

**Madison County
Department of Social Services**

**2004
Annual Report**

*Michael A. Fitzgerald
Commissioner*



**MADISON COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

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May 6, 2005

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

Dear Chairman DiVeronica:

I am pleased to submit the Madison County Department of Social Services 2004 Annual Report.

For years, Annual Reports of the Department of Social Services were submitted that were merely an accounting of dollars and cents. It is my belief that this kind of report does not accurately reflect what the Department of Social Services does. Without presenting a complete picture of the programs that the department offers to the citizens of Madison County, a simple examination of revenues and expenditures does not address the larger social issues. We deal with the problems of actual people who are a fairly representative cross section of any neighborhood in our county. The needs of our most vulnerable citizens (children, the disabled, and the elderly) do not fit neatly into columns of facts and figures.

In the following pages, the department staff will show the trends and problems that face this county. As you know, one industry has closed down in the past year and there may be others that follow. We understand that of those out of work, many have not been able to find new jobs. There still remains several hundred who have been receiving unemployment insurance benefits for such a period of time that, to date, they have not appeared on our rolls. We also recognize that without some good fortune, they will have to make an application for assistance.

Interestingly, the preceding paragraph is, more or less, a direct quote from the 1948 Department of Public Welfare Annual Report. Despite the passage of 57 years, the troubles facing the county then are not dissimilar to the issues of today. Despite our belief that the "good ol' days" were always good, we merely need to look at the historical documents to prove that today is not as bad as some would want us to believe. This point is particularly salient in light of the county's celebration of its 200-year-old history. A look around suggests that the county is in good shape and improving.

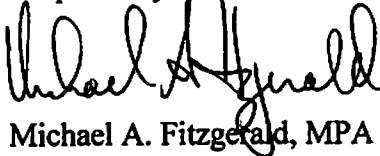
The good news for the department came in several areas: Public Assistance cases remained relatively low with a modest gain of 2 percent (155 cases in 2003 compared to 158 in 2004); there was a reduction in the number of days children spent in non-secure detention (1,920 care days in 2003 compared to 1,674 in 2004); seventeen children had their adoptions finalized in 2004 compared to seven in 2003; and the department was able to purchase 29 personal computers through a grant, which had no impact on the local tax levy.

Of course, there continued to be troubling news as 2004 came to a close: The agency received over 1,100 child abuse and neglect reports with 138 of those reports being serious enough for the county's Multi-Disciplinary Team to conduct the investigations; Medicaid caseloads increased by nearly 8 percent (4,715 cases with 7,553 individuals in 2003 compared to 5,071 cases and 8,311 individuals in 2004); despite the number of children in foster homes and institutions decreasing, the costs associated with those placements increased by over \$700,000 (average cost per day per child in 2003 was \$90.72 while in 2004, it rose to \$97.14); and finally, the costs of the Medicaid program exceeded \$12 million in local tax dollars.

I hope that the following pages give a different viewpoint of the work that the Social Services Department conducts. It is our hope that we make our figures just a little more representative of the casework achieved by the department.

As usual, I take this opportunity to thank the Madison County Board of Supervisors, the Social and Mental Health Services Committee, the many community partners who help this department and, finally, to the staff at the Department of Social Services, who endeavor each day to make the lives of our citizens better.

Respectfully Submitted,

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

Michael A. Fitzgerald, MPA
Commissioner

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DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

In 2004, a total of nine employees left the Department of Social Services. Eight employees resigned and one retired. Seven employees requested and were granted leaves of absence. Five were medical and two were maternity leaves.

The vacancies that resulted from persons' leaving the department occurred at many levels. There were five Caseworker vacancies, one Senior Social Welfare Examiner vacancy, one Office Assistant I vacancy, one Office Assistant II vacancy, and one Attorney vacancy.

Four of the Caseworker vacancies were filled by hiring new employees and one was filled through a transfer from another county. The Senior Social Welfare Examiner vacancy was reclassified to Senior Support Investigator and was filled by promoting a Support Investigator. The Office Assistant I vacancy was filled with the hiring of a new employee. The Office Assistant II vacancy was filled by promoting an Office Assistant I. The Attorney vacancy was filled by hiring a new employee.

There were a total of seven promotions within the department during 2004. The Director of Administrative Services was promoted to Deputy Commissioner for Administrative Services. The Assistant Director of Administrative Services was promoted to a Director of Administrative Services. The Child Welfare Social Worker was promoted to Deputy Commissioner for Family Services. A Senior Social Welfare Examiner was promoted to Caseworker. An Office Assistant I was promoted to Office Assistant II. A Support Investigator was promoted to Senior Support Investigator. An Office Assistant I was promoted to Social Welfare Examiner.

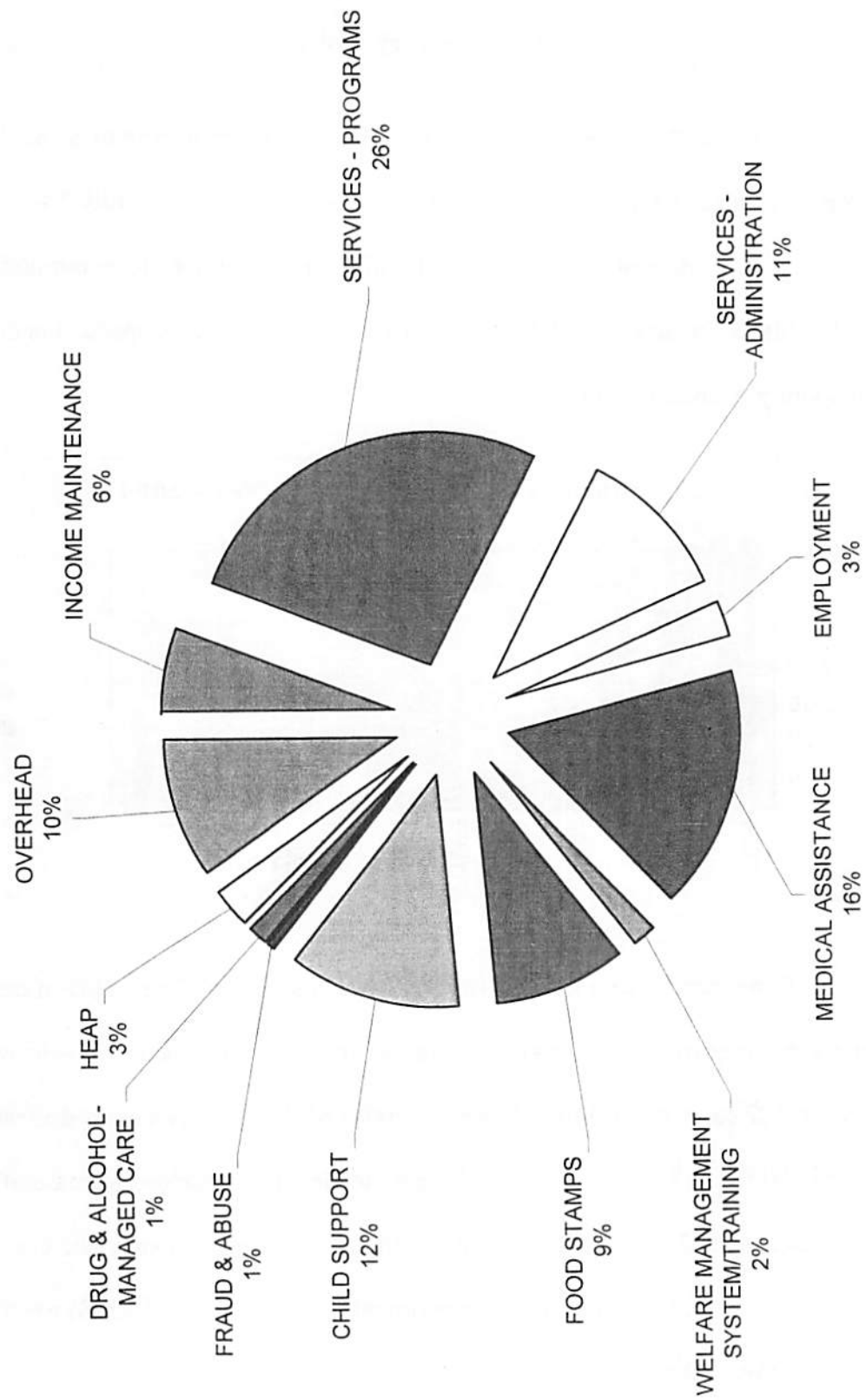
As part of a revamping of the management structure of the department, three new positions were created during 2004. A Deputy Commissioner for Administrative Services position was created to oversee all of the administrative/accounting functions of the department. A Deputy Commissioner for Family Services position was created to oversee all of the Child Welfare services, and a Director of Administrative Services position was created to oversee the cash receipts, payroll, and Cash Management System functions.

Two positions were eliminated in 2004. The Director of Economic Security position and the Assistant Director of Administrative Services position were eliminated. Deputy Commissioners and Directors absorbed their former responsibilities under the new management structure that was put into place. One position was reclassified during 2004. Upon becoming vacant, a Senior Social Welfare Examiner position was reclassified to a Senior Support Investigator position. Due to the changes in the department's organizational structure and increased demands on the Child Support unit, it was felt that the position could be better utilized providing added supervision within the Child Support unit.

