Department of Social Services Economic Security unit's continuation of success at keeping the Family Assistance caseloads reasonably low. Motivating families to self-sufficiency continued to be our number one goal. This has been accomplished through a variety of programs operated under the Temporary Assistance unit.



Temporary Assistance saw an overall increase in the number of cash assistance cases in 2005. The average number of Family Assistance cases increased 15 percent (111 cases in 2004 to 128 cases in 2005) while Safety Net cases increased 28 percent (47 cases in 2004 to 60 cases in 2005). This resulted in a total caseload increase of 19 percent (158 cases in 2004 to 188 cases in 2005). Considering the struggling local economy, it is not surprising that the Madison County Department of Social Services experienced this caseload increase.

We continued to operate or start a wide assortment of services this past year. We continued to serve as a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) site. The VITA program allows low-income families free, electronic filing of income tax information. The program continued to be a successful collaboration among the department, Community Action Program (CAP), and Colgate University. Students from the college prepared 235 tax returns bringing more than \$500,000 of federal/state income tax refunds into the county in 2005. This effort also resulted in Earned Income Tax Credits (EITC) totaling in excess of \$211,000.

The unit was also involved in collaboration with the Upstate Institute Field School of Colgate University. A student intern researched the impact of proposed child care regulations for informal child care providers. Her research looked at the proposed regulations that informal providers (those that care for only a few children in a private setting) would need to meet to receive government funding. This research has provided some valuable insight into the possible impact these new proposed regulations might have on cost, availability, and quality of child care in Madison County. This student intern also worked on a project that focuses on "child-only" welfare recipients in Madison County. This project is a follow-up study of work originally done by Cornell University that attempted to understand the backgrounds, needs, services used, and potential of Temporary Assistance for Needy Family (TANF) recipients. A survey of the approximately 75 cases of this type in Madison County was conducted toward the end of 2005 in an effort to assess the needs of these children and how the Department of Social Services can better assist them.

County residents continued to utilize the department's online food stamp screening and application process. During 2005, 255 residents of Madison County applied for food stamps online. The goal of this initiative is to increase the number of households

participating in the Food Stamp program. This continued to show success as, on average, the Food Stamp caseload increased by six percent as compared to 2004.

The unit continued to participate in a number of other initiatives currently underway. CAP and SUNY Morrisville, in collaboration with the Temporary Assistance unit continued to receive funding from a grant through the Department of Labor that has allowed the purchase of automobiles for low-income, working families. The DSS Deputy Commissioner, who oversees the financial program areas, continued to participate in a Forensic Case Management initiative with representatives of the Mental Health and Probation Departments. The purpose of the initiative is to successfully transition County jail inmates with mental health issues back into the community after they have completed their sentence. The Deputy Commissioner serves on a Forensic Task Group, which meets monthly with the forensic (Mental Health) case manager in an effort to coordinate services such as temporary assistance, food stamps, Medicaid, or Adult Services for those clients coming out of the jail.

Finally, the Bureau of Early Childhood Services approved our proposal to purchase scanning/imaging equipment through the use of a one-time grant opportunity. This equipment will be used for the imaging of case records and other related documents including common documents such as birth certificates, social security cards, etc. The intended result is to reduce both the cost and burden of paper handling and case processing errors due to lost files or key documents. It is anticipated that this equipment will be purchased in early 2006.

This past year also saw the enactment of the Flexible Fund for Family Services (FFFS) in the 2005-06 State fiscal year budget. This new fund incorporates certain TANF funding into a flexible allocation for local social services districts. The FFFS is designed to

provide local social services districts with maximum flexibility in determining how best to respond to identified local needs for services. Madison County's FFFS plan, in conjunction with the prior TANF services dollars, provided for funding for several TANF services projects. The Community Action Program received funding to continue with provision of a housing stabilization program and also a transportation services program. The housing stabilization program funded such items as first month's rent, moving expenses, and minor rehabilitation to name a few. During the year, this program served 335 low-income families.

An example of the kind of assistance the funding provides was a family of five (parents and three small children) was facing eviction. The father lost his job and they were unable to make a full rental payment. With the assistance from housing stabilization funds of \$75, CAP was able to make up the full rental payment and the family was able to stay in stable housing, enhancing the ability of the father to obtain a new job.

The CAP transportation services program provides direct client transportation services to assist low-income individuals in obtaining or maintaining employment. This program provides for direct client disbursement of funds for the cost of vehicle repairs, maintenance, purchase, rental, gas vouchers, and driving lessons. During the year, this program served 405 participants.

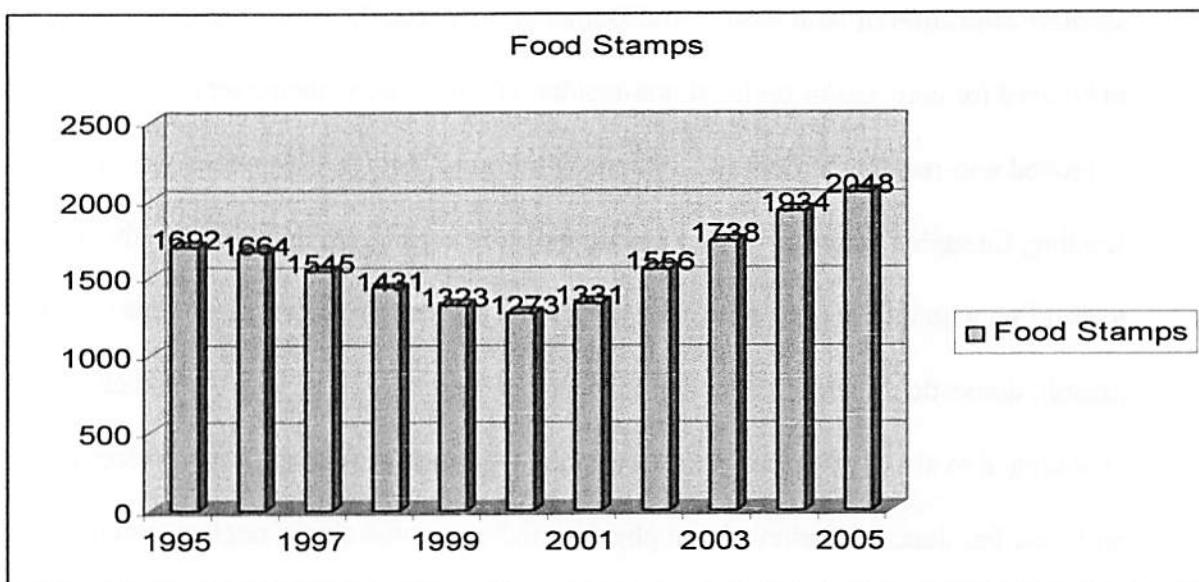
Funding was also granted to Liberty Resources, Inc., to provide an Enhanced Drug and Alcohol Case Management program. This program provides drug and alcohol assessments/referrals and case management services to individuals in an effort to help them become employable. During the year, 60 persons received drug/alcohol assessments and an average of 16 individuals per month received case management services. These services resulted in 35 individuals' achieving the goal of employment.

The Mid York Child Care Coordinating Council also received FFFS funds beginning in October, 2005, to provide for a fulltime staff person to be housed at the DSS office. This person works closely with the DSS Day Care unit in the day-to-day operations of assisting parents with procuring child care so they can maintain gainful employment. This staff person also conducts recruitment/training activities in an effort to enlist more providers of registered child care.

During 2005, the Madison County Department of Social Services also received a separate allocation of Non-Residential Domestic Violence Services TANF funds (\$25,000) to be used for core and/or optional non-residential domestic violence services provided by approved non-residential domestic violence programs. Liberty Resources, Inc., received this funding, through a contract, to start and operate a new program that provides therapy services to children who live in Madison County and have witnessed and/or are victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, child abuse, and other violent crimes. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to also participate in the treatment. Through providing these services to children and their families, it is believed that physical and emotional abuse, neglect, and domestic violence will be significantly decreased.

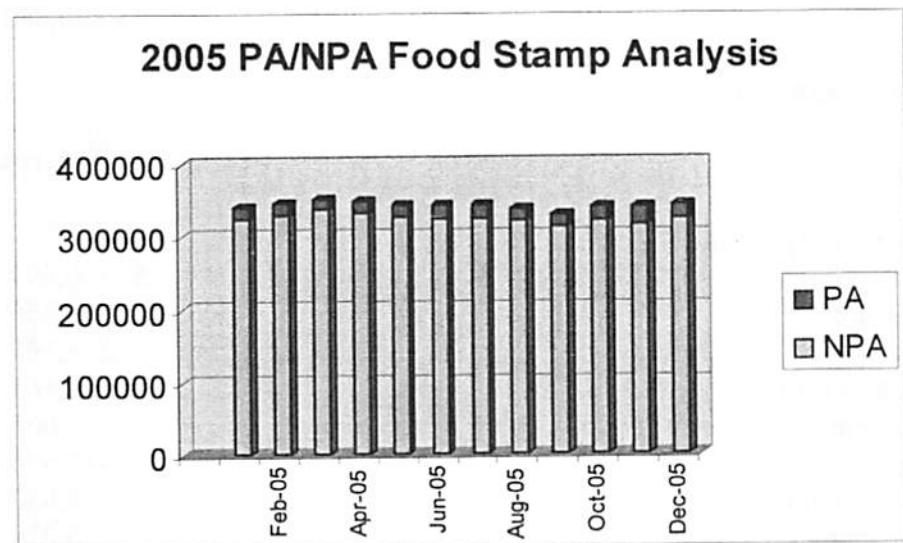
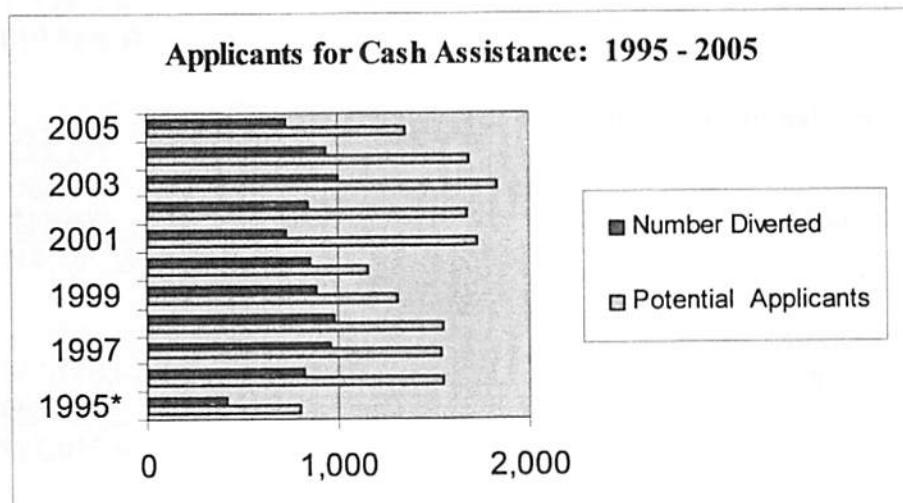
We saw a continued caseload increase in food stamps with a high of 2,123 cases in December and a low of 1,980 in August. We averaged 2,048 cases for the year, representing 4,252 residents of the county. The food stamp caseload has increased by 50 percent over the past five years, indicating that more of our neighbors need the nutrition that food stamps provide. In fact, it is important to note that food stamps, a totally federally subsidized benefit, adds \$342,650 monthly and over \$4.1 million annually to our local economy by the food purchases made at local grocery stores.

As a means to provide nutrition education to food stamp recipients, DSS continues to partner with Cornell Cooperative Extension to secure funding through the USDA for a food stamp nutrition education program. The program, called Eat Smart New York, teaches people to budget and stretch food dollars, prepare healthy meals and snacks, plan and prepare low-cost easy menus and recipes, handle and store food safely, and add more fruits and vegetables to their diet. During 2005, the program's first full year in operation, this program served 112 families consisting of 235 persons.



The cornerstone of the Temporary Assistance unit remains "Front-Door Diversion." The concept was instituted in July 1995 by a group of employees who wanted to offer our clients something more than an application for assistance every time they came into the Social Services office. This group felt that we could possibly "divert" up to 20 percent of the applications into some other form of assistance (Medicaid, food stamps, day care, HEAP, or directly into private sector employment). We have seen an average of 57 percent or 77 per month since beginning the program, of the persons applying for public assistance diverted

into some other form of help. The program has saved the county an average of \$32,373 per month or a total savings of \$4,173,260 since we began. In 2005, we continued to see impressive results: 1,355 persons came into the Social Services building to apply for public assistance with 734 diverted (54 percent) for a yearly savings of \$333,970.



*Submitted by Stephen Garneau, Deputy Commissioner*

## MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

### Medicaid Payments to Madison County Employers

#### **Oneida HealthCare Center:**

Inpatient	\$1,501,786
Outpatient	897,381
Skilled Nursing (ECF)	<u>4,296,751</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$6,695,918</b>

#### **Community Memorial Hospital:**

Inpatient	\$ 743,223
Outpatient	599,250
Skilled Nursing	<u>860,517</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,202,990</b>

#### **Crouse Community Center:**

Skilled Nursing	\$4,037,150
Adult Day Care	<u>473,599</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,510,749</b>

#### **Stonehedge, Chittenango:**

Skilled Nursing	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,120,482</b>

#### **Madison County Mental Health:**

Clinical Services	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,659,315</b>

#### **Madison County Public Health:**

Clinical Services	\$ 456,698
Personal Care	49,358
Nursing	205,260
Home Health Care	86,163
Rehabilitation	3,601
Preschool	417,574
Early Intervention	218,853
Case Management	36,224
Long Term Home Health Care Program	
Personal Care	43,154
Home Health Aide	310,439
Nursing	138,769
Waivered Services	66,294
Rehabilitation	<u>2,872</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,035,259</b>

**Madison-Cortland ARC:**

Clinical Services	\$ 464,096
Transportation (Madison Transit ended 5/05)	33,924
Case Management	500,308
Home and Community Based Waivered Services	<u>4,933,890</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,932,218</b>

**Oneida Indian Nation:**

Clinical Services	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 28,414</b>

**Liberty Resources:**

Case Management	\$ 595,168
Rehabilitation	262,798
Home and Community Based Waivered Services	<u>2,369,513</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,227,479</b>

**Consumer Services of Madison County:**

Case Management	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 126,898</b>

**Hamilton Manor:**

Homecare services	\$ 57,728
Transportation	<u>38,683</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 96,411</b>

**Heritage Farm:**

Home and Community Based Waivered Services	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 607,366</b>

**School supportive services provided by the following school districts:**

Canastota	\$ 463,786
Chittenango	458,169
Oneida	335,164
Morrisville – Eaton	225,268
Cazenovia	97,460
Brookfield	33,710
Hamilton	29,591
Stockbridge	25,835
DeRuyter	<u>25,021</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,694,004</b>

The Administrative Services unit report included in the annual report outlines Medicaid expenditures for 2005. Included in the millions of dollars paid out for the Medicaid program is a substantial amount to providers located within Madison County. Specifically listed here is a breakdown of those payments. Medicaid payments to these providers assist the community by providing jobs and, therefore, services within Madison County.

#### **Medical Assistance Program Changes and Caseload Figures**

Medicaid eligible children receive Medicaid through the Child Health Plus A program. Children above the Child Health Plus A income levels are eligible for health insurance through the Child Health Plus B program which is administered through the New York State Department of Health. Effective April 1, 2005, the Child Health Plus A income levels were reduced from 133 percent of the federal poverty level to 100 percent. The children affected are transitioned from Child Health Plus A to Child Health Plus B with no lapse of insurance coverage.

The Family Health Plus (FHP) program began in 2002 with income eligibility levels higher than the Medicaid program levels and no resource test. Individuals eligible for FHP are enrolled in Health Maintenance Organizations. Effective August 1, 2005, a resource test was implemented for FHP and a requirement for participants to pay co-pays for services was implemented September 1, 2005. As of the end of 2005, there were 1,642 individuals enrolled in the FHP program.

## Medicaid Caseloads During 2005

Medicaid Program	# Cases January	# Cases December	# Change
Regular Medicaid	2417	2580	+163
Nursing Home	354	363	+9
Family Health Plus	725	689	-36
Family Planning	344	296	-48
SSI	1260	1309	+49
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5100</b>	<b>5237</b>	<b>+137</b>

At the end of 2005, there were 8,264 individuals receiving Medicaid in Madison County.

---

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

## **MEDICAID HOME CARE PROGRAMS**

Madison County's Medicaid Home Care Programs provided in-home care to 123 individuals in 2005. The Long-Term Home Health Care Program provided 68 clients with expanded home care services. The program admitted 14 individuals in 2005 – one was admitted from an extended care facility. The average age was 72 with the age range being 38 to 98. The average DMS-1 score was 168. Males constituted 20 percent while 80 percent were female.

Skilled care was provided at approximately 53 percent of the monthly allowable cap of \$4052. This reflects a 61 percent savings as compared to nursing home placement. Health related care was provided at approximately 63 percent of the monthly allowable cap of \$2737. This shows a monthly savings of 47 percent compared to nursing home placement. The Long-Term Home Health Care Program continues to maintain residents of Madison County in their own homes in a cost-effective manner.

The Personal Care Program provided personal care assistance to eight county residents in 2005. The Care at Home Medicaid Waiver Program served one minor. The Consumer Directed Personal Care admitted 12 new clients and a total of 35 clients received personal care through this program.

Eleven residents of Hamilton Manor received personal care services through the Limited Licensed Home Care Services Program.

---

*Submitted by Tracy DiVeronica, Caseworker*

### **A Medicaid Success Story**

The following account is a successful story of a nursing home resident returning home through a collaborative effort among a Syracuse area skilled nursing facility, the Resource Center for Independent Living (RCIL), the Oneida Indian Nation, and the Department of Social Services.

A late 40-year-old Madison County resident had been an inpatient in Syracuse, New York, on a rehabilitation floor for 20 months. His admitting diagnosis was a series of serious, physical impairments. He required a Hoyer lift to get in and out of bed and to assist with all his activities of daily living.

A discharge planning meeting was scheduled, because the patient's condition was deemed chronic. A decision had to be made; either he would return to his home in the community with assistance provided for personal care and a mechanism to ensure safety in the home, or be permanently placed in an extended care facility. This gentleman had a strong desire to return to his home.