In 2004, 17 employees of the department qualified for the attendance bonus in accordance with Article 34.7 of the White Collar Bargaining Agreement.

At the end of 2004, there were 114 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. Additionally, the department contracts for one Sheriff's Deputy to provide transportation for children who are remanded to facilities outside the county.

2004 STAFFING ANALYSIS (DEC04)

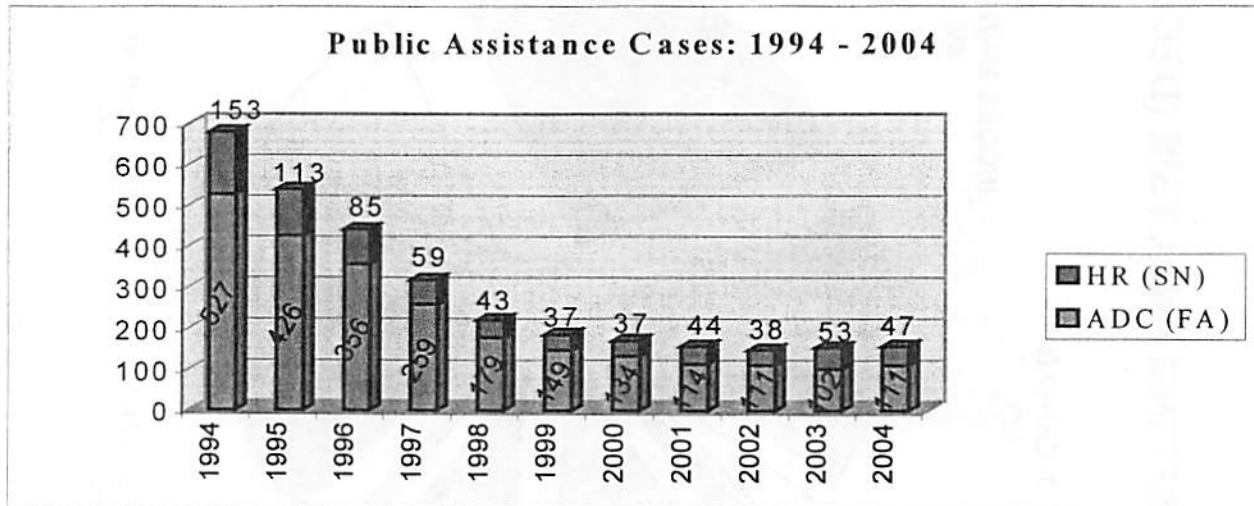


Submitted by Stephen Garneau, Deputy Commissioner

ECONOMIC SECURITY

Temporary Assistance

The year 2004 consisted of the Madison County Department of Social Services Economic Security unit's continuation of success at keeping the Family Assistance caseloads 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 a slight overall increase in the number of cash assistance cases in 2004. The average number of Family Assistance cases increased 9 percent (102 cases in 2003 to 111 cases in 2004) while Safety Net cases decreased (53 cases in 2003 to 47 cases in 2004). This resulted in a total caseload increase of 2 percent (155 cases in 2003 to 158 cases in 2004). With a struggling economy and uncertainties at the national level, Madison County Department of Social Services (DSS) was fortunate to see just a minimal 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 continues to be a successful collaboration between the department, Community Action Program (CAP), and Colgate University. Students from the college prepared over 200 tax returns, bringing more than \$380,000 of federal/state income tax refunds into the county in 2004. This effort also resulted in Earned Income Tax Credits (EITC) totaling in excess of \$220,000.

The unit continues to be involved in the next “Welfare Leavers Study,” which is currently underway. The study – building on the success of an earlier study, the second to be done in New York State – examines the lives of former welfare recipients and serves as a blueprint for future programming. The earlier study presented suggestions to improve our services and has since led to the implementation of a program to improve access for food stamps. The USDA Food Stamp Access Grant has allowed online food stamp screening and application in addition to more community outreach. The online application went “live” October 1, 2003, and during its first year of operation, 267 residents of Madison County had applied for food stamps online. The intended goal of this project was to increase the number of new households participating in the Food Stamp Program. The project has been very successful as the number of new food stamp cases opened increased by 29 percent during the year (October 1, 2003 to September 30, 2004) as compared to the year before.

The unit was also an instrumental participant in a number of other initiatives currently underway. CAP and SUNY Morrisville, in collaboration with the Temporary

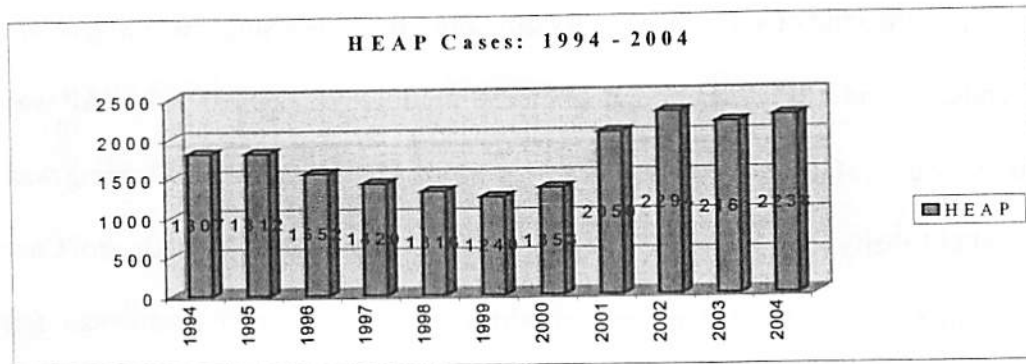
Assistance unit continued to receive funding from a grant through the Department of Labor (DOL) that has allowed the purchase of automobiles for low-income, working families. The DSS Deputy Commissioner, who oversees the financial program areas, participates in a Forensic Case Management initiative with representatives of the Mental Health and Probation Departments. The purpose of the initiative is to successfully transition inmates of the Madison County Jail 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. The unit is also involved in collaboration with other local housing providers, such as HUD, Stoneleigh Housing, Inc., and others in exploring the possibility of bringing additional federal community housing dollars into our community. Finally, the Bureau of Early Childhood Services approved our proposal to purchase 28 desktop computers and 8 printers through the use of a one-time grant opportunity. This will allow all the units within the department to share a common platform to facilitate more efficient communication.

The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) saw an increase in cases during 2004. Overall, the number of families seeking an energy grant increased by 77 cases. The rising cost of fuel for heating made it necessary for many families to apply for benefits.

The department continues to contract with Stoneleigh Housing of Canastota to process applications for furnace repairs and replacements. As the county's weatherization agent, they are better suited to determine the heating needs of eligible

households and better able to communicate those needs to local heating contractors.

During the 2003-to-2004 heating season, Stoneleigh replaced 36 furnaces and repaired 44 furnaces for low-income homeowners in Madison County.



Madison County has actively participated in an “Electronic Workbook Online System” for the Home Energy Assistance Program through the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance. This pilot project provides the ability for any Madison County resident with a heating expense and who received a HEAP benefit in the previous heating season with the option to apply electronically by completing an application on the OTDA website. During the year, 31 Madison County residents submitted applications electronically.

The “vision” of the pilot is to have the consumer apply electronically and have the DSS Examiner process the benefit electronically. The case records could be updated yearly with only minimal paperwork required. This would involve the update of current information such as income or household changes. This would be beneficial to both the consumer and the county in terms of access and efficiency.

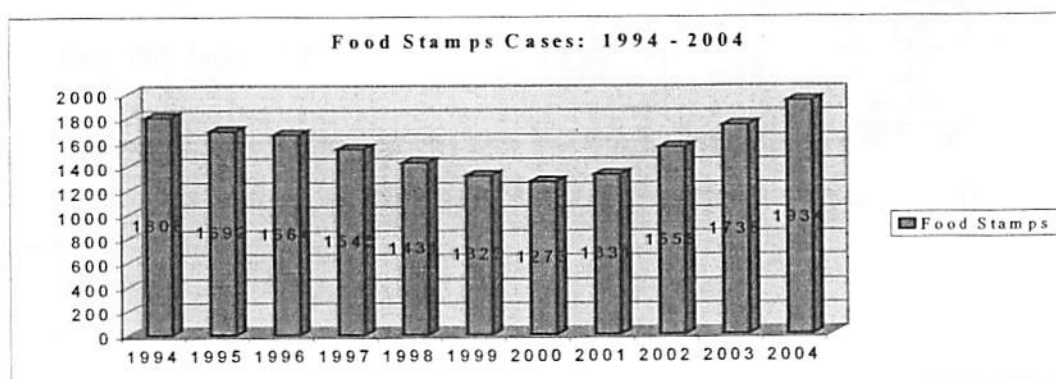
This past year also saw the agency continue to utilize TANF funded services. The money is an allocation set by the state, due, in part, to caseload reductions that have occurred in recent years. The TANF Services Plan provided funding to the Community

Action Program (CAP) to continue with provision of a housing stabilization program. The program funded such items as first month's rent, moving expenses, and minor rehabilitation to name a few. During the year, this program served 324 families. An example of the kind of assistance the funding provides was a single working mother with two children who lost her apartment when the building was condemned. CAP was able to assist with \$150 towards the security deposit for a new apartment. 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, 39 persons received drug/alcohol assessments and an average of 17 individuals per month received case management services. These services resulted in 15 individuals' achieving the goal of employment.