In a coordinated effort among the skilled nursing facility, Madison County Department of Social Services, Oneida Indian Nation, and RCIL, this county resident was able to return to his own home. Because of Madison County's Medicaid Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program (CDPAP), this man was able to hire and train his own personal care attendants. He was authorized 41 hours per week by Madison County. Nursing visits, meals, and the personal emergency response system were to be provided by the Oneida Indian Nation.

This example shows success in allowing the patient to return to his home while also reducing the cost of his long-term care.

---

*Submitted by Tracy DiVeronica, Caseworker*

## **ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES**

The Adult Protective Services unit is responsible for investigating alleged abuse towards any adult aged 18 and over. During 2005, the Adult Services unit investigated 143 allegations referred to them by the community. These referrals were investigated, and in most cases resolved, by the two Caseworkers located in the unit. The number of referrals was an increase of two from the previous year. These referrals can be for a variety of reasons including, but not limited to, adults suffering from some form of dementia, poor housing conditions, adults suffering from mental illness, financial exploitation, and physical and sexual abuse. Adult Services worked closely with agencies such as the Madison County Public Health Department, Madison-Cortland ARC, Madison County Mental Health Department, Madison County Community Action Partnership, and the Madison County Office for the Aging. The goal is to ensure that adults in need are provided the assistance and guidance to fix not only immediate needs, but also ongoing needs.

The unit also includes a Casework Assistant whose duties include acting as representative payee overseeing the finances for a number of clients who receive Social Security benefits. The Casework Assistant also monitors the employability of food stamp recipients, referring them to the Madison County Mobile Work Crew and monitoring their participation.

The Adult Services unit is vital in identifying and monitoring clients' success in obtaining and successfully completing alcohol and substance abuse treatment. Alcohol and substance abuse screening is conducted by the Caseworkers. The Casework Assistant refers, and subsequently monitors, clients identified by the screening to a Certified Alcohol and Substance Abuse Counselor (CASAC). The CASAC is provided through Liberty Resources,

Inc., and is another example of partnering with community agencies to assist those in need.

Following are two examples of successful outcomes for people that the unit worked with. The first involved a woman who lived in an unsafe environment. She was refusing to leave her residence even though she had no running water, no heat, no bathroom facilities, and was having severe physical difficulties. The Caseworker worked successfully with others in the community, including the local codes enforcement officer, the town supervisor, Environmental Health, and friends of this person, in finding a safe, stable home.

The other example involved a woman who had limited family resources, suffered from mental illness, and was generally not accessible to the community. She had been involved with Adult Services for a long time. The Caseworker that was assigned worked with this person to get her a telephone. To most people, getting a telephone is not a big deal; however, because of mental illness, to this person having a telephone seemed overwhelming and, as a result, had resisted getting one. The Caseworker, however, was able to convince this person of the benefits of having a telephone, and now this person has been using it to contact the Caseworker on a regular basis.

There were three major changes that occurred in the Adult Services unit in the past year. The first was that the unit was fully integrated into the state computer system Adult Services Automation Project (ASAP). This system makes it easier to enter progress notes, track cases, including looking at case records for persons who previously received services in another county. The second was that the supervisor in Adult Services retired in October. The third was that the Employment unit was taken out of Adult Services and placed under the Income Maintenance unit.

Restructuring of the Adult Services unit will continue into 2006 with the planned inclusion of home care services.

---

*Submitted by Timothy Collins, Case Supervisor Grade B*

## CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT

Last year's annual report for the Child Support Collection unit ended with a sanction's being lifted on an applicant, Mary Public. Following is as a "true-to-life story" as you can get of Mary's continuing involvement through the Child Support Enforcement unit's system.

Mary had applied for temporary assistance at Madison County Department of Social Services for herself and her one child, a son, Joe Public. One of the requirements to be eligible for temporary assistance is Mary's cooperating with the Child Support unit in establishing legal fatherhood for any child born out of wedlock. There must be cooperation with the agency in establishment, modification, and enforcement of child support for any children under 21 for whom assistance is sought. A year had passed since Mary's public assistance case opened. During that timeframe, Mary had been ordered to submit to genetic testing (a buccal swab is used to collect a sample of cells by rubbing the inside of the three parties' cheeks and is the DNA choice of tests used by Madison County), along with her son and the putative (alleged) father, John Doe. All parties appeared for testing at the Department of Social Services, which was performed by a phlebotomist hired by the laboratory contracted by the department.

The results were received approximately a week later by the Director of Child Support Collection. After reviewing the results, the director called Mary and told her that John was excluded as Joe's biological father. The director advised Mary that there would be a hearing and both parties would hear the results in the courtroom. The director explained the reason she was calling Mary was to ask who she was going to name as the alternative

putative father so that the Child Support unit could move forward with their paternity investigation. Mary adamantly maintained that the results were incorrect and she wanted to come to the agency and review them.

While Mary reviewed the results, the director explained that the tests require proof of identity, a picture, and the signature of the party drawn. A special chain of custody procedure is also followed. Mary declared that while the picture resembled John Doe and he had an identification tag that bore John Doe's name on it, the man who was photographed and had submitted to the genetic testing was not John Doe! The director alerted the court immediately.

In the weeks that followed, the story unfolded to reveal that John Doe had employed the help of another man that resembled himself, gave him his work identification, and sent him to submit to the genetic testing in his stead. Consequently, both men faced criminal charges and John did eventually surrender to genetic testing. As a result of the genetic testing and scheduled paternity hearing, John was found to be the father of Joe. At the hearing, Mary was advised that she could complete paperwork with the Family Court Clerk's office to change Joe Public's last name to his father's name of Doe on an amended birth certificate. There was no charge to have this done, so Mary did choose to change Joe Public's name to Joe Doe.

Subsequently, a child support order was also issued ordering John to pay child support to Mary for Joe, be responsible for paying a percentage of the day care costs, and be responsible for providing medical insurance, if available at a reasonable cost. Because Mary was in receipt of public assistance at the time, the order was issued and notice of the court order was provided by the Child Support unit to the Temporary Assistance unit. The child

support was added to the Mary's current public assistance budget, including wages from Mary's current job. The child support caused Mary's temporary assistance case to close due to ineligibility for ongoing cash assistance.

A successful quest for self-sufficiency from ongoing cash assistance was reached. Mary was eligible to continue to receive food stamps, monthly benefits redeemable at authorized retail food stores. Food stamp eligibility and benefit levels are based on household size, income, assets, and other factors. To help with the transition to self-sufficiency, food stamps can be continued for families leaving temporary assistance and moving into the workplace – this program helps families succeed on lower incomes.

Mary was also eligible for a child care subsidy. Families are eligible for financial assistance for child care if they meet the state's low-income guidelines and need child care to work, look for work, or attend employment training. In Mary's case, as long as she remains income eligible, she is guaranteed assistance in paying for child care for one year after leaving public assistance to participate in the workforce. Mary and Joe were also eligible to receive transitional medical assistance for six months, since Mary's public assistance case was closed due to her income.

Once John received his order to pay child support, he volunteered to take a layoff at his company. Business had been slowing down and the company had been in the unfortunate position of having to layoff a few employees. The company was more than glad to accept John's offer, rather than to layoff unwilling employees. John was ecstatic. With the Department of Social Services' help, Mary may have managed to get a child support order, but now she was not going to get one red cent out of him! He did not have a job – there was no way he could pay!

John's first unemployment insurance check arrived shortly after. John was confused as to why the amount was so low – that is, until he looked at his unemployment statement and discovered that the child support he was ordered to pay was taken directly out of his Unemployment Insurance Benefit (UIB) check and forwarded to the Child Support unit, payable to Mary for Joe. In fact, an additional amount of child support was being taken out along with the current child support. At the time of the support hearing, John was advised to send in his child support directly to the Child Support unit until he saw the court ordered child support being deducted from his pay. The amount of time that lapses from the issuance of a child support order and the Child Support unit's receipt of the order and sending out an income execution (an administrative process by which payments for current and/or past due child support are deducted from the payer's wages and sent to an appropriate Child Support unit) to the payer's employer is not lengthy, but still will cause an amount of child support to accumulate. Each payer is told by the court that it is his/her responsibility to make sure that the child support is being paid, regardless of the income execution process. In John's case, he failed to send any child support payments on his own.

John was still hopeful, as he had not yet filed his income tax return and could still get the return and keep it for himself! John had his income tax prepared through the rapid refund process. When he was asked if he owed any child support, John answered that he did not. When John appeared to pick up his income tax refund, the preparer had the unfortunate task of informing John that there was no refund for him. He had paid an additional fee for the rapid refund and that could not be refunded.

John had not been truthful about owing child support. He had received a statement that informed him that his account met the selection criteria to be automatically flagged for

submission to the Internal Revenue Service and to the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance, but he did not think they would catch him if he did rapid refund. John's refund had been intercepted by the Internal Revenue Service and would be forwarded to the Child Support unit because he was delinquent.

Mary was quite pleased once John's tax refund was received by the Child Support unit. Her vehicle, that was essential to her remaining employed, had required some major repairs and the back child support came at a much needed time. Had the child support enforcement process not been in place, Mary may have found herself out of a job and back on public assistance. The Child Support unit is vital piece of the support system in helping people remain self-sufficient.

A few statistics from the Child Support unit relating to the above processes in 2005:

- **165** – Number of individuals scheduled for genetic testing through the Child Support unit – 75 individuals were scheduled through administrative orders and 90 individuals through Family Court orders.
- **1123** – Number of petitions filed by the Child Support unit – this is a combination of paternity, support, and enforcement petitions.
- **1314** – Number of orders received and processed by the unit.
- **324** - Number of state and federal income tax refunds received by the Child Support unit.
- **\$181,109.27** – Amount of tax refund received towards child support obligations.
- **\$181,982.81** – Amount of child support received from unemployment insurance benefits.
- **\$5,882,742.00** – Total amount of child support collected.

---

*Submitted by Inez DeGroat, Director of Child Support Enforcement/Financial Aid*

## **EMPLOYMENT**

All applicants for and recipients of public assistance must comply with employment requirements. Social services districts facilitate an individual's progression to economic self-sufficiency by providing appropriate services. While all recipients have employment responsibilities, the type of assignment required and the consequences of noncompliance differ by district. It is up to each district to determine if an individual is either "exempt" or "non-exempt" from work activity assignments. The determination is based on an evaluation of the person's physical and mental health and other factors that may affect the individual's ability to work. Additionally, the work activities that will most benefit a client differ depending on the client's skills, abilities and limitations.

The recipient or applicant for temporary assistance has the following responsibilities:

- Continually look for a job and be prepared to provide evidence that he/she has been looking for a job.
- Take a job when one is available.
- Participate in an assessment of his/her ability to work and participate in work activity assignments.
- Be required to get a medical examination or medical statement to participate in a work assignment or to verify that he/she has a medical condition that prevents him/her from working.
- If he/she is determined to be exempt from participating in work activities, he/she will be required to accept medical care or other employment services to restore his/her ability to work.

The recipient or applicant is considered able to work and must participate in work activities unless he/she is determined by the department to be:

- Disabled, incapacitated, ill or injured to the extent that he/she is unable to engage in work activities.
- Younger than 16 years of age or 60 years of age or older.
- Under the age of 19 and attending fulltime a secondary, vocational or technical school.
- Needed in the home to care for an ill, incapacitated or disabled household member and he/she is the only one who can reasonably provide such care.
- Pregnant and expected to deliver her child within 30 days.
- Needed in the home to care for a child less than 12 months of age. This exemption shall last no longer than three months after a child is born.
- Unable to participate due to lack of child care.

The recipient or applicant for food stamps has the following responsibilities:

- Accept a job or a referral to an actual or potential job opening.
- Participate in an assessment of his/her ability to work.
- Provide information regarding his/her employment status and availability for work.
- Participate in work activity assignments.

The recipient or applicant is considered able to work and must participate in work activities unless he/she is determined by the department to be:

- Younger than 16 years of age or 60 years of age or older.
- Mentally or physically disabled, incapacitated, ill or injured to the extent that he/she is unable to engage in work activities.
- Responsible for the care of a dependent child under the age of six.
- Responsible for the care of an incapacitated person.
- An applicant for or recipient of Unemployment Insurance Benefit who is required to register for work as a part of the unemployment compensation process.

- A regular participant in a drug or alcohol treatment and rehabilitation program.
- Employed or self-employed and working a minimum of 30 hours weekly or receiving weekly earnings at least equal to the federal minimum wage multiplied by 30 hours.
- A student enrolled at least half-time in a recognized school, training program or institution of higher education.
- 16 or 17 years old who is not head of household and attending school or an employment training program at least halftime.

A Welfare Employment Representative works with the applicants and recipients on all the above temporary assistance requirements and responsibilities. At the end of 2005, the department did receive a replacement New York State JOBS Program Specialist through Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance that is physically located at the department. This position works jointly with the Welfare Employment Representative to assist applicants/recipients that are job ready with job placement referrals.

The food stamp employment and training is primarily handled by a Casework Assistant who performs scheduling duties and plans work activities. This same position also monitors the recipients that participate in either outpatient or inpatient drug or alcohol treatment plans.

Also working closely with the job-ready recipients is the Mobile Work Crew Leader. The mobile work crew gives direct supervision in a work setting, readying the recipients to enter the workforce with new or refined work skills. This program has a dual purpose. The work crew completes projects for not-for-profit agencies and local municipalities. The projects continue to result in cost savings for the taxpayers in

Madison County every year. Listed below are several of the projects the mobile work crew participated in this past year:

- Church of The Nazarene, Canastota – helped with an addition of new classrooms
- New Beginnings Free Methodist Church, Wampsville – installed new entrance door
- Cedar House, Oneida – painted offices
- County auction – cleared Fenner site in preparation for county auction
- Armory, City of Oneida – painted and built rooms for storage
- Madison County Landfill – cleared trees and building off property
- Madison County Public Health – moved the department from the Department of Social Services building back to their own refurbished building
- Stoneleigh Housing, Canastota – repaired and painted the exterior of the building
- Town of Sullivan Parks and Recreation – cleaned the exterior of the building
- Village of Morrisville – cleaned the Chenango River that runs through the village
- New Beginnings Free Methodist Church, Wampsville – helped with building an addition

Some additional minor projects: Snow removal on county cars for the Department of Social Services and Public Health; cleaned road and land around the landfill; cleared and set up for the Canastota Fishing Derby, sponsored by the Over the Hill Gang; set up and tore down for the Canastota Boxing Hall of Fame Weekend; poured concrete for Frisbee golf at the Oxbow Park; cleaned and performed various projects for the Madison County Highway Department.

A monumental enterprise the mobile work crew undertook was the complete interior and exterior renovation of a building to become an Agency Operated Foster

Home. This project began in September and was completed in December contributing to a tremendous cost saving to the county.

In total, the mobile work crew completed 7824 hours of work in 2005, compared to 8550 completed in 2004. This is a decrease of 726 hours, or eight percent.

---

*Submitted by Inez DeGroat, Director of Child Support Enforcement/Financial Aid*

## ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

### **FISCAL SUMMARY - 2005**

	<u>Expenditures</u>	<u>Credits</u>
General Administration	\$6,347,041	\$5,683,100
Public Facility For Children (AOFH)	\$61,022	\$0
Child Care Block Grant (Day Care)	\$581,995	\$722,543
Title XX (Purchase of Services)	\$517,166	\$328,988
Medical Assistance	\$284,680	\$840,830
MMIS (Medicaid)	\$10,649,413	\$2,122,186
TANF/Family Assistance	\$3,158,074	\$1,421,670
Child Welfare	\$2,054,516	\$1,603,168
Juvenile Delinquent	\$790,366	\$475,348
Safety Net	\$365,849	\$244,721
Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)	\$1,784,918	\$1,783,518
Emergency Assistance for Adults (EAA)	\$8,068	\$4,580
Burials	\$74,081	\$24,567
Title IV-D (Child Support)	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$37,791</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$26,677,191</b>	<b>\$15,293,009</b>
<b>NET LOCAL COST</b>		<b>\$11,384,181</b>
		<b>Increase/ (Decrease)</b>
	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>
<b>Gross Cost</b>	<b>\$27,893,561</b>	<b>\$26,677,191</b>
<b>Net Local Cost</b>	<b>\$13,458,806</b>	<b>\$11,384,181</b>

**Modified Budgeted Amount vs Actual Adjusted Gross Amount - 2005**

	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Surplus/ (Deficit)</u>
General Administration	\$6,552,836	\$6,347,041	\$205,795
Public Facility For Children (AOFH)	\$99,420	\$61,022	\$38,398
Child Care Block Grant (Day Care)	\$1,012,244	\$581,995	\$430,249
Title XX (Purchase of Services)	\$577,175	\$517,166	\$60,009
Medical Assistance	\$314,240	\$284,680	\$29,560
MMIS (Medicaid)	\$13,000,000	\$10,649,413	\$2,350,587
TANF/Family Assistance	\$3,493,367	\$3,158,074	\$335,293
Child Welfare	\$2,090,600	\$2,054,516	\$36,084
Juvenile Delinquent	\$1,451,759	\$790,366	\$661,393
Safety Net	\$367,439	\$365,849	\$1,590
Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)	\$1,788,168	\$1,784,918	\$3,250
Emergency Assistance for Adults (EAA)	\$9,000	\$8,068	\$932
Burials*	\$74,081	\$74,081	(\$0)
Title IV-D (Child Support)	(\$41,499)	(\$37,791)	(\$3,708)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$30,788,830</b>	<b>\$26,639,399</b>	<b>\$4,149,431</b>

\*Burials paid out of Department A6140.