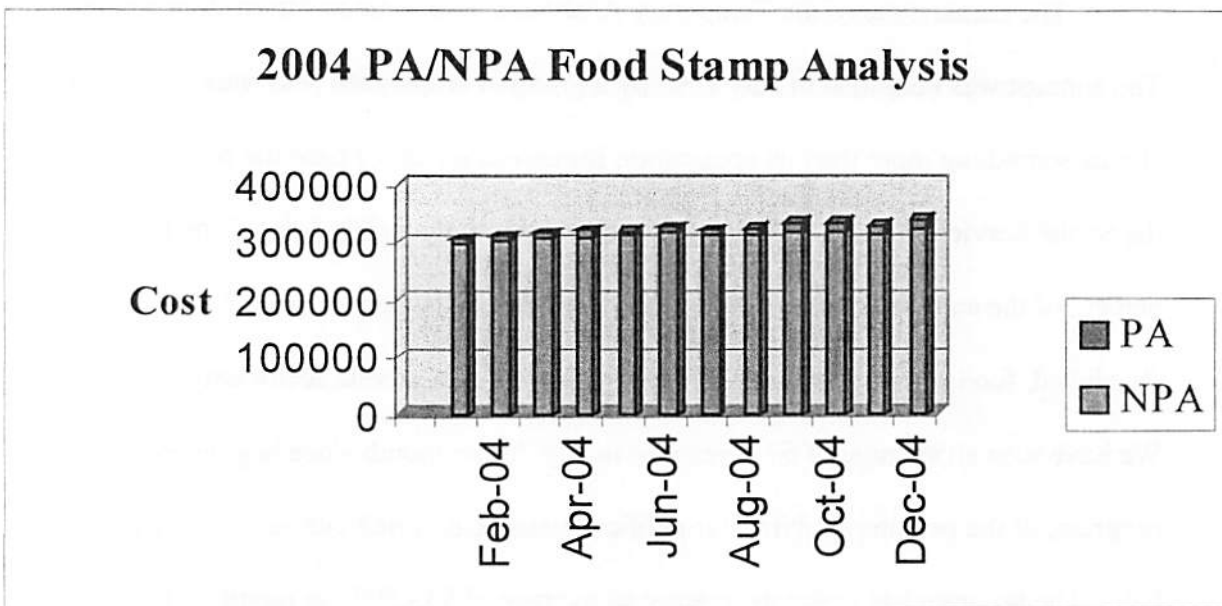
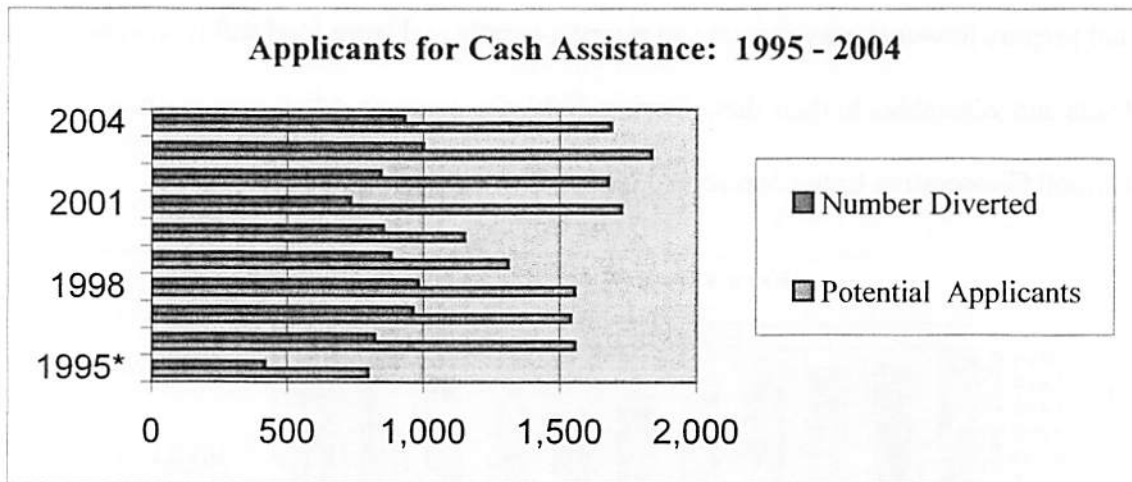
We saw a continued caseload increase in food stamps with a high of 2,053 cases in December and low of 1,839 in January. We averaged 1,934 cases for the year, representing 4,066 residents of the county. The food stamp caseload has increased by over 600 cases over the past three years indicating that more of our neighbors need the nutrition food stamps provide. In fact, it is important to note that food stamps, a totally federally subsidized benefit, adds \$321,086 monthly (and nearly \$3.9 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 has partnered 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 2004, the program's first year in operation, Cornell Cooperative Extension served 37 families consisting of 152 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 the person 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 nearly 76 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 \$33,509 per month or total savings of \$3,839,290 since we began. In 2004, we continued to see impressive results: 1,689 persons came into the Social Services building to apply for public assistance with 933 diverted (over 55 percent) for a yearly savings of \$424,515.



Submitted by Stephen Garneau, Deputy Commissioner

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

It is well known that Medicaid costs continue to increase. The 2003 annual report included Medicaid payments made to Madison County employers. In the 2004 Annual Report, this information has been expanded. Without Medicaid reimbursement, many of these employers would not be able to retain their current staff.

Medicaid Payments to Madison County Employers

Oneida HealthCare Center

Inpatient	\$1,616,221
Outpatient	796,585
Skilled Nursing	5,981,034
Child/Teen Health Plan Services	2,774
Total	\$8,396,614

Community Memorial Hospital

Inpatient	\$ 738,549
Outpatient	492,249
Skilled Nursing	890,619
Child/Teen Health Plan	8,573
Total	\$2,219,990

Crouse Community Center

Skilled Nursing	\$3,184,292
Adult Day Care	730,106
Total	\$3,914,398

Stonehedge, Chittenango

Skilled Nursing	Total	\$ 987,102
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Madison County Mental Health

Clinical Services	Total	\$1,866,076
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Madison County Public Health

Clinical Services	\$ 347,905
Personal Care	126,092
Home Health Aide	373,464
Nursing	397,810
Long Term Waivered Services	59,693
Rehabilitation Services	12,307
Preschool Services	431,861

Early Intervention	199,725
Case Management	<u>31,427</u>
Total	\$1,980,284

Madison-Cortland ARC

Clinical Services	\$ 513,624
Home & Community Based Waivered Services	4,479,619
Case Management	409,012
Taxi/Livery (Madison Transit)	<u>92,189</u>
Total	\$5,494,444

Oneida Indian Nation Health Department

Clinical Services	Total	\$19,035
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Liberty Resources

Home & Community Based Waivered Services	\$2,370,832
Rehabilitation Services	143,762
Case Management	<u>504,665</u>
Total	\$3,019,259

Heritage Farm

Home & Community Based Waivered Services	426,272
Case Management	<u>44,645</u>
Total	\$ 470,917

School supportive Services Provided by the Following Districts

Canastota	\$ 481,038
Oneida	353,464
Morrisville-Eaton	311,489
Chittenango	162,301
Stockbridge	116,435
Madison	112,862
Cazenovia	52,815
Georgetown	49,514
Brookfield	44,973
Hamilton	40,088

Vineall Ambulance	\$ 88,035
Greater Lenox Ambulance	\$ 36,931
Cazenovia Volunteer Ambulance	\$ 7,657

There were no new Medicaid programs established in 2004. The caseloads leveled out during 2004 as shown:

Medicaid Program	# Cases January	# Cases December	# Change
Regular Medicaid	2658	2530	- 128
Nursing Home	344	354	+ 10
Family Health Plus	716	725	+ 9
Family Planning	272	344	+ 72
SSI	1164	1177	+ 13
TOTAL	5154	5130	- 24

The yearend caseload total was 302 ahead of December 2003. Individuals receiving Medicaid totaled 8,319 as of December.

MEDICAID HOME CARE PROGRAMS

Madison County's Home Care Programs provided services to 127 individuals in the year 2004.

The Long Term Home Health Care Program provides Madison County residents with the opportunity to remain in their own homes. The program remains a cost effective alternative to institutionalization. The Long Term Home Health Care Program provided 84 clients with expanded Home Care services. Skilled care was provided to participants at approximately 52 percent of the monthly allowable program cap of \$3,942 and at 39 percent of the cost of nursing home placement. Health related care was provided at approximately 61 percent of the monthly allowable cap of \$2,662 and at 46 percent of the cost of nursing home placement. Nursing, aide service, and physical therapy are provided by Madison County Public Health. The program admitted 19 individuals, with six being discharged from higher cost extended care facilities. The age range of participants was 38 to 97, with an average age of 71. Twenty-three percent of participants were male and 77 percent were female.

The Personal Care Program served seven clients in 2004. The Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program, where clients locate and hire their own aides, continued to increase in popularity, in part because of the lack of agency-provided home health aides. Twenty-six individuals participated in this program, with 17 being admitted in 2004.

The Care at Home Program served two severely disabled children in Madison County. Nine residents of Hamilton Manor adult home received services through the Limited Licensed Home Care Services Program.

ADULT AND FAMILY SERVICES/EMPLOYMENT

The Adult and Family Services unit is mandated to investigate reports of adults who are abused, neglected, or exploited by others. In 2004, the unit received 141 allegations that required our staff to determine the veracity of the reports and what role we would take in protecting those who had been victimized. This was nearly a 10 percent increase over last year's total reports.

As a result of perceived medical, physical, or health-related problems, 29 percent of our referrals originated from healthcare providers. Doctors, Public Health nurses, and hospital social workers routinely contact us requesting intervention on behalf of their clientele who are struggling to maintain their independence while battling an illness. It is no surprise that the second most frequent problem (21 percent of the referrals) is housing related. As the aging process progresses, it is our experience that adults struggle to maintain their independence despite the incidence of dementia, Alzheimer's, and other related mental health disorders. Intervention for these referrals started at the least restrictive level, such as requesting the family to provide supportive care or implementing a Home Health Aide, to the most restrictive alternative, that of placement.

Placement occurred as a remedy in nearly one of every five referrals as opposed to the family's providing care to keep the individual at home or with them, which occurred in one out of every 14 referrals. The struggle with one's healthcare or with housing issues appears to be the cause that led to such a high placement ratio. Our objective is to assist Madison County residents to stay in their homes and live independently as long as they are able to do so safely. Madison County's Long Term Home Health Care Program, Madison County Public Health Department, and the Madison County Office for the Aging have been

instrumental team players in preserving the quality of life that we believe our community is entitled to.

Financial problems made up 16 percent of our referrals. Both elderly adults and disabled adults, in particular, are vulnerable to financial exploitation as they rely upon the trust of others to either assist them in managing their fiscal affairs or performing work for them to help them remain independent. These cases can include the following levels of involvement: Referral to consumer credit counseling, establishing a representative payee for Social Security payment, recommending individuals to seek some form of temporary assistance at the Department of Social Services, and/or conferring with the District Attorney and Madison County Sheriff's Department to pursue legal action. Consumer Services of Madison County, Inc., has been a valuable resource as we work together to provide a secure fiscal environment for those in need.

Individuals with specific mental health problems and neglect issues constituted 15 percent of our referrals. Service delivery to those individuals has been expedited through the support and cooperation of the Madison County Mental Health Department and the Single Point of Access Committee (SPOA). SPOA meets monthly and offers creative solutions from professionals who bring together decades of diverse experiences that pertain to treatment modalities, intervention strategies, accessing state and federal benefits, and residential options. The ability to confer with the county's Mental Health clinicians, Probation Officers, and case management professionals has created a team approach, which facilitated services for some of the hardest-to-serve clients this year.

There were 12 cases of abuse reported in 2005. Our unit responds immediately to this type of allegation and has sought support from the Madison County Sheriff's Department, the

New York State Police, and the Cazenovia, Canastota and Oneida Police Departments in protecting victims. The Oneida Healthcare Center's emergency room staff has made remarkable efforts in attempting to gather and interpret evidence despite the fear and limitations of our victims.

The incidence of drug/alcohol abuse/dependence for our clientele is reflected in the following statistics: 309 individuals were screened and 42 were referred for an evaluation. Our Casework Assistant monitors approximately 57 cases each month, which is a 25 percent increase over the 2003 monitored cases. Our department has continued to contract with Liberty Resources for assessment services, which are conducted on a weekly basis by a Certified Alcohol and Substance Abuse Counselor (CASAC). Failure to comply with treatment requirements usually results in a loss of benefits for Safety Net recipients and a significant reduction of benefits for Family Assistance recipients. Our department continues to refer clients to the Madison County Alcohol Drug Abuse Prevention and Treatment (ADAPT) Program and D. A. Mancuso treatment services for intervention and treatment.

The mission of the Employment unit is to assist the unemployed and underemployed to attain a level of self-support that will render them self-sufficient. The Department of Labor (DOL) services representative retired this year and, as a result of a DOL hiring freeze, he was not replaced. While this means that no DOL services representative is physically present at our agency, it has not affected our partnership with DOL in that we routinely refer applicants and recipients to the nearby Working Solutions Career Center. The center offers a unique opportunity for job seekers who can speak with an Employment Counselor, access data for available jobs, and use the bank of computers to create a resume or research job

specifications. The DOL also provides us with a weekly listing of current jobs available in our region that we make available to our applicants.

Our Mobile Work Crew (MWC) completed 8550 hours of work this year, which was an increase of 2278 hours over the year 2003! Our completed major projects included: painted and repaired the second story of the Elks Club in Oneida; painted the interior of Cedar House, Oneida; built shelving units and moved desks at DSS; covered the wheelchair ramp for the Town of Cazenovia; rebuilt the Great Swamp Conservancy barn and outer building; installed new siding on the Canastota VFW building; framed and poured a concrete slab for the Oxbow Road Madison County Park; painted the Madison County Community Action Program (CAP) food cupboard building and the CAP apartment; completed repairs, cleaning and other projects at the Madison County Highway Department; and cleaned the roadside and grounds for the Madison County Landfill. The following are minor projects completed by our MWC: cleaned off cars at DSS; set up for the Canastota Over the Hill Gang Annual Fishing Derby; cleaned and completed minor repairs for the City of Oneida Fire Department training center; washed and cleaned the Madison County fleet of cars; moved bales of hay for the Gravity Fest; installed posts for shelves and removed brush for the 911 Communications Center at their tower on Hill Road; moved furniture for the Madison County BRiDGES Program; prepared DSS for the Public Health Department (PHD) move and the moved PHD to the DSS building; and coated the basketball court for the Madison County Sheriff's Department. The completed projects benefited local townships, not-for-profit agencies, as well as numerous Madison County departments, and provided valuable work experience for the MWC.

Submitted by Christopher Munn, Case Supervisor Grade B

CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT

It seems that the public has formed many myths over the years in regards to Child Support. Below is an account of a client who applies for temporary assistance in Madison County. Read through and see if you come to the correct conclusion of whether the statements are "myth or fact."

A client named Mary Public applied for temporary assistance at the Madison County Department of Social Services. Mary was 21 and the mother of one child, Joe Public, who is one year old. One requirement of the application process requires the client to provide specific information regarding all absent parents from the household of any children for whom they are applying under the age of 21. This information is forwarded to the Child Support unit for processing. It was explained to Mary that in applying for temporary assistance, she was assigning any child support rights to the state and the Department of Social Services during the time she received temporary assistance. This assignment would include amounts she would receive either for her own behalf or on behalf of any other family member for whom aid was requested. Mary provided her child Joe's absent parent's name, date of birth, and last known address. Upon receipt of all other required information from the client, it was determined that the client and child were eligible and the temporary assistance case was opened. At case opening, the required absent parent information was forwarded on a Child Support Referral to the Child Support unit.

The Child Support unit's clerical staff used the information from the Child Support Referral to build a case under the absent parent's name and then forwarded the case to the appropriate Child Support Investigator. Upon receipt of the case, the Investigator contacted

Mary and explained that she would need to come into the department to go over the needs of her Child Support case. Mary stated she had provided the name of the father of her child, his date of birth, and last known address, and that was all she had to do to cooperate. Myth or fact? The Investigator explained that while it was true Mary had provided the aforementioned information, it is the client's responsibility to continue to cooperate in good faith with the department to establish paternity of a child born out of wedlock. The client must participate in efforts to locate any absent parent or putative father in order to establish, modify, and enforce orders of support to obtain support payments or any other payments or property due such person and/or due each child. This may include appearing as a witness at court, other hearings, and/or proceedings necessary to achieve the objective of establishing paternity or securing support. This may also include appearing at the local Child Support Enforcement unit to submit the child and self to genetic tests. Failure to comply with the requirements could result in a 25 percent reduction of the entire case's public assistance grant. Mary's statement was a myth.

An appointment date was agreed upon and a letter was sent to Mary confirming the time and date. Unfortunately, Mary did not appear nor did she call the Investigator to explain her failure to appear. The Investigator sent notice to the Temporary Assistance unit to institute a 25 percent sanction on Mary's temporary assistance grant. Once Mary received notice of her grant's reduction, she called the Investigator and requested another appointment time. Mary was given another time and date and she was informed that her sanction would remain until she appeared at the new time and date.