**Net Local Cost - 2005**

	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Surplus/ (Deficit)</u>
General Administration	\$2,553,540	\$663,940	\$1,889,600
Public Facility For Children (AOFH)	\$99,420	\$61,022	\$38,398
Child Care Block Grant (Day Care)	\$12,147	(\$140,547)	\$152,694
Title XX (Purchase of Services)	\$100,141	\$188,178	(\$88,037)
Medical Assistance	(\$206,140)	(\$556,150)	\$350,010
MMIS (Medicaid)	\$11,200,000	\$8,527,227	\$2,672,773
TANF/Family Assistance	\$2,549,823	\$1,736,404	\$813,419
Child Welfare	\$1,077,128	\$451,349	\$625,779
Juvenile Delinquent	\$678,713	\$315,018	\$363,695
Safety Net	\$155,760	\$121,127	\$34,633
Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)	\$0	\$1,401	(\$1,401)
Emergency Assistance for Adults (EAA)	\$4,500	\$3,488	\$1,012
Burials	\$50,900	\$49,514	\$1,386
Title IV-D (Child Support)	<u>(\$41,499)</u>	<u>(\$37,791)</u>	<u>(\$3,708)</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$18,234,433</b>	<b>\$11,384,181</b>	<b>\$6,850,252</b>

**Adjusted Gross Cost 2004 vs Adjusted Gross Cost 2005**

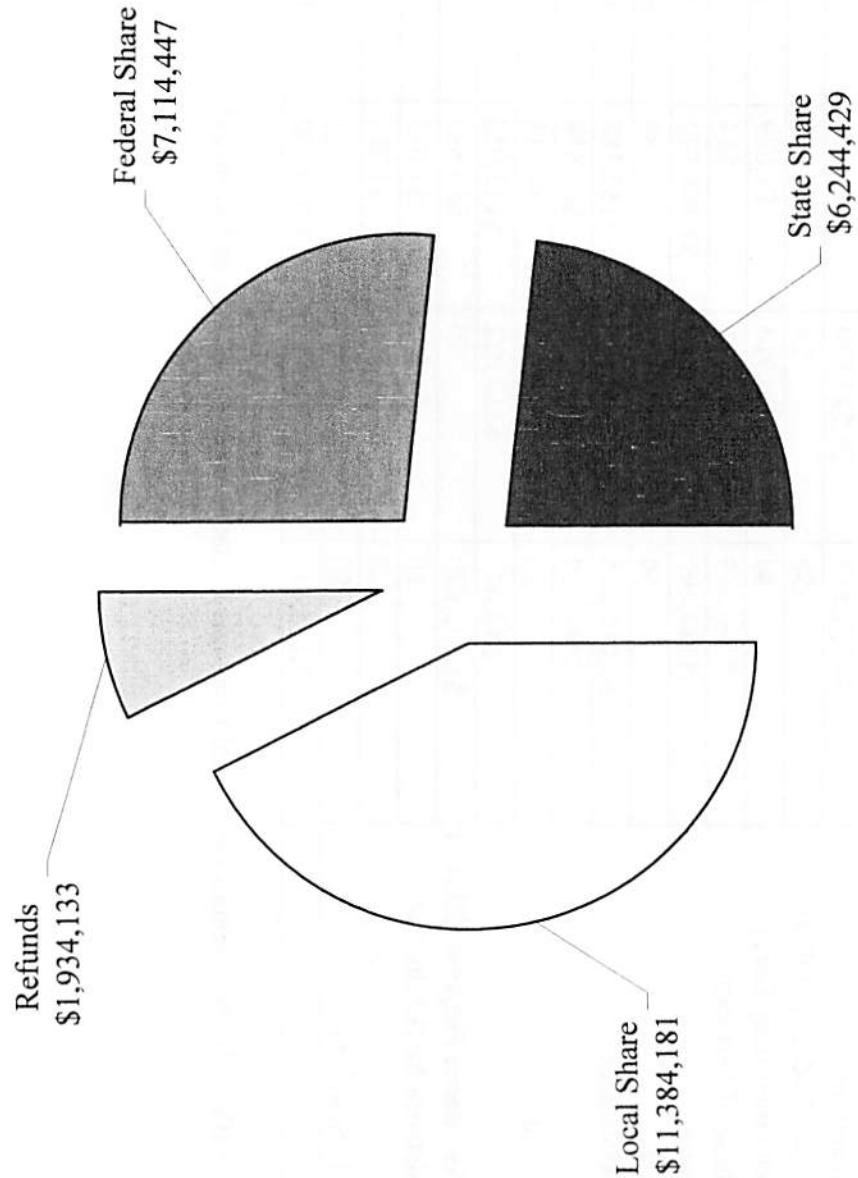
	<u>Actual - 2004</u>	<u>Actual - 2005</u>	<u>Surplus (Deficit)</u>
General Administration	\$5,893,613	\$6,347,041	\$453,427
Public Facility For Children (AOFH)	\$0	\$61,022	\$61,022
Child Care Block Grant (Day Care)	\$962,817	\$581,995	(\$380,822)
Title XX (Purchase of Services)	\$507,207	\$517,166	\$9,958
Medical Assistance	\$266,751	\$284,680	\$17,929
MMIS (Medicaid)	\$12,035,224	\$10,649,413	(\$1,385,811)
TANF/Family Assistance	\$3,085,976	\$3,158,074	\$72,099
Child Welfare	\$2,050,892	\$2,054,516	\$3,624
Juvenile Delinquent	\$1,182,738	\$790,366	(\$392,372)
Safety Net	\$301,046	\$365,849	\$64,803
Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)	\$1,513,232	\$1,784,918	\$271,686
Emergency Assistance for Adults (EAA)	\$9,572	\$8,068	(\$1,504)
Burials	\$84,496	\$74,081	(\$10,414)
Title IV-D (Child Support)	<u>(\$40,441)</u>	<u>(\$37,791)</u>	<u>\$2,649</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$27,853,124</b>	<b>\$26,639,399</b>	<b>(\$1,213,725)</b>

**2005 REIMBURSEMENT BREAKDOWN**

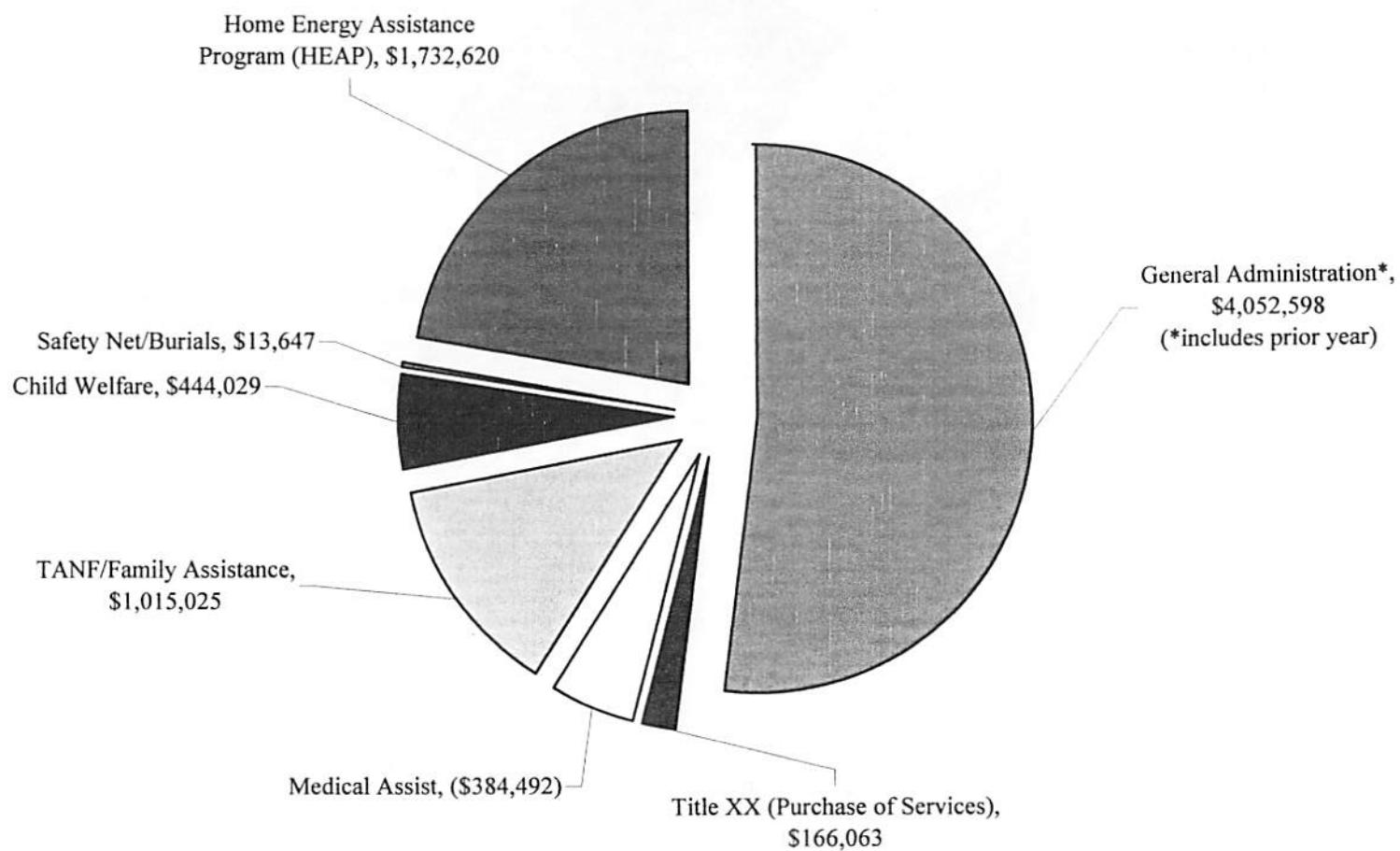
	FEDERAL SHARE	STATE SHARE	REFUNDS	LOCAL SHARE	TOTAL COST
General Administration	\$4,127,555	\$1,543,630	\$11,915	\$663,941	\$6,347,041
Public Facility For Children (AOFH)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$61,022	\$61,022
Child Care Block Grant (Day Care)	\$0	\$720,914	\$1,629	(\$140,547)	\$581,995
Title XX (Purchase of Services)	\$166,063	\$162,911	\$14	\$188,178	\$517,166
Medical Assistance	(\$384,492)	(\$243,250)	\$1,468,572	(\$556,150)	\$284,680
MMIS (Medicaid)	\$0	\$2,122,186	\$0	\$8,527,227	\$10,649,413
TANF/Family Assistance	\$1,015,025	\$253,457	\$153,188	\$1,736,404	\$3,158,074
Child Welfare	\$444,029	\$1,073,481	\$85,658	\$451,349	\$2,054,516
Juvenile Delinquent	\$0	\$466,233	\$9,115	\$315,018	\$790,366
Safety Net	\$13,647	\$118,022	\$113,052	\$121,127	\$365,848
Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)	\$1,732,620	\$0	\$50,898	\$1,401	\$1,784,918
Emergency Assistance for Adults (EAA)	\$0	\$3,565	\$1,015	\$3,488	\$8,068
Burials	\$0	\$23,280	\$1,287	\$49,514	\$74,081
Title IV-D (Child Support)	\$0	\$0	\$37,791	(\$37,791)	\$0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$7,114,447</b>	<b>\$6,244,429</b>	<b>\$1,934,133</b>	<b>\$11,384,181</b>	<b>\$26,677,190</b>

Note: Child Care Block Grant revenues are normally claimed as state aid, but settlement as federal aid.

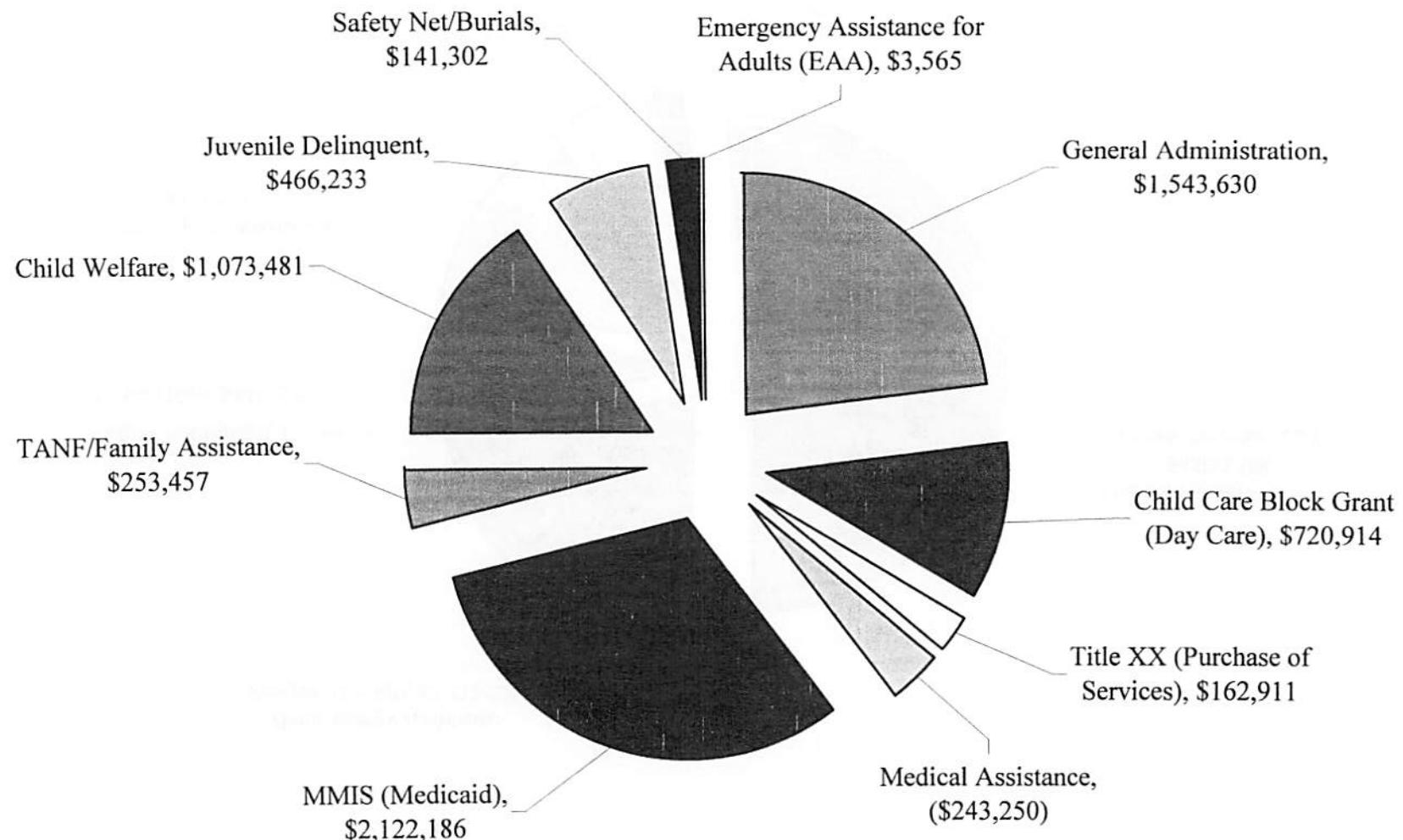
## 2005 REIMBURSEMENT ANALYSIS



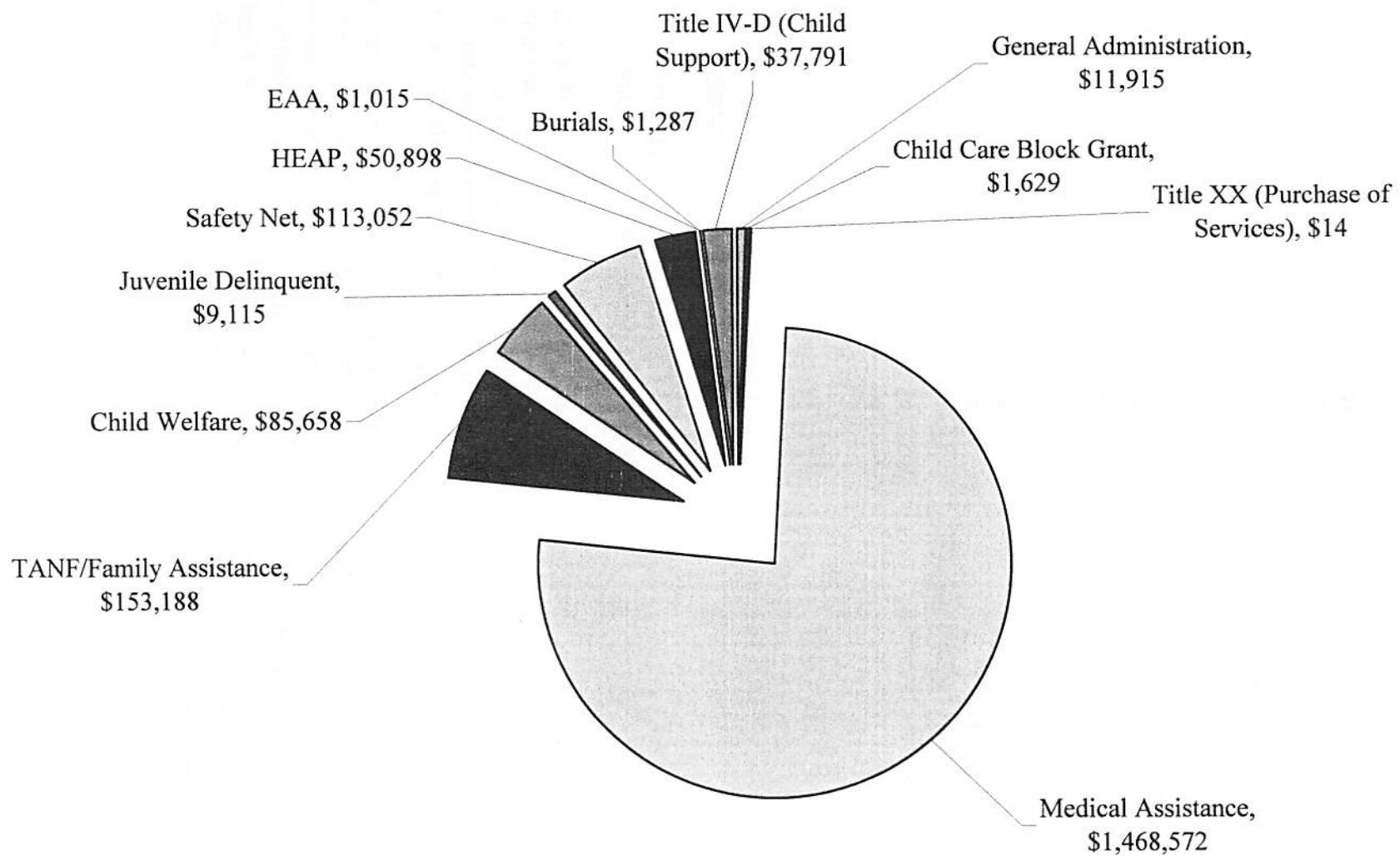
## 2005 FEDERAL SHARE ANALYSIS



## 2005 STATE SHARE ANALYSIS



## 2005 REFUND ANALYSIS



General Administration - 2005

### **Disbursements:**

<b>Personal Services</b>	<b>\$3,550,309</b>
<b>Equipment</b>	<b>\$63,781</b>
<b>Contractual</b>	<b>\$1,182,918</b>
<b>Employee Benefits</b>	<b><u>\$1,550,032</u></b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$6,347,041</b>

## Credits:

Refunds	\$4,678
Refunds - Other Agencies	\$7,237
State Aid	\$1,455,650
State Aid - O&M & Interest	\$79,299
State Aid - Prior Year	\$8,681
Federal Aid	\$3,279,741
Federal Aid - O&M & Interest	\$162,647
Federal Aid - Prior Year	<u>\$685,167</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$5,683,100</b>

NET LOCAL COST \$663,940

	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>Increase / (Decrease)</u>
<b>Gross Cost</b>	<b>\$5,893,613</b>	<b>\$6,347,041</b>	<b>\$453,428</b>
<b>Net Local Cost</b>	<b>\$207,101</b>	<b>\$663,940</b>	<b>\$456,839</b>

Notes: General Administration is made up of four main accounts (Personal Services, Equipment, Contractual Costs and Employee Benefits). The two main reasons for the cost increase in 2005 were salary increases due to contractual obligation and an increase in the payments made for fringe benefits relating to the retirement system. The overall fringe benefit portion of the department's budget was up 16.78 percent in 2005.