At the designated Child Support interview, the first area for the Investigator to examine was if paternity had been established for the child (Had it been legally determined

who Joe's father was?). Mary explained that the absent parent's name (John Doe) was on the birth certificate so he was the legal father. Myth or fact? If Mary was not married to the absent parent at the time of conception or if they had not signed an Acknowledgement of Paternity in the hospital, paternity was not established. An Acknowledgement of Paternity is a document signed by both the mother and the father that would legally establish who the child's father is. This form may be signed in a hospital at the time of birth or at a Child Support agency. An Acknowledgement of Paternity would have the same force and effect as a court order establishing paternity for the child. It would eliminate the need to have a Family Court hearing to decide who the child's father is and would establish the duty of both parents to provide support for the child. When a man signs an Acknowledgement of Paternity, he waives his right to a court hearing to determine if he is the father of the child. Mary's statement was a myth.

The Investigator explained to Mary that the Director of Child Support had the administrative authority to order a genetic test for all three parties (Mary, John, and Joe). Mary expressed her concern regarding how she could pay for the tests and that John would refuse to pay. The Investigator explained that the department would pay to have the tests conducted. If John were found to be the father, the department would petition John to be responsible for repaying the department for the expense of the genetic testing. The department contracts with a phlebotomist to come to the department once a month and perform the scheduled tests. Mary expressed her concern about subjecting her child Joe to having blood drawn. She said she had watched a show on television that conducted a different type of test using a buccal swab and that it was just as accurate as the blood draw test. Myth or fact?

A child inherits DNA from his/her mother and father. Each parent contributes half of the child's DNA. If the mother and father are the parents of the child, the two DNA sequences in the child's chromosomes must have been inherited from each parent. A buccal swab is soft and resembles a large cotton swab (Q-Tip). It is used to collect a sample of cheek cells by simply rubbing the inside of the cheeks. It is as accurate as blood, as the DNA is the same. The tests require a witness, proof of identity, and a special chain of custody procedures. Mary's statement was fact. The buccal swab test is the DNA choice of tests used by the Madison County Child Support unit.

Mary told the Investigator that John would never come into the department for the tests. The investigator explained that if John did not show up for the scheduled administrative genetic tests, that her time would not be wasted. The phlebotomist would still swab Mary and her son. The swabs would be forwarded to the lab. The Child Support unit would then file a paternity petition and child support petition in Madison County Family Court against John with personal service. Personal service means the summons for the scheduled court appearance would be personally served to John by the Sheriff's Department. The Sheriff's Department would then provide an affidavit of service to the Family Court. This affidavit is a testimony that the individual was personally given the summons to appear. If the person served then fails to show at the scheduled court appearance, a warrant may be issued for him/her. John would then stay in jail until Family Court was able to schedule another time for the petitions to be heard in court. At the scheduled hearing, the court would order John to participate in genetic testing. Since Mary and Joe had already been swabbed, they would not have to be appear at John's testing date.

Mary told the Investigator that John was still married but did not live with his wife and children. Because of this, John had told Mary she would never get any child support from him. Myth or fact?

The Investigator asked Mary if she knew if John had a court order to pay his wife support for his children. Mary said she was pretty sure he did not because when she and John had lived together, he would sometimes get calls from his wife asking for money. The Investigator explained to Mary that if John were found to be Joe's father and the petition for child support were heard in front of the Support Magistrate, the Child Support Standard Act (CSSA) would apply. The CSSA requires that both John and Mary provide financial disclosure to the court with a sworn statement of net worth, a current pay stub, W-2s, and copies of the most recently filed state and federal income tax returns. Income is calculated by determining the gross annual income and subtracting the allowable deductions. Income is then multiplied by the percentage assigned to the number of children that are part of the action. In John and Mary's case that percentage is 17. The percentages are:

- 17 percent for 1 child
- 25 percent for 2 children
- 29 percent for 3 children
- 31 percent for 4 children
- At least 35 percent for 5 or more children

Examples of allowable deductions from John's income would be:

- FICA
- New York City or Yonkers tax
- Unreimbursed business expenses

Court ordered alimony or court ordered child support that has been paid for a child or children is not part of this action. John's statement was a myth. If his payments to his wife were not court ordered, even though these children were born prior to Joe, they would not be

an allowable deduction from John's income. The Support Magistrate would calculate the obligation using the above process.

Mary told the Investigator that it would not matter how much the court ordered John to pay her, he already said he would not pay her a dime and no one could make him. Myth or fact?

The Investigator explained that, yes, the court order would order John to be responsible for paying the child support. The court order would also make the child support payable through the Child Support unit and all court orders authorized through the Child Support unit are automatically collected through income execution unless otherwise specified in the court order. Income execution is the administrative process by which payments for current and/or past due child support are deducted from the payer's wages and sent to the appropriate Child Support unit. If John applied to receive unemployment insurance benefits (UIB) from the New York State Department of Labor, the support payment would be deducted from his UIB checks through the automated income execution process. Some of the other remedies available to collect the child support are:

Tax Refund Offset – this is an automated process through which a delinquent payer's federal and state income tax refund is directed to the New York State Division of Child Support and then forwarded to the local Child Support unit to satisfy past-due support obligations.

Lottery Prize Intercept – an automated process by which lottery winnings are intercepted and directed to New York State Division of Child Support and then forwarded to the local Child Support unit.

Personal Injury Claims – this process collects from a delinquent payer’s personal injury and worker compensation claims.

While John’s statement that “No one could make him pay!” could be partially true, the Child Support unit certainly has built in mechanisms to make it difficult for him not to pay. Mary said while all those methods sounded great, she knew John would just get a job then quit once the child support deductions began. Mary said she read in the paper that someone was arrested for driving with no license because he owed child support. Myth or fact?

Mary stated John had his Commercial Driver’s License and worked independently for trucking companies. The investigator told Mary that there were still other processes that could be initiated. The Child Support unit could suspend John’s driver’s license privileges. Mary’s statement was fact. Also, if John fell behind in his child support payment by four months’ worth in the amount of \$500 or greater, there is an automatic process of referral to the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance (DTF). The DTF has many actions it may commence:

- A lien may be filed against any real or personal property.
- Seizure and sale of real and personal property – does John own his tractor-trailer?

The Child Support unit also receives a data match from financial institutions identifying accounts belonging to obligors who owe past due child support. Once a match is identified, a lien or levy can be issued on the accounts. The account will remain frozen until the obligations are satisfied. If John received payment from trucking companies as a sub-contractor and deposited his checks into a checking or savings account, the money would be frozen if he had fallen behind in his child support payments.

Mary asked for clarification regarding the department’s obtaining an order on behalf of her son Joe. She was unclear of what would happen if her temporary assistance case

closed. How would she get John to pay her, how would she keep track of how much money John owed, are there any other enforcement measures, and how could she provide medical coverage for Joe without John's help? The child support order would continue to be payable through the Child Support unit even if the temporary assistance case closed unless Mary requested that collection be taken out of the unit. Effective the date the temporary assistance case closed, Mary would be entitled to the child support to be payable to her through the Child Support unit. If John still owed money to the department for the time her son Joe was on assistance, the department would continue to attempt to collect that debt. Money coming into the department would be applied to Mary's private account first and any additional money would be applied to the department's arrears. When an income execution is sent to the employer, it asks for the child support obligation to be deducted from the payers check. The income execution may also ask for an additional amount, up to 65 percent, to be deducted from the paycheck if the payer is behind in his/her child support payments.

One of the services offered by the Child Support unit is the accounting of the child support and testimony in court as to how much is owed and the payment history of the obligor. If John fell behind in payments, the Child Support unit could file a violation petition against John. The petition would allege that John was behind in his court ordered child support payments and would request him to appear in court to testify on his behalf as to why he was not paying. If at the court appearance the Support Magistrate found that John had the income available to him and willfully chose not to pay his support obligation, John could be referred to appear in front of a Madison County Family Judge at a future court hearing. At that court hearing, the Judge would again listen to the testimony of both parties and then may impose a period of incarceration for John. Many times, the sentence would be purged upon

payment of a specified amount (usually the amount of the child support that the obligor has fallen behind).

At the Family Court hearing, along with a child support obligation, the Support Magistrate will also explore any prorated add-ons such as child care expenses, future reasonable health care expenses, and any fixed education costs. Due to federal legislation in recent years, medical insurance language must also be present in every child support order. If John is ordered to provide medical insurance, the Child Support unit will issue a medical support execution. This execution will instruct the employer to deduct an insurance premium from John's wages if it is available at a reasonable cost and immediately enroll Joe without the normal "window" opportunity waiting time. The employer would then send Mary any necessary insurance cards to utilize the coverage.

The Investigator concluded the interview by explaining to Mary that the mission of the Child Support program is to ensure that legally responsible persons, to the best of their ability, contribute toward the support of their children, thus improving the self-sufficiency of families through increased financial and medical support. The Investigator also told Mary a notice would be sent to the Temporary Assistance unit to lift her sanction at this time. This did not remove Mary's obligation to follow through with any future requests from the Child Support unit to participate in future proceedings.

Keeping in mind the above mentioned processes and functions the Child Support unit is responsible for, below are some statistics in reference to the Madison County Child Support unit year 2004:

- 847 – Referrals received by the unit on absent parents from households receiving temporary assistance, medical assistance and foster care.

- 150 – Number of individuals scheduled for genetic testing at Madison County Department of Social Services. Forty-five parties were scheduled through administrative orders and 105 through family court orders.
- 1,150 – Number of petitions filed by the Child Support unit – this number is a combination of paternity, support, and enforcement petitions.
- 19 – Number of outstanding warrants for failure to appear at scheduled hearings held in Madison Family Court on child support appearances.
- 600 – Number of orders received and processed or adjusted by the unit.
- 815 – Number of audits conducted on cases prior to court appearances.
- 3,379 – Number of child support cases at the end of December 2004
- \$5,811,031 – Amount of child support collected

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES
FISCAL

General Administration - 2004

Disbursements:

Personal Services	\$3,367,604
Equipment	\$43,952
Contractual	\$1,154,756
Employee Benefits	\$1,327,301
TOTAL	\$5,893,613

Credits:

Refunds	\$3,436
Refunds - Other Agencies	\$25,639
State Aid	\$954,931
State Aid - O&M & Int	\$63,462
State Aid - Prior Year	\$839,016
Federal Aid	\$3,152,588
Federal Aid - O&M & Int	\$196,877
Federal Aid - Prior Year	\$450,564
TOTAL	\$5,686,513

NET LOCAL COST **\$207,101**

	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>Increase/ (Decrease)</u>
Gross Cost	\$5,612,293	\$5,893,613	\$281,320
Net Local Cost	\$932,482	\$207,101	(\$725,381)

Note: 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 2004 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 5.76 percent in 2004.

Revenue in this category came in higher than estimated. Federal Aid for Prior Years was one of the key contributing factors. In 2004, Madison County received reimbursement in the amount of \$380,790 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 2004, this change in eligibility determination resulted in Madison County's receiving these additional funds.

(Please see reference guide on the last Administrative Services page for terminology and abbreviation explanation.)

Child Care Block Grant Expense - 2004
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Disbursements: \$962,813

Credits:

Refunds	\$724
State Aid	\$1,134,082
Total	\$1,134,806

NET LOCAL COST (\$171,993)

	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>Increase/ (Decrease)</u>
Gross Cost	\$974,881	\$962,813	(\$12,068)
Net Local Cost	\$16,692	(\$171,993)	(\$188,685)

Number of Children			
Month of Payment	2003	2004	Inc/(Dec)
Jan	265	305	40
Feb	316	373	57
Mar	305	334	29
Apr	359	364	5
May	349	363	14
Jun	317	394	77
Jul	293	361	68
Aug	331	315	(16)
Sep	290	301	11
Oct	333	298	(35)
Nov	356	308	(48)
Dec	248	266	18
Average/ Month	314	332	18

Notes: In 2004, there was a claiming mechanism change, which resulted in more revenue's being recognized as program-related reimbursement as compared to administration-related reimbursement. This change resulted in \$186,965's being claimed as program-related reimbursement that in previous years would have been claimed as administration reimbursement.

Breakdown by Provider Type		
TYPE OF PROVIDER	AVG # OF CHILD/MONTH	AVG COST/CHILD PER MONTH
Family DC FT	17	\$362
Family DC PT	11	\$158
DC Ctr FT	49	\$430
DC Ctr PT	54	\$231
Grp Fam DC FT	17	\$409
Grp Fam DC PT	13	\$195
Inf DC Rel FT	33	\$250
Inf DC Rel PT	46	\$138
Inf DC Non-Rel FT	41	\$223
Inf DC Non-Rel PT	37	\$127
Sch Age DC	6	\$125
Legally Operating Ctr - FT	6	\$250
Legally Operating Ctr - PT	3	\$102
AVERAGE/MONTH	332	\$246

Purchase of Service - 2004

Disbursements:

Purchase of Service	\$33,451
Nonresidential Victims of Domestic Violence	\$95,000
Public Purchase of Service – Mental Health	\$145,637
Family Unification Project	\$233,119
Total	\$507,207

Credits:

Refunds	\$0
State Aid	\$92,444
Federal Aid	\$215,146
Total	\$307,590

NET LOCAL COST	\$199,617
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	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>Increase / (Decrease)</u>
Gross Cost	\$583,237	\$507,207	(\$76,030)
Net Local Cost	\$198,111	\$199,617	\$1,506

Notes: The main reason for the decline in expenditures in this category was the result of less money being expended on Domestic Violence in 2004. Federal revenue in this category was down in 2004 because of the amount of money that was allowed to be transferred from TANF to Title XX was decreased from 10 percent to 4.25 percent.

Medical Assistance & MMIS (Local Share) - 2004

Disbursements:	<u>MA</u> \$266,751	<u>MMIS</u> \$12,035,224	<u>TOTAL</u> \$12,301,975
<u>Credits:</u>			
Refunds	\$1,082,149	\$0	\$1,082,149
State Aid	(\$137,790)	\$2,098,435	\$1,960,645
Federal Aid	(\$213,513)	\$0	(\$213,513)
Total	\$730,846	\$2,098,435	\$2,829,281
Net Local Cost	(\$464,096)	\$9,936,789	\$9,472,693
			Increase /
	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>(Decrease)</u>
MA/MMIS Net Local Cost	\$7,948,860	\$9,472,693	\$1,523,833

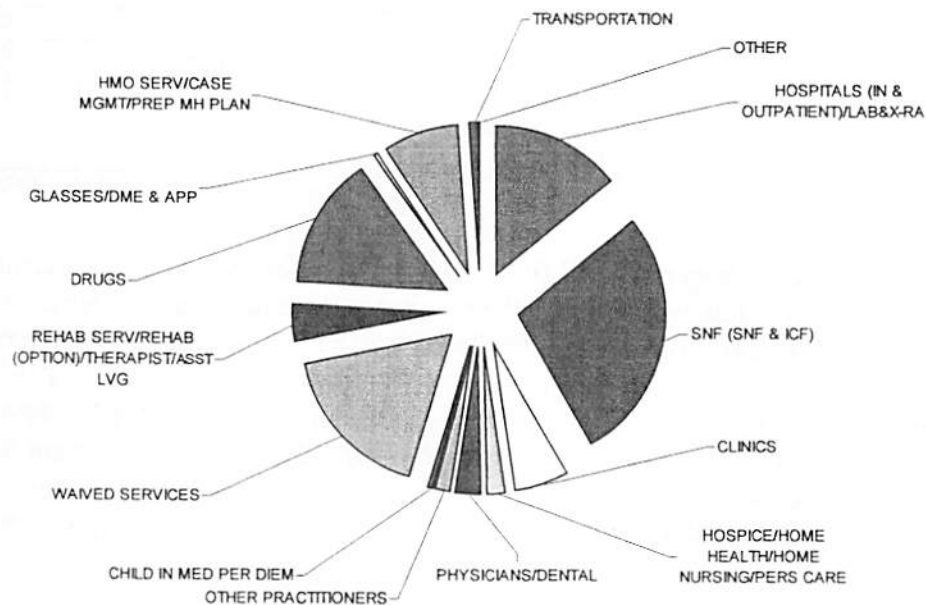
TYPE OF SERVICE	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>Increase/</u> <u>(Decrease)</u>
HOSPITALS (IN & OUTPATIENT)	\$ 8,800,212	\$ 9,489,598	\$ 689,386
SNF (SNF & ICF) NURSING HOMES	\$ 16,447,681	\$ 19,597,428	\$ 3,149,747
CLINICS	\$ 3,913,684	\$ 4,055,920	\$ 142,237
HOSPICE SERVICES	\$ 60,548	\$ 154,175	\$ 93,626
PHYSICIANS	\$ 1,521,566	\$ 1,414,280	\$ (107,286)
DENTAL	\$ 408,407	\$ 503,522	\$ 95,116
OTHER PRACTITIONERS	\$ 1,119,111	\$ 1,132,426	\$ 13,315
CHILD IN MED PER DIEM	\$ 295,957	\$ 419,884	\$ 123,927
PERSONAL CARE	\$ 394,912	\$ 510,361	\$ 115,449
HOME HEALTH AID	\$ 366,935	\$ 378,214	\$ 11,279
HOME NURSING	\$ 505,716	\$ 403,346	\$ (102,370)
ASSISTED LVG PROG	\$ 50,151	\$ 66,209	\$ 16,058
WAIVED SERVICES	\$ 10,884,675	\$ 12,271,693	\$ 1,387,017
REHAB SERVICES	\$ 23,902	\$ 13,272	\$ (10,630)
THERAPIST	\$ 7,800	\$ 4,595	\$ (3,206)
REHAB OPTIONAL SERVICES	\$ 2,595,883	\$ 2,812,315	\$ 216,433
DRUGS	\$ 8,358,803	\$ 10,064,159	\$ 1,705,356
SICK ROOM SUPPLIES	\$ 357,274	\$ 346,687	\$ 10,587
EYEGLASSES	\$ 24,836	\$ 25,416	\$ 580
DME AND APPLIANCES	\$ 341,220	\$ 250,289	\$ (90,931)
HMO SERVICES	\$ 3,202,499	\$ 4,110,598	\$ 908,100
CASE MANAGEMENT	\$ 1,660,786	\$ 1,597,835	\$ (62,951)
PREPAID MH PLAN	\$ 94,541	\$ 75,766	\$ (18,775)
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 686,979	\$ 729,675	\$ 42,696
LAB & X-RAY	\$ 493,609	\$ 566,163	\$ 72,554
OTHER	\$ 49,362	\$ 53,501	\$ 4,139
TOTAL	\$ 62,667,049	\$ 71,047,328	\$ 8,380,279

Notes: In 2004, Madison County began paying Medicare Part A buy-in premiums. As a result of this new cost, a slight increase was noticed in the Medical Assistance category. Revenues in the Medical Assistance category were up \$211,780. The main reason for this increase was the amount of monies the county received as a result of pharmaceutical rebates.