Revenue in this category came in higher than estimated. Federal aid for prior years was one of the key contributing factors. In 2005, Madison County received reimbursement in the amount of \$604,427 for EAF JD/PINS-related expenditures that were found eligible for additional federal funding. Originally, these expenditures had been moved out of the Foster Care Block Grant funding stream in hopes of attaining additional federal aid. In 2005, this change in eligibility determination resulted in Madison County's receiving these additional funds.

**Agency Operated Foster Home - 2005**

**Disbursements:**      \$61,022

**Credits:**

Refunds	\$0
State Aid	\$0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$0</b>

**NET LOCAL COST**   \$61,022

	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>Increase/ (Decrease)</u>
<b>Gross Cost</b>	\$0	\$61,022	\$61,022
<b>Net Local Cost</b>	\$0	\$61,022	\$61,022

**Child Care Block Grant Expense - 2005**

**Disbursements:** **\$581,995**

**Credits:**

Refunds	\$1,629
State Aid	<u>\$720,914</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$722,543</b>

**NET LOCAL COST** **(\$140,547)**

	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>Increase/ (Decrease)</u>
<b>Gross Cost</b>	<b>\$962,813</b>	<b>\$581,995</b>	<b>(\$380,818)</b>
<b>Net Local Cost</b>	<b>(\$171,993)</b>	<b>(\$140,547)</b>	<b>\$31,446</b>

<b>Number of Children</b>			
<b>Month of Payment</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>Inc/(Dec)</b>
Jan	305	212	(93)
Feb	373	207	(166)
Mar	334	219	(115)
Apr	364	198	(166)
May	363	169	(194)
Jun	394	163	(231)
Jul	361	139	(222)
Aug	315	176	(139)
Sep	301	179	(122)
Oct	298	210	(88)
Nov	308	222	(86)
Dec	266	250	(16)
<b>AVERAGE/MONTH</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>(137)</b>

Note: In 2004, there was a claiming mechanism change, which resulted in more revenue being recognized as program-related reimbursement as compared to administration-related reimbursement.

<b>Breakdown by Provider Type</b>		
<b>Type of Provider</b>	<b>Avg # of Child/Month</b>	<b>Avg Cost Child/Month</b>
Family Day Care FT	10	\$368
Family Day Care PT	13	\$206
Day Care Center FT	31	\$417
Day Care Center PT	31	\$201
Group Family Day Care FT	11	\$368
Group Family Day Care PT	12	\$216
Informal Day Care Relative FT	16	\$254
Informal Day Care Relative PT	21	\$141
Informal Day Care Non-Relative FT	21	\$219
Informal Day Care Non-Relative PT	26	\$155
School Age Day Care	0	\$662
Legally Operating Center - FT	2	\$317
Legally Operating Center - PT	3	\$104
<b>AVERAGE/MONTH</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>\$247</b>

**Title XX/Purchase of Service - 2005**

**Disbursements:**

Purchase of Services	\$51,293
Nonresidential Victims of Domestic Violence	\$95,000
Public Purchase of Services- Mental Health	\$145,181
Family Unification Program	\$223,841
Prevent Detention	<u>\$1,850</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$517,166</b>

**Credits:**

Refunds	\$14
State Aid	\$162,911
Federal Aid	\$166,063
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$328,988</b>

<b>NET LOCAL COST</b>	<b>\$188,178</b>
-----------------------	------------------

	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>Increase / (Decrease)</u>
<b>Gross Cost</b>	<b>\$507,207</b>	<b>\$517,166</b>	<b>\$9,959</b>
<b>Net Local Cost</b>	<b>\$199,617</b>	<b>\$188,178</b>	<b>(\$11,439)</b>

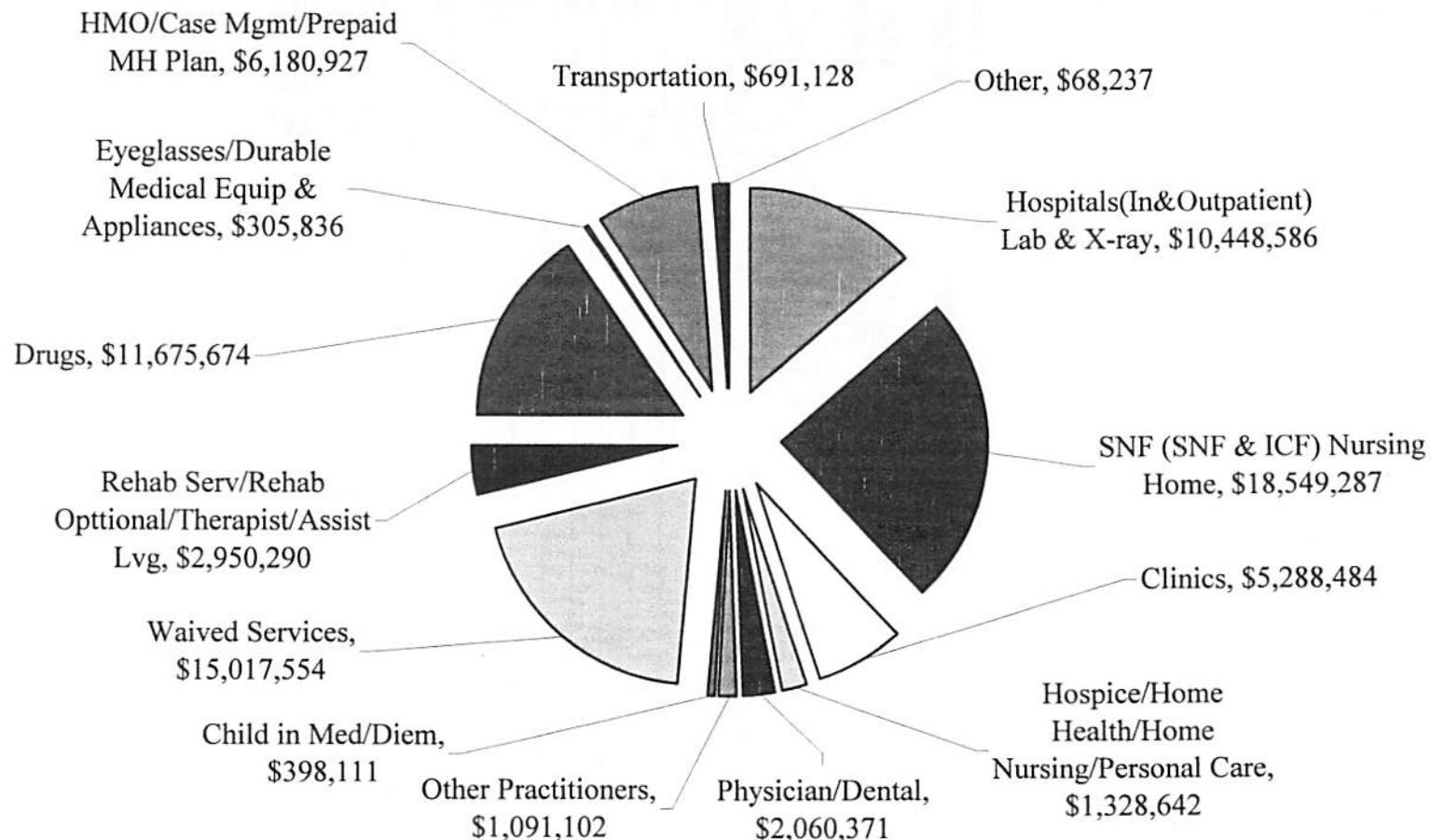
**Medical Assistance & MMIS (Local Share) - 2005**

<u>Disbursements:</u>	<u>MEDICAID</u>	<u>MMIS</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
	<b>\$284,680</b>	<b>\$10,649,413</b>	<b>\$10,934,093</b>
<b>Credits:</b>			
Refunds	<b>\$1,468,572</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$1,468,572</b>
State Aid	<b>(\$243,250)</b>	<b>\$2,122,186</b>	<b>\$1,878,936</b>
Federal Aid	<b>(\$384,492)</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>(\$384,492)</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$840,830</b>	<b>\$2,122,186</b>	<b>\$2,963,016</b>
<b>NET LOCAL COST</b>	<b>(\$556,150)</b>	<b>\$8,527,227</b>	<b>\$7,971,077</b>
	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>Increase / (Decrease)</u>
<b>MA/MMIS NET LOCAL COST</b>	<b>\$8,105,105</b>	<b>\$7,971,077</b>	<b>(\$134,028)</b>

Type of Service	Gross 2004	Gross 2005	Gross Increase/ (Decrease)
Hospitals (In & Outpatient), Lab & X-ray	\$ 10,055,761	\$ 10,448,586	\$ 392,825
SNF (SNF & ICF) Nursing Homes	\$ 19,597,428	\$ 18,549,287	\$ (1,048,141)
Clinics	\$ 4,055,920	\$ 5,288,484	\$ 1,232,564
Hospice/Home Health/Home Nursing/Personal Care	\$ 1,446,096	\$ 1,328,642	\$ (117,454)
Physicians/Dental	\$ 1,917,803	\$ 2,060,371	\$ 142,568
Other Practitioners	\$ 1,132,426	\$ 1,091,102	\$ (41,324)
Child In Med Per Diem	\$ 419,884	\$ 398,111	\$ (21,773)
Waived Services	\$ 12,271,693	\$ 15,017,554	\$ 2,745,861
Rehab Serv/Rehab Optional/Therapist/Asst Living	\$ 2,896,391	\$ 2,950,290	\$ 53,899
Drugs/Sick Room Supplies	\$ 10,410,846	\$ 11,675,674	\$ 1,264,828
Eyeglasses/Durable Medical Equip & Appliances	\$ 275,705	\$ 305,836	\$ 30,131
HMO Services/Case Mgmt/Prepaid MH Plan	\$ 5,784,199	\$ 6,180,927	\$ 396,728
Transportation	\$ 729,675	\$ 691,128	\$ (38,547)
Other	\$ 53,501	\$ 68,237	\$ 14,736
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 71,047,328</b>	<b>\$ 76,054,229</b>	<b>\$ 5,006,901</b>

Notes: In 2005, the Medicaid (MA) CAP was implemented. This change resulted in a considerable savings to Madison County. Madison County was no longer required to use the accrual method of accounting for recognizing expenditures relating to the MMIS lag and the MA Buy-In Program. Also, revenues related to MA Recoveries - Local Share Distribution were no longer required to be picked up as an accrued revenue.

## 2005 MMIS GROSS COST ANALYSIS



**Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)/Family Assistance - 2005**

**Disbursements:**

Family Assistance/EAF	\$845,679
EAF- Foster Care	\$415,733
EAF- JD/PINS	\$1,712,709
EAF- Services	\$155,713
TANF-Preventive Services	\$28,240
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$3,158,074</b>

**Credits:**

Refunds	\$153,188
State Aid	\$253,457
Federal Aid	\$1,015,025
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,421,670</b>

**NET LOCAL COST** **\$1,736,404**

	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>Increase/ (Decrease)</u>
<b>Gross Cost</b>	\$3,085,976	\$3,158,074	\$72,098
<b>Net Local Cost</b>	\$2,104,598	\$1,736,404	(\$368,194)

	<b>Family Assistance</b>		<b>EAF - Foster Care</b>		<b>EAF - JD/PINS</b>		<b>EAF - Services</b>	
	<b>Caseload</b>	<b>Care Days</b>	<b>Care Days</b>	<b>Caseload</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>
	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>
Jan	98	123	514	385	761	671	6	3
Feb	102	127	558	280	819	640	3	8
Mar	103	130	647	356	803	576	6	5
Apr	89	126	512	333	845	653	4	8
May	93	129	614	264	885	561	7	6
Jun	97	129	551	331	835	635	10	8
Jul	106	126	486	329	891	626	10	7
Aug	112	124	594	329	895	658	12	18
Sep	115	127	695	387	696	605	10	21
Oct	113	136	526	420	606	586	9	19
Nov	116	130	496	465	650	672	5	13
Dec	115	128	480	571	648	667	6	14
<b>AVG</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>556</b>	<b>371</b>	<b>778</b>	<b>629</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>GROSS COST/DAY</b>	<b>\$ 484</b>	<b>\$ 523</b>					<b>\$ 513</b>	<b>\$ 567</b>
<b>GROSS COST/DAY</b>			\$ 54	\$ 89	\$ 199	\$ 228		

**Child Welfare - 2005**

**Disbursements:** **\$2,054,516**

**Credits:**

Refunds	\$85,658
State Aid	\$1,073,481
Federal Aid	<u>\$444,029</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,603,168</b>

**NET LOCAL COST** **\$451,349**

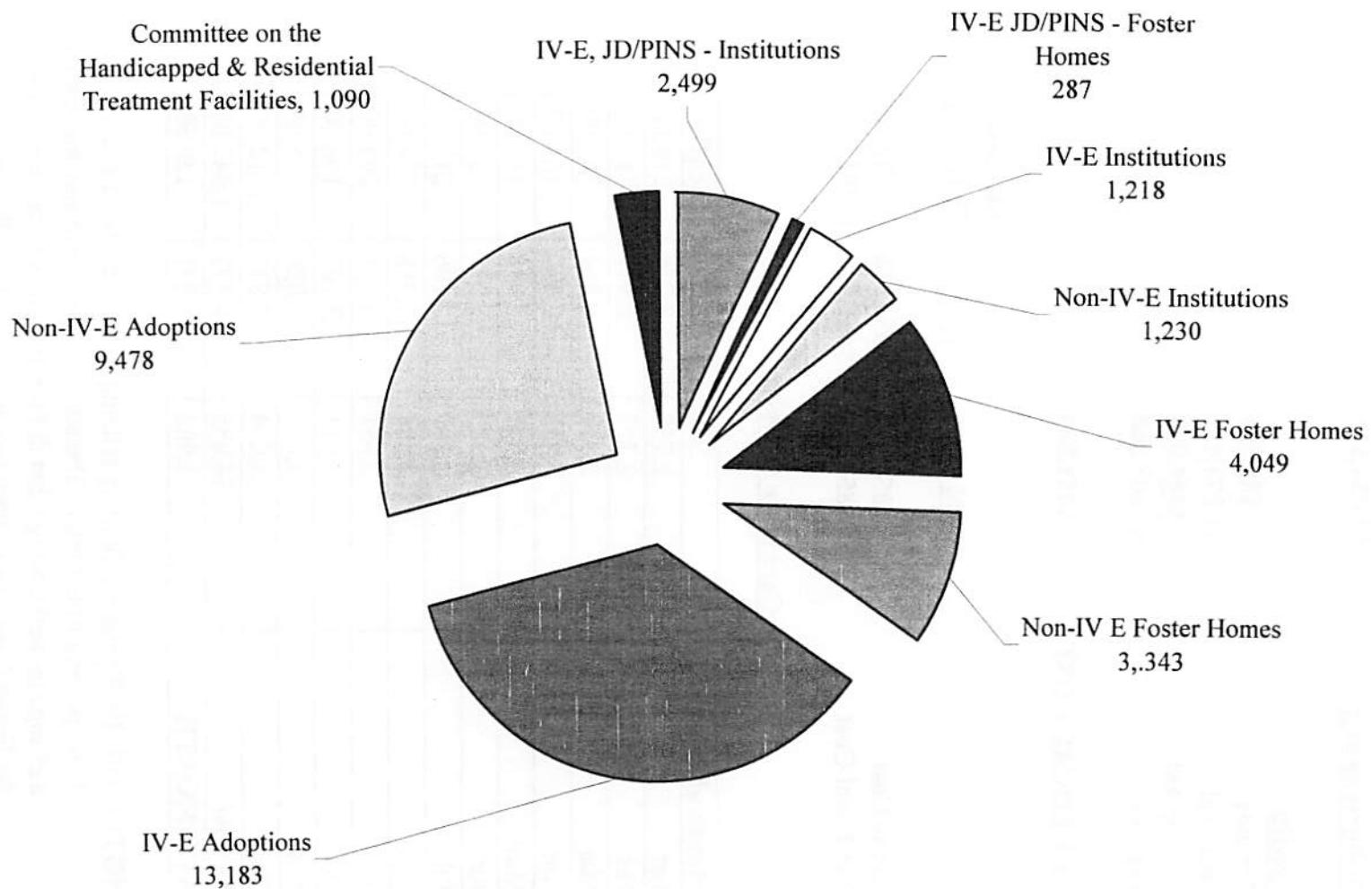
	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>Increase/ (Decrease)</u>
<b>Gross Cost</b>	<b>\$2,050,892</b>	<b>\$2,054,516</b>	<b>\$3,624</b>
<b>Net Local Cost</b>	<b>\$854,244</b>	<b>\$451,349</b>	<b>(\$402,895)</b>

**Care Days Analysis**

<b>Month of Payment</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>Inc/(Dec)</b>
Jan	2,758	2,976	218.00
Feb	2,727	2,911	184.00
Mar	2,579	2,864	285.00
Apr*	2,898	2,837	(61.00)
May	3,017	2,948	(69.00)
Jun	3,125	3,277	152.00
Jul	2,889	3,106	217.00
Aug	2,884	3,258	374.00
Sep	2,951	3,235	284.00
Oct	2,911	3,107	196.00
Nov	3,052	3,026	(26.00)
Dec	3,044	2,832	(212.00)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>34,835</b>	<b>36,377</b>	<b>1,542.00</b>
<b>AVG/MONTH</b>	<b>2,903</b>	<b>3,031</b>	<b>128.50</b>

**NOTE:** Title IV-E program funding relating to these costs equalled 21.61 percent of the total. The additional state aid was the result of a change in methodology that did not require a 50 percent reduction in the Foster Care Block Grant monies that were shifted over to EAF JD/PINS.