In 2004, Gross Local Share of Medicaid increased dramatically. The total local cost of the program was up \$1,893,529 over 2003. While the gross cost of this program was up 13 percent over the previous year, the actual local share went up more than 20 percent. The loss of FMAP funding during the year contributed to this local share increase. Revenue in the A3602 was higher than in 2003 primarily because for the first time Madison County received COPS monies to help offset increases being billed for mental health services. In 2004, Madison County received \$177,291 related to this program.

TYPE OF SERVICE	2004
HOSPITALS (IN & OUTPATIENT)/LAB&X-RAY	\$ 10,055,761
SNF (SNF & ICF)	\$ 19,597,428
CLINICS	\$ 4,055,920
HOSPICE/HOME HEALTH/HOME NURSING/PERSONAL CARE	\$ 1,446,096
PHYSICIANS/DENTAL	\$ 1,917,803
OTHER PRACTITIONERS	\$ 1,132,426
CHILD IN MED PER DIEM	\$ 419,884
WAIVED SERVICES	\$ 12,271,693
REHAB SERV/REHAB (OPTION)/THERAPIST/ASSIST ED LIVING	\$ 2,896,391
DRUGS	\$ 10,410,846
EYEGASSES/DME & APPL	\$ 275,705
HMO SERVICES/CASE MGMT/PREPAID MH PLAN	\$ 5,784,199
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 729,675
OTHER	\$ 53,501
TOTAL	\$ 71,047,328

2004 GROSS COST ANALYSIS



TANF - 2004

Disbursements:

FA/EAF	\$685,027
EAF-Foster Care	\$368,909
EAF JD/PINS	\$1,875,361
EAF-Services	\$129,750
TANF-Prev Services	\$26,930
Total	\$3,085,976

Credits:

Refunds	\$191,108
State Aid	\$222,789
Federal Aid	\$567,481
Total	\$981,378

Net Local Cost **\$2,104,598**

	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>(Decrease)</u>
Gross Cost	\$2,003,988	\$3,085,976	\$1,081,988
Net Local Cost	\$1,279,698	\$2,104,598	\$824,900

	FAMILY ASSISTANCE		EAF-FC		EAF JD/PINS		EAF	
	CASELOAD		CARE DAYS		CARE DAYS		CASE COUNT	
	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004
Jan	102	98	527	514	0	761	6	6
Feb	101	102	562	558	0	819	3	3
Mar	102	103	562	647	0	803	6	6
Apr	97	89	682	512	157	845	4	4
May	102	93	656	614	274	885	7	7
Jun	101	97	699	551	351	835	10	10
Jul	90	106	719	486	432	891	10	10
Aug	94	112	592	594	529	895	23	12
Sep	93	115	517	695	514	696	20	10
Oct	98	113	499	526	429	606	9	9
Nov	92	116	536	496	673	650	5	5
Dec	104	115	536	480	716	648	6	6
Average	98	105	591	556	453	778	9	7

Gross Cost/Case	\$482	\$484					\$572	\$513
Gross Cost/Day			\$57	\$54	\$173	\$199		

Notes: This category saw a \$1,081,988 increase over the same time period in 2003. The main reason for this increase was the number of care days paid under the EAF JD/PINS program, which was responsible for 94 percent of this increase. The department also picked up a liability of \$23,025 in Child Support Unreimbursed Assistance. This topic was a focal point at the state level in 2004. Originally, this amount had exceeded 42.4 million. Revenue in this category was up as the result of the availability of reimbursement under the EAF JD/PINS Program. As in the past few years, EAF Foster Care expenditures were not reimbursed, but used to meet the TANF Maintenance of Effort requirement.

Child Welfare - 2004

Disbursements: \$2,050,892

Credits:

Refunds	\$59,870
State Aid	\$639,009
Federal Aid	\$497,769
Total	\$1,196,648

Net Local Cost \$854,244

	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>Increase/ (Decrease)</u>
Gross Cost	\$1,684,287	\$2,050,892	\$366,605
Net Local Cost	\$670,227	\$854,244	\$184,017

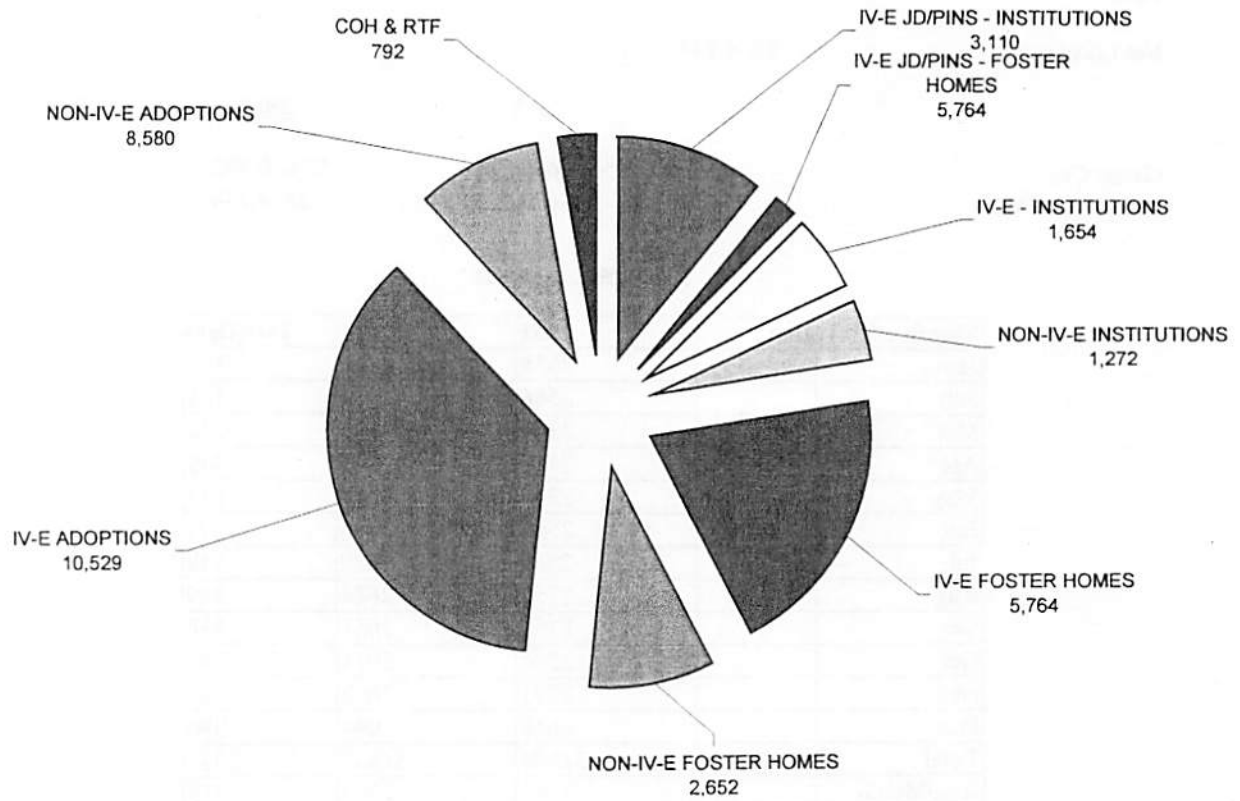
Care Days Analysis

Month of Payment	2003	2004	Inc/(Dec)
Jan	2638	2758	120
Feb	2586	2727	141
Mar	2347	2579	232
Apr*	2509	2898	389
May	2360	3017	657
Jun	2552	3125	573
Jul	2521	2889	368
Aug	2755	2884	129
Sep	2753	2951	198
Oct	2544	2911	367
Nov	2791	3052	261
Dec	2648	3044	396
Total	31004	34835	3831
Avg/Month	2584	2903	319

*2003 care days do not include COH and RTF care days. In 2004, RTF and COH care days total 792.

Notes: Expenditures in this category were up \$366,605. Title IV-E funding relating to these costs was 18 percent of the total. A funding mechanism change resulted in monies' being moved out of the program arena (A4770) and into the federal administration arena (A4610.1010). The additional state aid was the result of the pro-ration of the Foster Care Block Grant over the eligible Foster Care Administrative, Child Welfare, and JD/PINS costs.