## 2005 FOSTER CARE CARE DAY ANALYSIS



**Juvenile Delinquents - 2005**

**Disbursements:**

JD/PINS	<u><b>\$790,366</b></u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$790,366</b>

**Credits:**

Refunds	<b>\$9,115</b>
State Aid	<u><b>\$466,233</b></u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$475,348</b>

**NET LOCAL COST** **\$315,018**

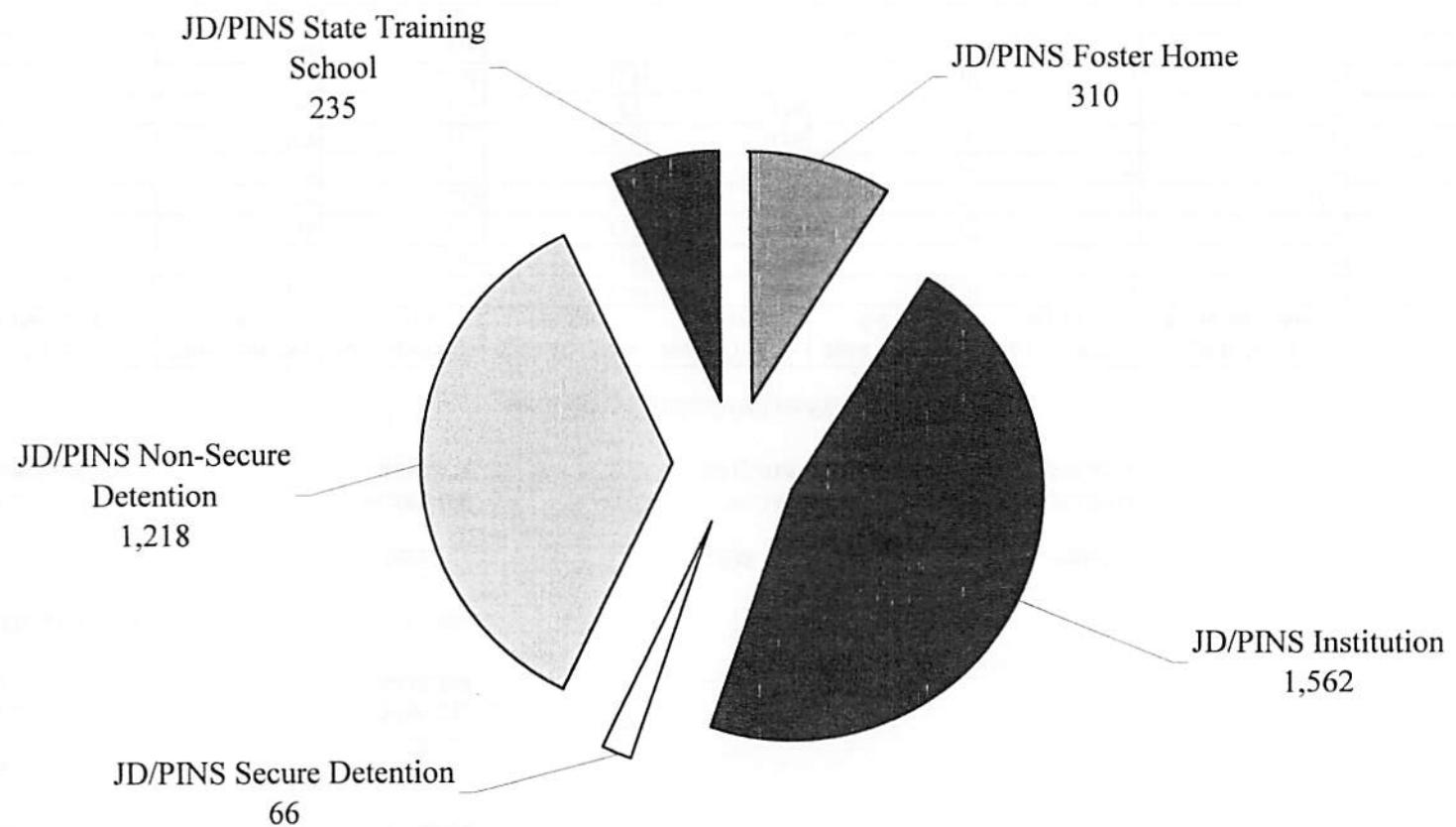
	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>Increase/ (Decrease)</u>
<b>Gross Cost</b>	<b>\$1,182,738</b>	<b>\$790,366</b>	<b>(\$392,372)</b>
<b>Net Local Cost</b>	<b>\$683,471</b>	<b>\$315,018</b>	<b>(\$368,453)</b>

**Care Day Analysis -Based on Date of Payment**

Month of Payment	2004 JD/PINS FC/Inst	2005 JD/PINS FC/Inst	2004 JD PINS NS Det	2005 JD PINS NS Det	2004 JD/PINS Sec Det	2005 JD/PINS Sec Det	2004 State Training School	2005 State Training School
Jan	429	186	138	253	45	50	236	0
Feb	401	204	136	173	1	0	0	0
Mar	348	112	131	115	0	0	0	92
Apr	289	133	207	0	0	0	184	0
May	377	137	191	241	0	0	0	0
Jun	372	171	208	119	0	0	0	81
Jul	267	171	87	129	0	0	182	0
Aug	341	201	129	86	0	0	0	0
Sep	291	211	123	28	0	16	0	0
Oct	223	124	91	14	0	0	116	0
Nov	156	124	94	32	0	0	0	0
Dec	150	98	139	28	0	0	111	62
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,644</b>	<b>1,872</b>	<b>1,674</b>	<b>1,218</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>829</b>	<b>235</b>
<b>AVG/MONTH</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>20</b>

Notes: The number of care days in the Foster Care/Institutional category decreased 1,772 days in 2005.

## 2005 JD/PINS CARE DAY ANALYSIS



**Safety Net - 2005**

**Disbursements:** **\$365,849**

**Credits:**

Refunds	\$113,052
State Aid	\$118,022
Federal Aid	\$13,647
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$244,721</b>

**NET LOCAL COST** **\$121,127**

	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>Increase/ (Decrease)</u>
<b>Gross Cost</b>	<b>\$301,046</b>	<b>\$365,849</b>	<b>\$64,803</b>
<b>Net Local Cost</b>	<b>\$86,372</b>	<b>\$121,127</b>	<b>\$34,755</b>

**Caseload Average/Average Gross Cost Per Case**

MONTH	2004	2004	2005	2005
	Caseload	Cost/Case	Caseload	Cost/Case
Jan	47	545	53	434
Feb	53	469	50	520
Mar	49	537	62	485
Apr	47	515	53	588
May	53	708	60	421
Jun	50	324	57	563
Jul	53	477	56	526
Aug	52	512	60	591
Sep	54	520	62	583
Oct	54	432	65	522
Nov	52	399	66	465
Dec	53	342	67	514
<b>AVG</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>482</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>518</b>

**Notes:**

The expenditures in this category increased slightly in 2005 as the result of an increase in caseload.

**HEAP - 2005**

**Disbursements:**      **\$1,784,918**

**Credits:**

Refunds	\$50,898
Federal Aid	<u>\$1,732,620</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,783,518</b>

**NET LOCAL COST**      **\$1,401**

	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>Increase/ (Decrease)</u>
<b>Gross Cost</b>	<b>\$1,513,232</b>	<b>\$1,784,918</b>	<b>\$271,686</b>
<b>Net Local Cost</b>	<b>\$1,666</b>	<b>\$1,401</b>	<b>(\$265)</b>

<b>HEAP Caseload Analysis</b>			
	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>Increase/ (Decrease)</b>
Jan	2,116	2,231	115
Feb	2,232	2,349	117
Mar	2,393	2,456	63
Apr	2,454	2,524	70
May	2,488	2,561	73
Jun	2,489	2,559	70
Jul	2,487	2,557	70
Aug	2,034	2,054	20
Sep	2,007	2,005	(2)
Oct	1,997	2,004	7
Nov	2,017	2,079	62
Dec	2,141	2,216	75
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>2,238</b>	<b>2,300</b>	<b>62</b>

**Emergency Aid to Adults - 2005**

**Disbursements:** **\$8,068**

**Credits:**

Refunds	\$1,015
State Aid	<b>\$3,565</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$4,580</b>

**NET LOCAL COST** **\$3,488**

	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>Increase/ (Decrease)</b>
<b>Gross Cost</b>	<b>\$9,572</b>	<b>\$8,068</b>	<b>(\$1,504)</b>
<b>Net Local Cost</b>	<b>\$4,670</b>	<b>\$3,488</b>	<b>(\$1,182)</b>

<b>EAA Number of Payments Analysis</b>			
	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>Increase/ (Decrease)</b>
Jan	2	1	(1)
Feb	4	2	(2)
Mar	5	3	(2)
Apr	4	2	(2)
May	1	1	0
Jun	1	4	3
Jul	1	1	0
Aug	1	2	1
Sep	3	4	1
Oct	1	8	7
Nov	2	1	(1)
Dec	2	3	1
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>

**Burials - 2005**

**Disbursements:** **\$74,081**

**Credits:**

Refunds	\$1,287
State Aid	<b>\$23,280</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$24,567</b>

**NET LOCAL COST** **\$49,514**

	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>Increase/ (Decrease)</u>
<b>Gross Cost</b>	<b>\$84,496</b>	<b>\$74,081</b>	<b>(\$10,415)</b>
<b>Net Local Cost</b>	<b>\$56,807</b>	<b>\$49,514</b>	<b>(\$7,293)</b>

<b>Burials Paid By Month</b>		
	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>
Jan	3	5
Feb	3	1
Mar	6	4
Apr	5	1
May	6	3
Jun	3	3
Jul	2	3
Aug	1	2
Sep	6	7
Oct	2	8
Nov	2	0
Dec	4	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>NET COST/BURIAL</b>	<b>\$1,895</b>	<b>\$1,953</b>

**Title IV-D Program - 2005**

**Disbursements:** \$0

**Credits:**  
Incentives \$37,791

**NET LOCAL COST (\$37,791)**

	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>Increase/ (Decrease)</u>
<b>Net Local Cost</b>	(\$40,441)	(\$37,791)	\$2,650

---

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

## RESOURCES

Resource recovery is the return of revenues to this agency. This includes insuring the collection of money from mortgages, 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 collection of medical information for disability determinations are done.

### Recoveries for 2005

Estates	\$ 79,106
Assignment of Proceeds	51,061
Accident Liens	429,252
Excess Resources	962
Mortgages	13,601
Burial Reimbursement	<u>1,287</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$575,269</b>

---

*Submitted by Diane Cromp, Director of Administrative Services*

## STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The Staff Development office is responsible for securing and providing training that develops and maintains the skills needed by our staff to successfully perform their job functions and to cope with their ever-increasing job demands. Agency staff completed a total of 3,985 hours of locally arranged and state-provided training in the year 2005. Staff participated in a total of 296 different training events including everything from new worker orientation to college credit courses. The agency spent a total of \$7,764 in training expenses for the year. This represents monies used for registration fees, lodging, meals, and travel.

New worker training was provided in-house to 20 employees. This includes both new hires and promoted employees. In-house training is provided as a joint effort between the Director of Staff Development, the director of the program area, and the individual's supervisor. Some staff members have their training enhanced with programs provided under state contract with one of several colleges including Cornell University, SUNY Albany, and SUC at Buffalo. State training is provided at a cost to the local district of \$14 per day. Necessary lodging and the cost of most meals are included in this fee.

It can take a new worker anywhere from two weeks to six months to be fully trained to perform independently in his/her position. For example, let's take a look at the training a new worker assigned to the Child Protective Services (CPS) unit receives.

*On day one, the Caseworker meets with the Director of Staff Development/WMS for an orientation session. This includes informing the employee of agency policies and procedures, securing an ID badge, getting a tour of the agency, and being introduced to coworkers. The two will also get together on day two for hands-on computer training, including inquiry into the many state systems.*

*The rest of the first week is spent with the supervisor or another experienced Caseworker. During this time, the Caseworker will be observing, accompanying another worker on home visits and investigations, and reading program manuals. If possible, the new worker will accompany an experienced worker to court to observe. The first two weeks are spent in giving a new worker a good overview of the job, so he/she will have a frame of reference when the training becomes more specific.*

*New York State has mandated that all Caseworkers must attend new worker core training. Sometime after the first week, a Caseworker will start his/her state-sponsored core training. This 20-day training program enhances the Caseworker's competencies by providing knowledge and skills to effectively work with families. Core training is held on an alternating schedule in Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, or Albany. If the employee has to travel more than 35 miles one way to the training, then the state pays the lodging and travel costs. If the distance to the training is less than 35 miles, then the worker must commute each day. The training is spread out over an 8-to-10-week period. When the employee is not at training, there are specific activities that he/she must complete at the office.*

*After completing core training, the Caseworker must attend six additional days of training that concentrates on Child Protective investigations. Once these two state training courses are complete, the worker is allowed to conduct CPS investigations on his/her own. This initial training can cover a period of almost four months. During this time, the worker has not been able to pick up a caseload or be a fully functioning worker which causes his/her co-workers to pick up the slack.*

*In addition, there are other specialized state courses that we want all CPS Caseworkers to take. These include Sexual Abuse Interviewing, Medical Issues in CPS, and Legal Issues in CPS. These three courses are all two days in length. We must wait for these courses to be offered locally since the state does not pay for overnight stays for these trainings.*

We were hit hard this year with the county's mandatory training requirements. All staff had to attend training sessions on sexual harassment, HIPAA refresher, hazard communication, and workplace violence prevention.

Another area of concern was the many hours of CONNECTIONS training that the Children's Services Caseworker staff needed in order to automate their case management process. Some of this training was offered onsite and other sessions were offered regionally. Some of the sessions were pertinent and others were a waste of time. The problem was we could not weed out the bad ones without sending staff to the training initially. On a positive note, some of the training was offered in a computer lab setting, even here at DSS!

Other new initiatives requiring extensive computer training included eMedNY, which is the system used for entering prior approvals for some medical services such as transportation, and ASAP (Adult Services Assistance Program), which is a new case management program used by the Adult Services staff.

We were also fortunate to be able to offer some of the state's management and behavioral skills courses onsite including "Positive Workplace Communications," "Dynamic and Productive Work Management," and "Coaching for Accountability and Results."

Staff participated in 13 teleconferences and 38 Learnlinc courses. Learnlinc courses allow trainees from across the state to gather together in a classroom environment using their

desktop computers. Instructors and trainees can interact (speak) with each other while viewing common content on the computer screen. By participating in these courses, the worker (and county) is able to save both time and travel costs associated with other types of trainings.

Six employees who are furthering their education received tuition reimbursement for a total of 10 courses. Five members of management attended the New York Public Welfare Association (NYPWA) winter conference and five attended the summer conference.

The year ahead sees more employees taking part in LearnLinc courses. We will also be exploring a new technology called "Training Spaces," which is a computer-based training on specialized topics. A worker can participate in this training at a time of his/her choosing. One advantage of this type of training is the ability to update the curriculum just once instead of having to reissue training discs to every county. We also anticipate fewer new state initiatives that will help keep our local training budget under control.

---

*Submitted by Diane Myers, Director of Staff Development/IT*

## **BURIALS**

Forty-three burial applications were taken in 2005. Of these, one was denied for excess income and another was withdrawn when the deceased's caretaker paid the bill. The total amount paid for the remaining burial applications was \$79,210.21. Below is the amount paid to our local funeral homes.

### **Funeral Home Payments**

Burgess and Tedesco, Hamilton	\$ 4,020.00
Campbell Dean, Oneida	18,888.80
Coolican-McSweeney, Oneida	3,720.00
Fiore Funeral Home, Oneida	4,690.16
G. F. Zimmer, Chittenango	8,156.00
J. Homer Ball, Canastota	21,188.00
Kloster-Northrop & Bentz, Waterville	3,158.50
Paul Funeral Home, Madison	3,822.50
Traub Funeral Home, Bridgeport	1,310.00
All Others	<u>10,256.75</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$79,210.71</b>

## **AID TO DISABILITY DETERMINATIONS**

One of the most successful ways of securing money for the agency is through the disability review process. This involves identifying those clients with long-term ailments, interviewing them, and collecting medical records from their doctors and from any inpatient hospital stays. Once all the information is collected, a packet is sent to a New York State Review Team for a disability determination. If the client is determined to be disabled, then we are able to claim federal reimbursement for a portion of the monies paid out for this individual. In 2005, out of 86 disability packets submitted, we were successful in getting a determination of disability on 61 or 76 percent of them.

---

*Submitted by Diane Myers, Director of Staff Development/IT*

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Madison County is responsible to pay the cost of transportation to and from medical appointments for our Medicaid recipients. We have one Office Assistant II who is responsible for assuring payment for all prior-approved medical transports. This is done either by issuing a voucher or by authorizing payments on the state Medicaid Management Informational System (MMIS).

There were two major changes that occurred in 2005 in the administration of the transportation program here at Social Services. The first change was in the way prior approvals for transportation are entered on the system. In March, New York State went from using a WMS prior approval system to using a Web-based program known as eMedNY. Some of the benefits of this new system were to reduce the amount of paperwork and to reduce the amount of time it takes for the provider to be paid. This new system presented challenges not only for our staff, but for the providers as well. We got off to a slow start as we tried to build confidence in the system. Most of our providers experienced some initial difficulties in getting their claims paid. As experience with the system has grown, we have seen more and more success with the system.

The second change occurred when we received notification in April that Madison Transit would no longer be the county's transportation service coordinator as of May 27. Heretofore, they were responsible for not only operating the only local bus service in the county, but also for arranging and scheduling all of our medical transports. It was a scramble, but thanks to the hard work put in by the Planning Department, we were able to continue "business as usual" when First Transit, Inc., took over as our new Transportation

Service Coordinator on May 27, 2005. The transition had a few problems at first, with missed appointments and late notifications, but things have smoothed out since.

The year ahead sees us struggling to come up with enough transporters to cover the ever-increasing amount of calls that are received. This is especially true of those people needing to travel by stretcher. We also see a need to do some creative problem solving with First Transit and New York State in order to help contain the costs of medical transportation.

### **2005 Medical Transportation Expenses Paid to our Most-Frequently Used Vendors**

<b><u>Ambulance</u></b>	<b><u># of Trips</u></b>	<b><u>Amount Paid</u></b>
Vineall Ambulance, Inc.	886	\$ 90,919
Eastern Paramedics (Rural Metro)	407	28,124
Greater Lenox Ambulance Service	176	13,258
Cazenovia Area (CAVAC)	151	12,074
Kunkel Ambulance Service	93	6,781
Superior Ambulance Service	66	5,665
TLC Emergency Medical	55	5,325
All Others	<u>437</u>	<u>30,663</u>
<b>Total Ambulance</b>	<b>2,271</b>	<b>\$192,809</b>

<b><u>Invalid Coach (Wheelchair Van, etc.)</u></b>		
Suburban	1,541	\$ 70,201
Julie Jean Taddeo (Affordable)	165	19,619
Able Medical Transport	341	18,830
Birnie Bus Service	318	18,325
Speedy Medical Transport	66	5,880
Kunkel Limousine Service	78	3,755
Superior Ambulance	29	3,482
TLC Medical Transport	52	3,196
All Others	<u>92</u>	<u>6,751</u>
<b>Total Invalid Coach</b>	<b>2,682</b>	<b>\$150,039</b>

<u>Taxi</u>	<u># of Trips</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u>
Suburban	1,361	\$127,492
Oneida Taxi	787	73,670
Madison Co. ARC	1,300	33,924
Jack's Taxi (Canastota)	288	29,068
First Transit, Inc	442	11,138
Fiore Funeral Home	100	3,063
All Others	<u>468</u>	<u>31,632</u>
<b>Total Taxi</b>	<b>4,746</b>	<b>\$309,987</b>

**Day Treatment Transportation**

Gregory P. Collis	1,252	\$ 38,683
-------------------	-------	-----------

<b><u>Office for the Aging:</u></b>	245	\$ 4,825
-------------------------------------	-----	----------

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

<b><u>Paid by voucher:</u></b>	<b>\$27,049.00</b>
--------------------------------	--------------------

Reimbursement at \$.15/mile + tolls + parking; some meals, lodging & other means of transportation may also be paid in this manner.

---

*Submitted by Diane Myers, Director of Staff Development/IT*

## **SYSTEMS**

The Systems staff is responsible for the management and functioning of all local and state computer systems, including the Welfare Management System (WMS). Our functions include planning and coordinating the installation of new systems, upgrading and maintaining existing systems, performing daily computer operations such as data entry, registering cases, assigning case numbers, and providing technical and end-user support. This unit is also responsible for specialized data entry and Benefit Issuance and Control System (BICS) operations, providing training, and administering system security and access. It is our job to be sure that all computer equipment is in place and functioning correctly.

It was a banner year for systems improvements in 2005! Our accomplishments include the following:

- Purchased 28 computers and eight networked printers with money obtained through a childcare grant. These were deployed mostly to our Income Maintenance and general office staff.
- Purchased nine computers out of our agency budget. These computers were used to replace some of our oldest ones.
- Four CONNECTIONS PCs were obtained through the state's revenue intercept process. These were needed by our Children's Services unit for employees who were not considered in the initial deployment of computers.
- With the influx of additional equipment, we were able to outfit 12 interviewing cubicles with some type of computer—local, state, or the WMS “dummy” terminals. By having a computer available to use during the interview process, the workers can conduct their interviews more efficiently and effectively.
- The state swapped out 15 EEDSS (Electronic Eligibility Decision Support System) PCs that are used by Medicaid staff, one BICS PC used by our computer programmer, one AFIS (finger imaging) PC, and 3 CONNECTIONS printers used by Children's Services staff.
- The state provided us with 20 brand new 17" monitors that were used to replace any and all 15" monitors that were still in use.

- All DSS employees now have some type of personal computer at their desks. Outdated WMS terminals were removed to common areas or to the interview area to be used as a back up if the state and/or local network are down.
- The State Department of Health implemented a new system known as eMedNY. This system changed the way we enter prior approvals for medical services including medical transportation. The system is also used for third party health insurance entries and adjudicated claim information. One PC was provided by the state for us to use for this program.
- Systems staff registered 5,783 applications in 2005.
- 1,538 new case numbers were issued.
- The BICS operator printed 6,246 checks in 2005.
- Electronic calendars were prepared for our common areas such as the training room and group interview room. This allows access by most staff to see when a specific room is available.
- Piloted two new system enhancements: The Commissioner's Dashboard and the electronic HEAP workbook. The Commissioner's Dashboard is a system that allows for a quick and easy way to view summary level data about our county's programs. This system is being made available to all management staff. The electronic HEAP workbook allows for the processing of HEAP cases with an interface with the WMS system. It appears that this may be the forerunner to electronic case files.
- Received a \$101,282 state archives grant to be used for updating and expanding our local imaging efforts.

Below is a list of the computer systems currently supported at Madison County Department of Social Services and the number of PCs associated with each system:

**State Systems**

2	Accounting
1	AFIS (Automated Finger Imaging)
4	ASAP (Adult Services)
14	ASSETS (Child Support)
1	BICS (Benefit Issuance Control System)
1	CCFS (Child Care Facility System)
1	COMM (Commissioner's)
25	CONNECTIONS + 6 laptops
3	EBT (Electronic Benefit Transfer)

- 15 EEDSS (Medicaid eligibility)
- 1 STARS (Statewide Training Automated Registration System)
- 14 WMS (Welfare Management System) these are "dummy" terminals.

### **Local Systems**

- 53 PCs connected to our LAN + 2 laptops
- 7 CONNECTIONS terminals

The year ahead holds even more promise for our workers. Madison County Department of Social Services will be receiving 22 state PCs and 11 printers for our welfare-to-work staff. In addition some of our oldest state PCs will be swapped out including EBT, ACS, and the Commissioner's. We will be converting our Watermark imaging system over to an OnBase system. With this new system, we will be expanding our imaging efforts to include paperless files.

---

*Submitted by Diane Myers, Director of Staff Development/IT*

## **CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

This has been another exciting year for Children's Services with extensive legislative changes, a new computer system and, perhaps, the most exciting change of all, almost no change in Caseworker staff. We have also added preventive services with the new Flexible Funds for Family Services (FFFS), obtained a grant for programming to reduce the number of Persons In Need of Supervision (PINS) placements, provided an improved Independent Living Skills program at a greatly reduced cost, reduced the amount of overtime used by Caseworkers, reduced the number of institutional care days for children by over 25 percent, and opened the county's first Agency Operated Foster Home.

The first major legislative change came at the beginning of the year with the passage of the PINS Reform Law, which was effective as of April 1, 2005. This law requires each county to provide PINS diversion services to all youth at risk of having a PINS petition filed against them, to designate a lead agency to coordinate services to children with PINS related behavior and their families, and that the lead agency must supply a letter to the Family Court approving the submission of a PINS petition before it can be filed with the court. Children's Services worked in a coordinated and cooperative manner with the Probation Department to ensure that this county was in compliance with the new legislation. It was decided that the Department of Social Services would be the lead agency and, therefore, before any PINS petition may be filed with the court, a letter approving that petition must be submitted by Children's Services. The two supervisors of the Foster Care/Preventive Services units meet regularly with the supervisors from the Probation Department to discuss diversion cases, services needs and potential cases for court involvement. Diversion services have always been provided. Now there is a requirement that families must work with those services first

to alleviate the problem before there can be any court intervention. This has resulted in a greatly reduced number of PINS petitions going to court, which, in turn, has greatly reduced the number of children placed in foster or residential care. The diversion services available are: oversight by a probation officer, mental health counseling, substance abuse counseling, intensive home-based family counseling, intensive mentoring program, and funding for positive community activities such as music lessons and anger management counseling with a life coach.

Most of the services listed above were already in place and available to families, if they chose to use them, but the last three are new. Through the FFFS funds, we contracted with the Community Action Partnership, who already had an existing mentoring program, to provide intensive mentoring, with paid mentors to children who either displayed or were at risk of developing PINS-type behavior. The program focuses on children ages 10-to-14 years and although it has recently been started, it appears to be doing well. Also with FFFS funds, we have developed preventive services wraparound funding designed to pay for unique and case-specific needs such as musical instruments, music lessons, karate lessons, YMCA memberships, clothing, or anything else that would help a child engage in healthy activities.

Finally, through a grant from New York State Office of Child and Family Services, we have contracted with Dr. Scott Petosa, a Madison County resident, who provides Christian life coaching to help with anger management. Dr. Petosa meets with children and their families at the local YMCA and, using skills related to physical fitness, teaches anger management and other positive decision-making skills.

The other major legislative change came near the end of the year and most of it took effect on December 21, 2005. This legislation is referred to as the Permanency Legislation. It made some minor adjustments in relation to Child Protective Services' obtaining records from mandated reporters, changes in the timeframe when petitions could be filed in the event of the need to terminate parental rights, and changes in timeframes for court appearances after the emergency removal of children. It made major changes in the timing of permanency hearings for children in foster care, which now need to occur every six months rather than once a year, and the information provided to the court at that time must now be in the form of a standard "permanency report." This permanency report needs to be completed by the Caseworker at least two weeks prior to the hearing and is approximately 20-pages long. The Caseworker used to be able to write a simple two-to-three-page report. This has added a very time-consuming task to the responsibilities of the Caseworkers.

While on the subject of time-consuming responsibilities, we will mention the new computer system that was implemented this year for all child welfare workers in New York State. We have had the Connections system for quite some time for Child Protective investigations, but in 2005, we saw the system expand, called Build 18, to include all of Children's Services. This required all of the Caseworkers and supervisors to receive training on the new system prior to its implementation. Unfortunately, the system at times is slow to respond and requires the manipulation of multiple windows to complete a basic case assessment. We will continue to work with the state to hopefully bring about improvements in this program. For now, the workers are doing the best they can to work with it and be in compliance with state mandates.

One of our local initiatives that we are very proud of is the implementation of our new Agency Operated Foster Home. This program has been in the planning stages for quite some time and we were excited when it opened in December for the first resident. We have contracted with the Community Action Partnership to provide the supportive services to this home, which can house five boys and has a fulltime foster parent, who, like all of our other foster parents, is certified by Children's Services. The foster parent is young and energetic. He has a great deal of experience working with young people who have come from difficult backgrounds. He has a relaxed, easy-going personality, but recognizes the need for structure and clear boundaries for children. So far, the house has two boys living there, but we expect it will fill up soon. This program will allow more children to stay closer to their own families and avoid the need for more costly residential care in other counties.

And finally, one positive occurrence that we want to mention for 2005 is the very low rate of turnover in the casework staff. We had one Caseworker retire and one Caseworker promoted to a Senior Caseworker position, both very positive reasons for turnover. This gave us a less than 10 percent turnover in casework staff when we often have a rate of 25 percent or more. We feel this is an indication that workers are recognizing how valuable their work is and feeling the support of those around them to continue this very stressful and sometimes heartbreaking work.

---

*Submitted by Melissa Maine, Deputy Commissioner for Family Services*

## **FOSTER CARE**

### **Detention Services**

During 2005, the department has continued to utilize the services of Elmcrest Children's Center for non-secure detention beds for our Juvenile Delinquents/Persons in Need of Supervision (JD/PINS) children. This year, in light of a major change to the Family Court Act regarding PINS petitions, which has drastically reduced the number of detention placements, we cut back on the number of beds that we contract for with Elmcrest. We now have two beds available to us when we need them. We used 828 care days for an average of 2.27 children per day in non-secure detention. This is a reduction of 2.31 care days from 2004. Children are placed in detention while a Family Court PINS or Juvenile Delinquency petition is pending and there is a substantial risk that the child will not appear for the next court hearing. When there are no other options for these children, such as appropriate relatives, friends or respite care, detention is the last resort.

The reduction in care days in 2005 can be attributed to the change in the Family Court Act in April of this year in which PINS diversion services through the Probation Department are required before a PINS petition can be filed on a child. Additionally, it has limited the circumstances of a child's being remanded to detention to only situations where there is a risk that the child will not appear for the next court appearance. Since the implementation of this new legislation, the Departments of Social Services and Probation have joined together to review all cases where families or schools seek assistance in helping to deal with children, mainly teens, who are ungovernable and/or out of the control of their parents/guardians or school officials.

In all cases where parents/guardians or schools seek a PINS petition, diversion

services must be attempted to resolve the problems and presented to a review committee staffed by DSS and Probation to determine if any and all services and alternatives to filing a petition have been tried and documented. In addition, it must be determined that further attempts at diversion will most likely not be successful. If it is the review committee's belief that those standards have been met, then they can refer the case to Family Court for the filing of a PINS petition. If not, then further services and/or documentation need to be completed.

#### **Foster Care and Institution Placements**

During 2005, a total of 59 children were placed in DSS custody. Along with 51 children that were discharged from custody, we ended the year with 76 children in foster care. Thirty-five of these were in foster care and 41 were in higher levels of care such as therapeutic foster care, group home, or a residential treatment center. This represents a higher percentage of our children in care being in institutional care. This trend continues in spite of the fact that our overall placement numbers have dropped. This indicates that it is becoming more and more apparent that the families in Madison County are dealing with increasingly more complex problems and issues that are difficult to address given the dearth of community services available to them within the county.

One family that we were involved with in 2005 has a story that illustrates how DSS, with assistance from willing and appropriate relatives, can help families get the help they need during times of stress and need and reduce a child's need to be separated from his/her family. In this case, a very young child, under three months, was not gaining the weight it should have. The mother and father had issues in their relationship that were impeding their ability to make sure the baby was fed properly. Child Protective Services investigated and determined that it was not safe for the baby, as well as two older siblings, to remain in the

home. The baby was placed in foster care and grandparents cared for the older siblings. In this way, the children were able to be safe and maintain family connections along with reducing the cost to the county. The parents were given the opportunity to address some of their problems while the children were well cared for and, eventually, the children were returned to their parents' custody. The two older children were returned to the parents first while the baby was discharged to the maternal grandparents. This allowed the parents to get used to caring for the older children first before resuming the responsibility of caring for the baby. They were also given time to work with service providers to better communicate with each other and to learn how to better meet the needs of the baby.

This is an abbreviated version of this family's story, but it gives an indication of how when taking advantage of the opportunity, families can work in conjunction with DSS to help keep their children safe at the same time that they work on their own problems and issues in order to become better caretakers and advocates for their children.

Of the children placed in Madison County foster homes, these families, using DSS funds as well as their own, have contributed to the local economy by making clothing and other essential purchases through businesses in Central New York. The following amounts were paid to local businesses by the department for the needs of Madison County foster children: Fashion Bug - \$2,689; Herb Phillipson's - \$2,058; K-Mart, New Hartford - \$4,774; K-Mart, Dewitt - \$1,812.

The children placed in higher levels of care have also provided an opportunity for the department to contribute to the Central New York economy. We have paid the following amounts in 2005 to these facilities for the care of children in the custody of Madison County Department of Social Services: Elmcrest Children's Center, Syracuse - \$1,264,126; The

House of the Good Shepherd, Utica - \$396,113; Liberty Resources, Syracuse/Oneida - \$468,225.

---

*Submitted by Timothy Brown, Case Supervisor Grade B*

## **FOSTER CARE/ADOPTIVE PROGRAM**

The Foster Care unit is responsible for recruiting and certifying foster and adoptive families for children in Madison County. They are, thereafter, responsible for maintaining these foster and adoptive homes including safety and compliance with state and agency regulations. Focus is also brought to the wellbeing of the family and their ability to care for children in their home. This is accomplished through regular contact with the family and through training and in-service programs. In 2005, the unit certified eight families for both foster care and adoption. Three homes closed voluntarily due to various family and personal reasons.

The unit continues to struggle with the availability of families willing to take on the responsibility of being foster parents. Although the lack of families has not caused us to look beyond our own program for beds, our emphasis is now being focused toward recruiting new families to prevent this from happening.

### **Relative Foster Parents**

Two relative foster families were approved this year, therefore providing homes for a total of six children. Our work with relatives will continue to grow because of new state regulations regarding notification to these families. We welcome relatives as resources for our children who need temporary and permanent homes.

### **Custody and Courtesy Home Studies**

The Homefinding unit is responsible for completing home studies for families applying for custody of children in foster care, as well as for counties across the state who need our assistance. This year, Madison County assisted Chenango, Otsego, Ulster and Erie Counties with home studies and contacts for families residing in Madison County.

### **Interstate Compact On the Placement of Children**

The Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) are laws and procedures that help children move across state lines while residing in foster care. When an ICPC is requested by another state, the department is responsible for investigating the proposed family for the child. The department currently has three open ICPC cases.

### **Agency Operated Foster Home**

In 2005, the unit became involved in the opening of our Agency Operated Foster Home. The Homefinding Caseworker worked closely with Community Action Program staff and the new house parent throughout the fall months to open the home. The unit certified the home in December as an official Madison County Foster Home, increasing our available beds for adolescent boys by five. The unit will continue to work with the Community Action Program staff and the house parent to ensure this foster home continues to meet the state and agency regulations.

### **Christmas and Beyond**

This year we are pleased to report a total of \$ 2,205.64 in donations to our "Christmas and Beyond" fund. Donations were acquired through community agencies, individuals in the community, and Madison County employees. The donations received go toward Christmas gifts and special activities for foster children throughout the year.

In addition to monetary donations, the department worked with several community agencies, churches, and individuals who helped purchase Christmas gifts for the children. Because of the tremendous outreach from the community this year, we were able to provide several gifts to each child in foster care.

### **Adoptions Program** **Madison County's Waiting Children**

Children who are legally free for adoption are photo listed with the New York State Adoption Services (NYSAS) Adoption Album. The album is a collection of New York State's children waiting for adoptive families. In 2005, the department photo listed two children. One child was placed with an adoptive family and the other is hospitalized with the Office of Mental Health (OMH). When adoptive families are not available for children, efforts are made to connect the child to other community resources. Our child placed with OMH has an aunt and uncle, as well as other individuals in her life, who have taken an active role in visiting with her and providing her hope for the future.

At the end of 2005, there were eight children in adoptive homes waiting finalization of their adoption.

### **Finalized Adoptions**

In 2005, the department finalized three adoptions. The first child spent three years in foster care and was adopted by her foster parents. The second child was placed with an adoptive family and adopted about seven months later. The third child was placed with an adoptive family in Poughkeepsie, New York. This child was considered hard to place, so finding an adoptive home to handle his mental health issues was very challenging. With the help of Family Focus Adoption Services (a private agency who handles adoptions for children who have behavioral and mental health issues), we were able to find a home for this child. This finalization proved that despite a child's special needs, there is hope for permanency. In 2006, we will continue our collaboration with Family Focus Adoption Services as they have identified a family for a 13-year-old boy who has been in foster care for seven years.

It is our belief that children deserve a healthy, safe, and permanent home. We will continue to strive for excellence in this area in the hopes that every child freed for adoption in Madison County will be placed with a permanent family.

### **Recruitment and Retention**

In 2005, the Adoption and Homefinding programs continued their efforts to recruit foster and adoptive families. Newspaper advertisements, radio announcements, and posters throughout the county have generated inquiries into the Foster/Adoptive program.

Plans for 2006 promise more recruitment and community outreach activities with the development of a new recruitment plan. Monies for this project will come from the 2005 Adoption Incentive award.

### **Post - Adoption Services**

Post-adoption services were provided to four families this year. Services provided included counseling, referral services, and funding for special projects and activities that prevented placement in the foster care system.

### **National Adoption Day**

This year, our National Adoption Day event was sponsored by Colgate University's Center for Outreach, Volunteerism, and Education (COVE) Program. Together we provided a day of activities held on the Colgate Campus for all foster and adoptive families in the county. Activities included arts and crafts, games, and an opportunity to use the rock wall located in the campus gym.

At the end of the day, children received Colgate t-shirts and foster/adoptive parents received Colgate coffee mugs purchased by the Office of Children and Family Services. Lunch was served in the on-campus dining hall. Eighteen adults and 22 children attended the event.

### **Adoption Subsidy Program**

Adoption subsidies are based on the needs of the child and, in some cases, include medical coverage depending on their federal reimbursement status. This year, the department applied for a total of eight adoption subsidies. All applications were approved through NYSAS and all children received medical coverage.

**Adoption Incentive Award**

The Adoptions program is pleased to report the accomplishments we attained over the past two years. In the past two years, Madison County placed 20 children in adoptive homes, making us one of 35 counties in New York State to receive the Adoption Incentive Award. Our total award of \$ 31,854 will be used to enhance our current training program, recruitment and retention of foster and adoptive families, as well as provide funding for adopted children in need of services.

---

*Submitted by Jennifer Mastrangelo, Caseworker*

## **PREVENTIVE SERVICES**

Preventive Services Caseworkers work with families who have been identified as needing child welfare services to prevent children from being placed outside the home. They are also responsible for helping families to transition children back into their home when they are returned from a foster care or kinship care placement. Twelve Caseworkers work with these types of families to establish a professional helping relationship. In 2005, this unit worked with an average of 47 families involving an average of 108 children per month.

Preventive Caseworkers also handle foster care cases. Please refer to the "Foster Care" section of the 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 assists the entire Children and Family Services staff. The Casework Assistant performs many invaluable assignments for Madison County families. He supervises visitation between parents and their children, provides transportation, acts as a second person on home visits, etc.

One example of Preventive Services casework is the case of a Madison County family who had a child that was the victim of a violent crime. A Preventive Services case was opened to help the child cope with her feelings and to prevent any further victimization. We worked with this family for several years and were successful in preventing further victimization. The child benefited immensely from our in-house counseling services.

Another example is a family consisting of a mother and three teenage girls. Mom was having difficulties motivating the girls to go to school and do well in school. A

combination of casework counseling and incentives in the form of Preventive Services money spent for clothing, etc. have been successful in preventing foster care placement. The Preventive Services money used for this family was from state sources and involved no local shares. The girls are attending school and doing well.

An example of preventing return to care is found in a family that had their three children placed with grandparents for approximately two years while the parents struggled with substance abuse. The father has since overcome his problems and has regained custody of his children. While completing services through the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention and Treatment Program (ADAPT) and Madison County Mental Health Department, the father was able to obtain steady employment and suitable housing. The children continue in counseling through our in-house counseling program.

The Office of Court Administration implemented a change in how the Family Court deals with parents who abuse drugs and alcohol. This has resulted in the Family Treatment Program in Madison County. Other counties refer to this program as "Drug Court." Parents come to court every two weeks and a judge reviews their progress or lack of progress in substance abuse treatment. There is a Social Worker that meets with the parents and helps coordinate their treatment. The Family Treatment Program creates greater accountability for parents.

In 2005, the State Office of Children and Family Services required all Preventive Services and Foster Care workers to document their services through a statewide computer system known as Connections. This change required several training sessions and technical support from the regional office. Caseworkers continue to learn the system and incorporate it into their practice.

Liberty Resources continued to provide contracted preventive services to Madison County families in 2005. We continue to use our in-house counseling services for many mental health or relationship issues. There are three therapists who provide this contracted therapy.

Partners in Prevention, a school-based preventive service, continues under contract with Liberty Resources and is jointly funded by this agency and other community programs. The Partners in Prevention program (PIP) works with elementary children in the Cazenovia, Chittenango, Hamilton, and Oneida School Districts, and with the middle school and high school-aged youth in Oneida. The children served through the PIP program are experiencing difficulty at school with academics, attendance, or behavior. The intent is for the child and family to address the non-academic barriers to school success that, left unaddressed, could lead to involvement with other more intrusive systems such as probation or social services. Ultimately, the goal is for the child to succeed academically, as school success is a protective factor in preventing at-risk behaviors.

The Family Reunification and Placement Diversion programs are contracted preventive services through Liberty Resources, Inc. Four Social Workers and one supervisor staff these programs.

Family Reunification served nine children and their families in 2005. This program is designed to shorten children's time in higher-level placements and to smooth the transition back home. The total number of care days saved with this program in 2005 was 504. This figure was computed by counting the number of days from when a child came home from residential treatment to the end date of his/her court order.

The goal of the Placement Diversion program is to prevent children from being placed into residential treatment centers or foster care due to a PINS petition. This program served 29 children and their families throughout the year. Liberty Resources counts each day of treatment as a prevented care day for a total of 6,902 days in 2005. The need for placement diversion services grew in 2005 due to PINS reform legislation that became effective on April 1, 2005. The key statutory changes require counties to provide enhanced PINS diversion services. Local social services departments are required to integrate their plans with the Division of Probation and Correctional Alternatives. Madison County Social Services and the Madison County Probation Department worked together to establish a cooperative procedure for diversion services. Under the new law, we must diligently attempt to prevent the filing of a PINS petition and placement of PINS youth into foster care. Social Services and Probation staff meet regularly to review families who have contacted Probation for help or who have come to the attention of Social Services. We review services needed, referrals made, and family progress or lack of progress. When there is no substantial likelihood that the youth or family will benefit from diversion attempts, the Department of Social Services, as lead agency, can allow a PINS petition to be filed. The new law has resulted in greater accountability for the parents of children with PINS behaviors. There have been fewer PINS petitions filed. There has been a significant drop in the number of children remanded to detention and placed with the Department of Social Services for residential treatment.

---

*Submitted by Linda Khan, Case Supervisor Grade B*

## **CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES**

The Madison County 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 in which the subject child resides. Often, multiple counties are involved in the same case, as children may live with one parent in Madison County, go to school in Chenango County, and visit another parent in Oneida County.

The eight Caseworkers in the CPS unit interview all children listed on a report, usually at school, and any other children who may be in the household. In addition to meeting with the parents and any alleged subject, the Caseworker must observe the home environment of children alleged to be abused or maltreated. This is important, as the child's environment may negatively affect his or her safety, but may not be the allegation discussed in the report.

This year, a report was received alleging that a young child had a suspicious burn on his body. No mention was made in the report about the condition of the home, as the reporter had not been to the family's home. The Caseworker visited the home and found it to be a safety hazard to the two-year-old child. The Caseworker encouraged the family to make a safe plan for their child to stay with relatives until the house could be brought to a minimal degree of safety. The family did so, and the necessary changes enabled their child to return to their home. In this particular case, a safety concern was noted immediately.

The Caseworkers continue to assess safety throughout a case, which can be up to 60 days. During this time, additional information is often gathered through discussions with other agencies and the reviewing of any applicable records.

During 2005, Madison County Child Protective Caseworkers investigated 1,103 reports. Thirty-one of the numerous children interviewed were deemed to be in imminent risk and were removed from their homes to Madison County foster homes. Caseworkers work diligently to encourage parents to utilize family members or other resources whenever possible.

At the beginning of 2005, two young children were found to be at imminent risk and would have needed immediate foster care placement. The Child Protective Caseworker arrived at the family home to assist police in this situation. The Caseworker encouraged the mother to make alternative plans for her children. The Caseworker then observed the children's aunt's home to assure that it was a safe environment. A Preventive Services case was opened for the family, and the Family Court process was begun to mandate treatment for the mother. The children remain with their aunt at this time and continue to thrive.

New York State Law mandates that reports of abuse and maltreatment be responded to 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. All Child and Family Services Caseworkers are required to choose one week of after-hours coverage three-to-four times per year. During their coverage period, The Caseworkers are responsible for responding to the Child Protective reports received as well as questions and crises that may arise. A total of 244 CPS reports were received outside of normal business hours during 2005.

New York State Law also requires certain professionals to make reports of suspected abuse or neglect if the situation warrants. They are mandated reporters. One of the ways mandated reporters, such as school personnel, are able to recognize that a situation should be reported is through training. The Child Protective supervisor developed an adaptable curriculum that can be used in informational sessions with a large variety of professionals. A

total of 18 informational training sessions were conducted during 2005. The Child Protective supervisor, Deputy Commissioner for Family Services, and School Services Coordinator worked collaboratively to provide a wide variety of training throughout the community. The audiences included day care providers, law enforcement officials, teachers, college students, and many more. Not only does this type of training foster safety, it also increases communication and cooperation among the Department of Social Services and community agencies.

Of the 1,103 Child Protective reports received during 2005, members of Madison County's Multidisciplinary Team investigated 167 reports. During 2004, the Multidisciplinary Team, showing an increase of 29 cases, investigated 138 reports. This team is comprised of specially trained members of law enforcement, the District Attorney's Office, Child Protective, legal, 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 Multidisciplinary Team cases are those involving allegations of sexual abuse and/or severe physical injury to a child. These cases are investigated jointly by all necessary team members. This greatly reduces the number of times that a child needs to be interviewed. Using a multidisciplinary approach also assures that the most skilled professionals in each discipline work closely together to lessen the trauma to the child.

The objective of Child Protective Services is to investigate allegations of abuse and neglect and to monitor the safety of all children who may be at risk of abuse and neglect. This is achieved through collaboration with community services, resources, and residents.

## Monthly CPS Report Comparison by Month/Year

Month	CPS Report Comparison by Month/Year											
	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	
Jan	59	61	48	61	54	72	90	100	90	77	90	
Feb	56	57	45	74	56	81	70	68	79	82	86	
Mar	71	70	70	85	56	81	86	118	93	115	94	
Apr	57	66	78	59	70	66	83	106	85	89	90	
May	55	49	76	74	51	69	88	96	95	85	116	
Jun	66	63	60	61	74	87	67	95	93	125	98	
Jul	52	49	49	63	59	62	89	87	102	101	87	
Aug	68	48	74	85	68	61	112	77	96	86	88	
Sept	55	50	52	58	58	71	82	85	103	96	85	
Oct	69	81	66	79	67	86	105	111	94	97	107	
Nov	60	57	65	55	66	76	75	62	58	80	77	
Dec	42	46	45	59	50	64	78	78	72	85	85	
<b>Total</b>	<b>710</b>	<b>697</b>	<b>728</b>	<b>813</b>	<b>729</b>	<b>886</b>	<b>1025</b>	<b>1083</b>	<b>1060</b>	<b>1118</b>	<b>1103</b>	

## Monthly Child Protective Reports Sorted by Township for 2005

Town	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Brookfield	2	0	5	2	5	2	0	4	2	1	3	2	28
Cazenovia	1	4	3	3	3	2	2	2	0	0	0	1	21
DeRuyter	0	0	2	0	2	0	1	0	2	0	1	1	9
Eaton	4	4	4	6	11	3	2	5	6	1	2	3	51
Fenner	3	2	2	0	2	0	4	0	1	1	0	0	15
Georgetown	0	4	1	0	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	15
Hamilton	4	5	9	5	9	1	1	5	2	5	4	5	55
Lebanon	1	0	1	0	2	2	1	0	2	2	0	0	11
Lenox	11	11	14	12	13	20	11	8	8	12	8	6	134
Lincoln	1	2	2	0	3	1	1	0	2	1	1	3	17
Madison	7	5	5	2	3	5	1	3	3	4	1	0	39
Nelson	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	2	0	2	1	10
Oneida	13	12	20	26	20	19	34	16	15	31	20	22	248
Smithfield	1	0	1	0	0	2	2	0	1	1	0	0	8
Stockbridge	5	5	2	5	5	5	3	5	4	6	2	0	47
Sullivan	19	16	11	17	24	16	13	22	21	19	20	25	223
Other Reports	18	16	11	11	12	18	9	16	13	22	12	14	172
<b>Total</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>1103</b>

## Summary of Madison County Child Protective Reports for 2005

Month	Indicated Reports	Unfounded Reports	Police Assists	Pending Reports	Transfer/ Secondary Pending Reports	Add Info/ Duplicate Reports/ Consolidated Reports/ Courtesy Contacts	Total Reports
Jan	34	45	2	0	3	6	90
Feb	32	46	5	0	1	2	86
Mar	31	54	4	0	2	3	94
Apr	24	54	5	0	0	7	90
May	27	76	7	0	1	5	116
Jun	25	62	5	0	0	6	98
Jul	33	46	3	0	0	5	87
Aug	27	49	7	0	2	3	88
Sep	23	51	6	0	2	3	85
Oct	38	52	7	0	3	7	107
Nov	22	46	3	0	2	4	77
Dec	18	42	7	16	0	2	85
<b>Totals</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>623</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>1103</b>

*Submitted by Catherine Fowler, Case Supervisor Grade B*

## **CHILDREN'S SERVICES SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM**

### **Purpose**

The Children's Services Social Work Program is designed to provide intensive home-based case management and mental health treatment to families involved with the Children's Services unit. One individual serves as the family's case manager and therapist rather than those services being provided by two or more individuals. A primary focus of the program is to work with families to prevent the placement of at-risk children in foster care. Children may be at risk due to abuse or maltreatment or due to their own behavioral difficulties. An additional focus is to work with children, foster parents, and parents when children are placed in family foster care and are at risk of placement in a higher level of care.

### **Program Objectives**

- To prevent placing children into higher levels of care, without compromising safety, in situations where the standard level of services are not seen as sufficient to do so.
- To strengthen parents to be able to meet the needs of their children.
- To maintain the least restrictive environment as possible, if placement is necessary.
- To provide enhanced support to foster parents dealing with very difficult-to-manage behaviors.
- To reunite children with their birth families as soon as conditions are safe and adequate to provide for the needs of the children – in some cases sooner than if intensive services were not provided.

A new edition to the Children's Services Social Work Program was an "emotions group" targeting boys. The group started in November and was designed to address the needs of boys aged 10 to 14 who have been working on understanding their behaviors in relation to their feelings. The boys have been learning to identify their feelings and to find healthy

coping skills to address these feelings that are often acted on behaviorally and potentially leading to a higher level of care. At this time, the group is not accepting new members, but the goal is to have additional groups in the year 2006. The group has received positive feedback from the boys, as well as their parents.

In the past year, the Children's Services Social Work Program has had the honor of working with numerous families, but while all families have had success on various levels, one family's success stands out. This is the story of "Billy's" family.

"Billy" was placed into foster care at the age of 10 and progressed to residential care due to sexually acting out behaviors. While "Billy" worked diligently to achieve his goals, his parents were unable to meet the needs of their children and "Billy" was freed for adoption. "Billy," now age 12, was then placed into a foster home and the family accepted "Billy" as part of their family. "Billy" struggled with being freed for adoption and continued to state that he wanted to return to his biological parents. He displayed his mixed feelings by acting out verbally, being physically aggressive towards peers, and physically threatening siblings in his foster home. At age 14, he threatened others with a knife and desired to run away. Due to the foster family's commitment, their involvement with the Children's Services Social Work Program, and "Billy's" desire to understand his feelings and make healthy choices, "Billy" was adopted, continued counseling, and was successful in his home and school environments.

In the year 2005, the Children's Services Social Work Program engaged with nine families involving a total of 11 youths. Out of the 11 youths, four remained at home, three returned home from foster care, one foster care youth was adopted by his foster parent, two

youth, who were at risk of higher level care, remained in foster care, and one youth was placed in a residential facility due to substance abuse issues.

The cost savings of the Children's Services Social Work Program for the year 2005 was approximately \$252,654.00.

---

*Submitted by Debbie O'Connor, Children's Services Social Worker*

## PARENT AIDES

During the year 2005, approximately 130 families were offered Parent Aide services in Madison County. This included Parent Aides' providing in-home services to families, supervising visits between parents and their children, and teaching the Parenting Skills class during the year. We currently have two Parent Aides, who work with parents on a variety of tasks, such as learning appropriate methods of discipline, helping to find appropriate housing, transporting family members to necessary appointments, and how to talk to school personnel and medical providers about their children.

The Parent Aides complete these tasks while meeting with parents in their own homes. During these visits, they discuss everyday life situations and work on a variety of training materials. These visits are meant to be supportive and non-threatening rather than an authority simply telling parents what to do. During the year, the Parent Aides did 609 home visits with the 36 families in Madison County who were referred for in-home services. The Parent Aides also supervised 78 visits between children and their parents when supervised visits were required to keep children safe.

The Parent Aides also teach a parenting class for parents who have been referred by Family Court or a Caseworker to receive parenting skills training. In 2005, the Parent Aides started teaching a new program called "Parenting Skills." This program allows the Parent Aides to work with a more "hands-on" approach with the parents. The Parent Aides teach a school-age class and an early childhood class. A total of 94 parents were invited to participate in these classes. A total of 43 parents attended the classes – 31 in the school age class and 12 in the early childhood class. Of those who attended, 20 earned completion

certificates based on their attendance and participation, nine received attendance certificates, and another 14 people attended part of the classes, but did not finish and receive a certificate.

While working with one family, the Parent Aide was able to help the parent with the school regarding the mother's young child who had been diagnosed with a serious mental health issue. The school's Committee on Special Education (CSE) met with the mother and Parent Aide. The committee asked the mother to read the CSE evaluation and make comments. The Parent Aide was able to help the mother understand what the report said and was then able to help the mother stand strong until the school agreed to provide the services she wanted for her son.

The school originally wanted to place the child on a waiting list for a Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) program with no idea of how long the child would have to wait for services, but the mother would not allow her son to wait. The school then wanted to send someone to the house to provide instruction to the child, but the mother wanted her son to have the experience of leaving the house for school. The school then agreed that the child could receive the service at school, but the child would have to ride the school bus for one hour each way to receive the instruction. The school finally agreed to provide a bus just for the child so he would only have a five-minute ride to school. This parent was able to advocate for her child to receive the best services possible with the help of the Parent Aide.

The Parent Aides provided a very valuable service to families in Madison County who were involved with Child Protective and Children and Family Services in 2005.

---

*Submitted by Karen Bright, Senior Caseworker*

## **INDEPENDENT LIVING**

In 2005, Madison County provided independent living services to those children in foster care who are at least 14 years old. The agency teamed up with the Peacemaker program and the Oneida YMCA to provide life skills services for 14 teenagers. The Peacemaker program provided a mentor through the Young Leaders in Training program and the YMCA provided a one-year membership to the facility for the teens involved in the program to provide a safe and supervised setting for the teens to utilize. The life skills provided to the youth help them in forming and sustaining positive relationships, problem solving, decision making, goal planning, preventive health and wellness, education and supports, employment skills, accessing community resources and housing, and home management.

The teens participated in 24 hours of learning in a classroom environment that included special guest speakers from the community on such wide-ranging topics as fitness and nutrition, music appreciation, conflict resolution, youth employment, breaking barriers, civic issues, and leadership skills. They participated in 12 hours of community service projects and 32 hours of field trips to help foster problem solving, decision making, and accessing community resources.

One of the community service projects the teens participated in was a car wash/bake sale to raise money for an Oneida family whose mother was dying. This would provide the family an opportunity to have a few family outings without having to worry about the cost. The teens planned, set up, baked the goodies, advertised, washed a lot of cars on two different early evenings, and collected close to \$300 for this family.

The other community service project involved the group's going to the Rescue Mission in Utica, New York to serve dinner to those less fortunate. The group originally thought most of the people who used the Rescue Mission would be old and homeless, so it was an eye-opening experience for the youth when they saw the number of young people receiving services through the Rescue Mission due to drug and/or alcohol issues. This enabled the youth to see up close the impact drugs and/or alcohol can have on a person's life, such as losing housing and having no place else to turn.

One of the field trips the group took was to spend a day touring Madison County offices and learning what resources are available through each agency. The teens especially enjoyed the tour of the Public Safety Building that day.

The group also spent a day at Panther Mountain learning to trust and take appropriate risks when they learned to climb up and repel down a mountain. A couple of the teens had a really hard time trusting the instructor and actually going over the side of the cliff, but they did it. Through tears and screams and saying, "No, I can't do it," THEY DID IT! It was amazing to see the belief in themselves grow.

Another field trip involved the annual "YOUTH SPEAK OUT" held at Herkimer Community College. It allowed the youth to interact with other youth who are also in foster care. It is a day-long event where the youth attend workshops in the morning and then spend the afternoon talking about being in foster care and what changes they would like to see occur. It is the knowledge they gain during these groups that will be critical to their eventual success once they leave foster care.

---

*Submitted by Karen Bright, Senior Caseworker*

## **TRANSPORTATION AIDES**

Within the Child and Family Services unit of Madison County, the Transportation component is responsible for safely transporting children who are in foster care. At any given time, there have been approximately 35 children in care who have needed transportation from foster homes, relative placement homes, or their schools for various reasons.

One fulltime Transportation Aide and one part-time Transportation Aide have brought these children to therapeutic counseling, supervised visitation, and doctor appointments. Besides the many hundreds of trips within Madison County, the aides have transported children as far as Long Island and south to Pennsylvania. In 2005, the Transportation Aides made 1,200 trips at a cost savings of \$22,600.

Many of the children that are transported have come to know and trust the familiar faces of the Transportation Aides. One particular child comes to mind. "Melvin" is a four-year old who entered foster care in 2005. He was very reluctant to allow anyone to transport him. "Melvin" became familiar with our Transportation Aides and now looks forward to seeing them regularly. He is now able to receive the necessary services that will help reunite him with his family.

---

*Submitted by Dawn Hewitt, Principal Account Clerk  
and George James, Transportation Aide*

## **SCHOOL SERVICES COORDINATOR**

The School Services Program is a single point of contact for county schools needing assistance accessing or coordinating services for children and their families facing difficulties inside and outside 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, and all Madison County departments. Families may make self-referrals. 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 with 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. Often times, a family in crisis only needs to know what help is available for their child and some short-term support accessing those services. Examples of various services are: mental health counseling, medical treatment, accountability to a probation officer, or financial assistance for food or home heating.

Most of the time, once the family is engaged in a support service, they are able to function at a healthy level once again. Home visits and school-based contacts are made by the Coordinator in order to develop a plan to address goals identified by the family and/or school. Once goals are identified, referrals can be made to public and private service

agencies. The Coordinator is able to support families and service providers at an early point to prevent escalating difficulties or conflicts in the classroom and home.

In the year 2005, this program received 171 referrals. The following is a breakdown of the referral sources:

<b>46</b>	<b>School social worker</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>Committee on Special Education</b>
<b>28</b>	<b>Madison County Department: PH, DSS, MH or Probation</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>BOCES Alt. Ed. Middle School</b>
<b>6</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>BOCES Alt Ed. High School</b>
<b>18</b>	<b>Guidance counselors</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>School nurse</b>
<b>17</b>	<b>Community Agencies</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Teacher</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>Principals</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Superintendent</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>Family/ child self-referral</b>		

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.

<b>61</b>	<b>Requests for individual or group counseling</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>Requests for psychiatric mental health treatment and assessments</b>
<b>40</b>	<b>Requests for assistance coordinating various services offered to a family</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>Requests needing assistance obtaining medical insurance</b>
<b>39</b>	<b>Requests for children exhibiting PINS/JD-type behaviors</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>Requests reflecting a need for case management services</b>
<b>34</b>	<b>Requests related to social difficulties in the school environment</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>Requests pertaining to medication and health</b>
<b>28</b>	<b>Requests related to academic difficulties</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>Requests as a result of parents not responding to the school's letters or phone calls</b>
<b>25</b>	<b>Requests regarding PINS diversion services</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>Requests for mentoring services</b>
<b>24</b>	<b>Requests for help with parenting skills or parental support</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>Requests for a child exhibiting anger control problems</b>
<b>22</b>	<b>Requests related to truancy or school attendance problems</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>Requests pertaining to issues connected to Family Court/legal issues</b>
<b>19</b>	<b>Requests as a result of a child's struggling with depression</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>Requests reflecting serious financial problems or unemployment</b>
<b>18</b>	<b>Requests for assistance for a teenaged parent</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>Requests concerning a child's safety in the home</b>

<b>18</b>	Requests regarding child day care	<b>9</b>	Requests as a result of the child being bullied or a child who bullies other children
<b>18</b>	Requests for information for summer activities and summer camp options	<b>8</b>	Requests for children who have been diagnosed with ADHD and need assistance
<b>17</b>	Requests regarding a need for food or shelter	<b>7</b>	Requests connected to issues of drugs/alcohol for the child or the parents
<b>16</b>	Requests with transportation barriers	<b>6</b>	Requests as a result of a child's being suspended from school and needing outside intervention
<b>15</b>	Requests regarding a homeless family or an unaccompanied youth	<b>4</b>	Requests pertaining to the home sanitation or the cleanliness of a child

An example of a referral made to the School Services Program was that of a 13-year-old girl suffering from tooth decay and abscessed gums. She was visiting the school nurse several times a day due to the distracting pain in her mouth. The mother reported to the school nurse that she called one doctor who told her it would be several months before her daughter could be seen – her only option was the emergency room. The mother did not know where to turn for help. Her daughter's mouth needed immediate attention in order to relieve the pain, to stop infection, and begin the long process of repairing her teeth. The school nurse called the School Services Coordinator for assistance. The Coordinator immediately called numerous dentist offices in three counties, finally locating an office that would take Medicaid. The dentist had an opening for a new patient and was equipped to do oral surgery on the premises. The mother of the girl began transporting her to regularly-scheduled appointments for the rest of the year. Throughout the year, the young girl visited the nurse's office to bravely update her of root canals, bridgework, and eventually to show off her beautiful new smile.

---

*Submitted by Tayah Beebe, School Services Coordinator*

## **TEENAGE SERVICES ACT (TASA) PROGRAM**

The Teenage Services Act (TASA) Program is provided to any young person under the age of 20 years (at the time of intake) who is the recipient of public assistance or Medicaid and who is either pregnant, parenting, or at risk of pregnancy or parenting. Services are provided on a voluntary basis until the individual no longer wishes to participate or until he or she reaches 21 years of age. TASA provides case management services to help young people make appropriate use of their financial resources, reside in a healthy and safe environment, obtain appropriate health care, achieve education success, secure and maintain employment, and improve their overall life skills. In Madison County, TASA services are provided through a contract between Madison County Department of Social Services and Liberty Resources, Inc. TASA case management services are funded by Medicaid funds.

In 2005, TASA case management services worked with a total of 112 families from a variety of townships. There is a table on the following page to indicate which townships families who worked with this program reside in.

Some of the achievements by participants for this past year are: 59 percent secured either fulltime or part-time employment, 91 percent maintained school or educational program participation, 83 percent secured appropriate infant/child care, 96 percent demonstrated an increase in healthy pregnancy outcomes, and 78 percent did not become pregnant while receiving TASA services.

**Breakdown of TASA Services Provided by Townships for 2005**

<b>Township</b>	<b>Number Served</b>
Cazenovia	3
Earlville	1
Eaton	6
Georgetown	1
Hamilton	4
Lenox	26
Madison	4
Oneida	47
Smithfield	2
Stockbridge	1
Sullivan	17

---

*Submitted by Melissa Maine, Deputy Commissioner for Family Services*

## LEGAL

The Legal unit was very busy during 2005, continuing to provide legal counsel as necessary to all areas of the agency. The major caseload continues to be divided between Children and Family Services and the Support Collection units. Staff turnover resulted in a new Attorney's joining this department in August 2005. Our current staff consists of two Attorneys, a Paralegal and an Office Assistant II.

### Children and Family Services

The Legal unit currently has approximately 120 active cases that include child abuse and/or neglect, juvenile delinquent supervision and placement, Persons in Need of Supervision (PINS) supervision and placement, and termination of parental rights proceedings. To that end, in 2005, this unit opened approximately 51 new cases, filed over 125 new petitions, and prepared approximately 128 court orders.

We have continued to actively work with Children and Family Services to ensure that the department is in compliance with all laws and regulations, 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.

We meet regularly with Children and Family Services supervisors and Caseworkers on individual cases and for trial preparation. Subsequently, the legal unit prepared for over 37 trials in 2005. In total, the Legal staff made approximately 275 court appearances on a myriad of issues addressing the health and welfare of Madison County children.

In addition to the cases that are filed in Family Court, there are those cases that are reported as child 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 allegation or not? The Attorneys often meet with the investigator to aid in making that determination. When a report is indicated and closed, there is sometimes a request for a fair hearing by the parent. The state then decides if the determination made by our local agency was correct. The Legal unit handled approximately seven fair hearings during 2005.

#### Support Collection

The unit's other major caseload is in the area of establishing and enforcing support orders, establishing paternity when a child is in receipt of Medicaid or temporary assistance, seeking reimbursement for confinement expenditures related to the birth of a child in receipt of Medicaid, and establishing child support orders when a child is in receipt of temporary assistance or is placed in foster care. In 2005, the Attorneys and Paralegal combined made approximately 1,538 court appearances on matters of support establishment and enforcement, paternity, and establishment of medical support orders. This number includes approximately 500 initial appearances, 333 fact-finding hearings, and 32 referrals to the Family Court Judges on support cases where the Department of Social Services was the recipient of the support. It also includes 400 initial appearances, 207 fact-finding hearings, and 66 referrals to the Family Court Judges in private support cases. Additionally, this office prepared and submitted approximately 675 orders to the court. All cases required preparation by the Legal

staff for each court appearance, whether on behalf of the department or for private support collection cases.

The legal issues presented to this office regarding support matters include not only establishment and enforcement of orders, but also violations of support orders, referrals to the Family Court Judges on those violations, requests for warrants and incarceration when necessary, and registration and enforcement of foreign support orders.

#### **Child Care Review Services (CCRS) Legal Tracking**

The Office Assistant II to the Legal unit is responsible for tracking all Madison County foster children and reporting the information to the state and federal governments. In 2005, there were 839 transactions entered in the Child Care Review Services (CCRS) system.

#### **Other Areas**

The Attorneys provides legal counsel for all other units within the agency as necessary. These areas include, but are not limited to, the following: Adult Services, Medicaid, Temporary Assistance, estate matters, bankruptcy, property liens, and foreclosures. Each day there are new legal issues presented to the Legal unit for analysis and assistance. We look forward to achieving many new successes in the coming year and feel well equipped with the current staff to achieve these goals.

---

*Submitted by Julie Jones, Supervising Social Services Attorney*

## INVESTIGATIONS

There have been several changes to the Madison County Sheriff's Investigative unit in 2005. The Investigative Lieutenant left the Investigations unit to become the Criminal Division Captain. A Sergeant was promoted to Lieutenant of the Criminal Investigations unit, and a Deputy was promoted from Investigator to Sergeant of the Criminal Investigations unit. The Investigative unit was short staffed for many months in 2005, but is now at full staff with the addition of two more Investigators. The unit now 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, and Civil.

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, an Investigator is assigned to "desk duty" during business hours and, if requested by staff, after business hours. While on "desk duty," the Investigator 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.

The Investigative unit investigates major crimes, such as rape, arson, robbery, burglary, narcotics, and homicide. We do internal investigations as directed by the Sheriff. The unit assists other local, state, and federal agencies such as the Child Protective unit, Adult Protective unit, and the Madison County District Attorney's Office.

The Investigative unit performs several other functions at the Social Services building as well. These include investigating fraud complaints, completing validations (front-end detection), and assisting the Child Protective and Adult Protective units. The validation

process consists of an Investigator's reviewing a client's application for services and verifying that the information is correct. This is done by conducting a home visit or using other techniques to verify the information. The validation process helps to eliminate fraud as well as create a saving if a case is denied.

In 2005, there were several changes to the rules and regulations for validations and fraud complaints. This made fraud arrests and validation denials very difficult. The Investigative unit completed 465 validations in 2005. This is down from 859 in 2004. This decrease is due in part to the fact that the Investigative unit no longer does validations on Medicaid applications. In 2004, 364 of the 859 validations completed were Medicaid validations. In 2005, \$253,618 was saved from being paid out as a result of validation denials. Another area of savings is prison matches. If a client is found to be in jail, prison, or has an active warrant, his/her assistance case is closed. This is done primarily with computer checks. This resulted in a saving of \$314,117 in 2005.

Investigations completed 61 fraud complaints in 2005. This is down from 64 in 2004. The fraud investigations were received through tips from the public, case screening, and leads developed in criminal investigations. As a result, one person was arrested on various criminal charges and the remaining cases were closed as unfounded or the client signed a repayment agreement.

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 Investigative unit of the Sheriff's Office is only a small piece of the MDT. Other

team members consist of law enforcement (other local and state agencies), Mental Health Department, medical community, District Attorney's Office, and Child Protective Services. The team meets once a month at the Department of Social Services building to review cases and share ideas on cases, training, etc. Being located in the Social Services Building has proven to be a great asset when investigating MDT cases. We have child-friendly interview rooms as well as areas to conduct multiple interviews at once. The Madison County Sheriff's Investigative unit investigated 38 MDT cases in 2005 resulting in 11 arrests on various charges. This is up from 22 cases investigated in 2004.

The part-time Investigators do background checks on new employees as well as backgrounds on pistol permit applications. The part-time Investigators conducted 36 background investigations, 21 pistol permit applications, and 28 arrest notifications on current pistol permit holders.

The Investigative unit conducted a total of 1,430 investigations in 2005. This is up from 1,248 investigations in 2004 and 974 in 2003. The number of cases the unit has been involved with increases each year along with the quality of the work.

In 2003, the Sheriff's Transport unit took over juvenile transports. The transport team consists of four fulltime Corrections Officers that are assigned to juvenile transports as well as adult transports. One officer is designated as the transport coordinator and is responsible for scheduling transports, scheduling officers, completing necessary paperwork, and assisting with the transports. The transport coordinator is based at Social Services and helps cover "desk duty" when not doing transports. This strategy was put into place to put an additional Investigator in the field.

Having a transport team to do the juvenile transports has proven to be beneficial to both the Investigative unit as well as Social Services. In the past, an Investigator and Caseworker would transport juveniles, making them unavailable for other investigations. With the transport team doing juvenile transports, the Caseworkers and Investigators are free to work on other cases. The transport team works flex hours to cover the transports when needed. The Transport unit did 131 juvenile transports in 2005 – this is down from 187 in 2004. This is in part due to PINS law changes. Out of the 131 juvenile transports, the Investigators only assisted with four. The transport team also transports county jail inmates to state prison, county court, local courts, and medical and dental appointments. The transport team did 949 adult transports in 2005. This is up from 891 in 2004. Out of the 949 adult transports, the Investigators assisted with 10.

The Investigative unit is a valuable section of a larger law enforcement picture and has proven to be successful. We will continue to educate our staff and build our team to better serve the citizens of Madison County.

---

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