2004 FOSTER CARE CARE DAY ANALYSIS



Juvenile Delinquents - 2004

Disbursements:

JD/PINS	\$1,182,738
TOTAL	\$1,182,738

Credits:

Refunds	\$25,691
State Aid	\$473,577
Total	\$499,268

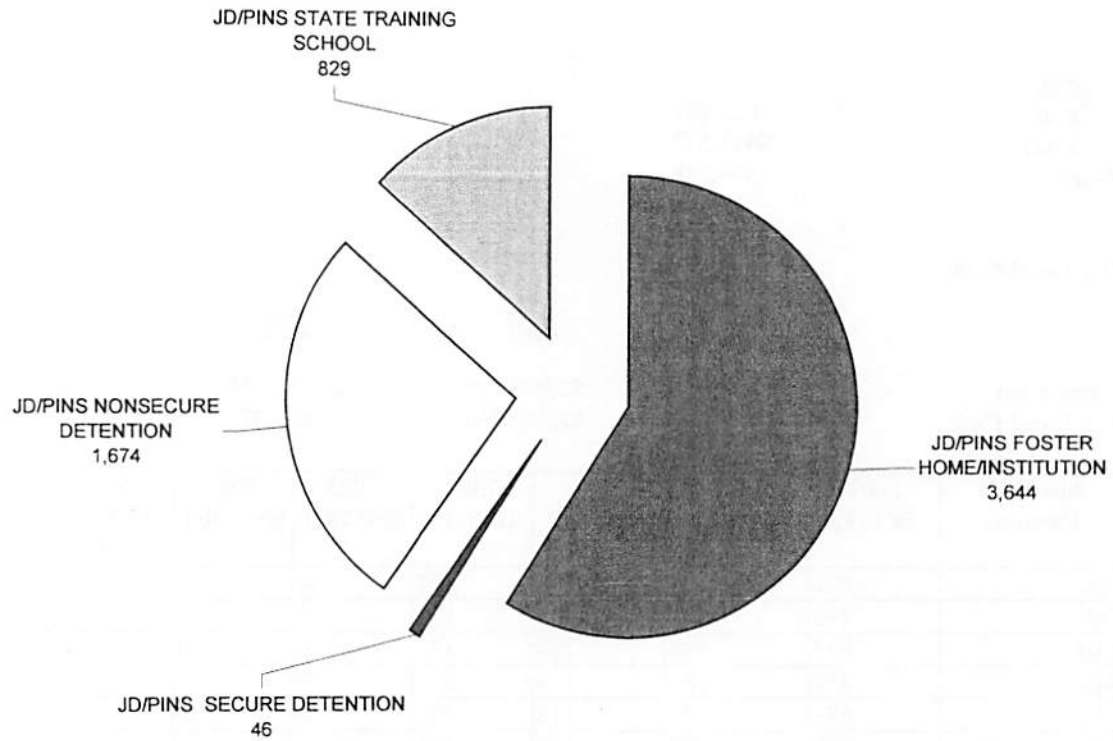
Net Local Cost	\$683,471
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	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>Increase/ (Decrease)</u>
Gross Cost	\$2,076,735	\$1,182,738	(\$893,997)
Net Local Cost	\$1,392,776	\$683,471	(\$709,305)

Month of Payment	2003 SCH K	2004 SCH K	2003 DFY-14	2004 DFY-14	2003 SEC DET	2004 SEC DET	2003 TRAIN SCH	2004 TRAIN SCH
Jan	871	429	173	138	34	45	0	236
Feb	896	401	165	136	0	1	0	0
Mar	845	348	108	131	0	0	214	0
Apr	857	289	154	207	0	0	0	184
May	674	377	113	191	0	0	0	0
Jun	768	372	148	208	0	0	0	0
Jul	674	267	122	87	0	0	257	182
Aug	652	341	149	129	0	0	0	0
Sep	460	291	229	123	0	0	0	0
Oct	441	223	218	91	0	0	350	116
Nov	485	156	200	94	0	0	0	0
Dec	420	150	141	139	0	0	0	111
Total	8043	3644	1920	1674	34	46	821	829
Avg/Month	522	238	160	140	3	4	68	69

Notes: The average number of care days in the Foster Care/Institutional category decreased almost 4,400 days in 2004. These days were basically moved over to EAF JD/PINS as a result of the eligibility determination process.

2004 JD/PINS CARE DAY ANALYSIS



Safety Net - 2004

Disbursements: \$301,046

Credits:

Refunds	\$108,768
State Aid	\$90,543
Federal Aid	\$15,363
Total	\$214,674

NET LOCAL COST \$86,372

	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>Increase/ (Decrease)</u>
Gross Cost	\$292,437	\$301,046	\$8,609
Net Local Cost	\$147,737	\$86,372	(\$61,365)

CASELOAD AVERAGE/AVERAGE GROSS COST PER CASE

	2003	2003	2004	2004
Month	CASELOAD	COST/CASE	CASELOAD	COST/CASE
Jan	60	368	47	545
Feb	59	384	53	469
Mar	51	468	49	537
Apr	54	377	47	515
May	54	490	53	708
Jun	56	393	50	324
Jul	55	517	53	477
Aug	53	420	52	512
Sep	51	627	54	520
Oct	46	468	54	432
Nov	48	516	52	399
Dec	52	485	53	342
Average	53	459	51	482

Notes: The expenditures in this category remained relatively the same as 2003. The main difference in this category was the amount of refunds received. In 2004, \$39,862 more was received as refunds as compared to the same time period in 2003.

HEAP - 2004

Disbursements: \$1,513,232

Credits:

Refunds \$25,289

Federal Aid \$1,486,278

Total \$1,511,567

Net Local Cost \$1,666

	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>Increase/ (Decrease)</u>
Gross Cost	\$1,544,808	\$1,513,232	(\$31,576)
Net Local Cost	\$2,211	\$1,666	(\$545)

Emergency Aid to Adults - 2004

Disbursements: \$9,572

Credits:

Refunds \$84

State Aid \$4,818

Total \$4,902

NET LOCAL COST \$4,670

	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>Increase/ (Decrease)</u>
Gross Cost	\$8,221	\$9,572	\$1,351
Net Local Cost	\$3,899	\$4,670	\$771

Burials - 2004

Disbursements: \$84,496

Credits:

Refunds \$2,728

State Aid \$24,961

Total \$27,689

NET LOCAL COST \$56,807

	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>Increase/ (Decrease)</u>
Gross Cost	\$52,552	\$84,496	\$31,944
Net Local Cost	\$51,836	\$56,807	\$4,971

Burials Paid By Month		
	2003	2004
Jan	1	3
Feb	1	3
Mar	6	6
Apr	4	5
May	0	6
Jun	6	3
Jul	0	2
Aug	0	1
Sep	3	6
Oct	3	2
Nov	0	2
Dec	4	4
Total	28	43
Net Cost/Burial	\$1,713	\$1,895

Title IV-D Program - 2004

Disbursements: \$0

Credits:

Incentives \$40,441

NET LOCAL COST (\$40,441)

	<u>2003</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>Increase/ (Decrease)</u>
Net Local Cost	(\$46,810)	(\$40,441)	\$6,369

FISCAL SUMMARY - 2004

	<u>Expenditures</u>	<u>Credits</u>
General Administration	\$5,893,613	\$5,686,513
Child Care Block Grant	\$962,813	\$1,134,806
Title XX	\$507,207	\$307,590
Medical Assistance	\$266,751	\$730,846
MMIS	\$12,035,224	\$2,098,435
TANF/Family Assistance	\$3,085,976	\$981,378
Child Welfare	\$2,050,892	\$1,196,648
Juvenile Delinquent	\$1,182,738	\$499,268
Safety Net	\$301,046	\$214,674
HEAP	\$1,513,232	\$1,511,567
EAA	\$9,572	\$4,902
Burials	\$84,496	\$27,689
Title IV-D	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$40,440.66</u>
Total	\$27,893,561	\$14,434,755
NET LOCAL COST		\$13,458,806

	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>Increase/ (Decrease)</u>
Gross Cost	\$25,223,005	\$27,893,561	\$2,670,556
Net Local Cost	\$12,545,166	\$13,458,806	\$913,640

Modified Budgeted Amount vs Actual Adjusted Gross Amount - 2004

	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Surplus/ (Deficit)</u>
General Administration	\$6,211,523	\$5,893,613	\$317,910
Day Care	\$962,817	\$962,813	\$4
Title XX	\$654,097	\$507,207	\$146,890
Medical Assistance	\$266,750	\$266,751	(\$1)
MMIS	\$12,035,223	\$12,035,224	(\$1)
Family Assistance	\$3,422,386	\$3,085,976	\$336,410
Child Welfare	\$2,055,505	\$2,050,892	\$4,613
Juvenile Delinquent	\$1,404,229	\$1,182,738	\$221,491
Safety Net	\$355,000	\$301,046	\$53,954
HEAP	\$1,513,235	\$1,513,232	\$3
EAA	\$10,000	\$9,572	\$428
Burials	\$84,500	\$84,496	\$4
Title IV-D	<u>(\$41,499)</u>	<u>(\$40,441)</u>	<u>(\$1,058)</u>
Total	\$28,933,766	\$27,853,120	\$1,080,646

*Burials paid out of Department A6140.

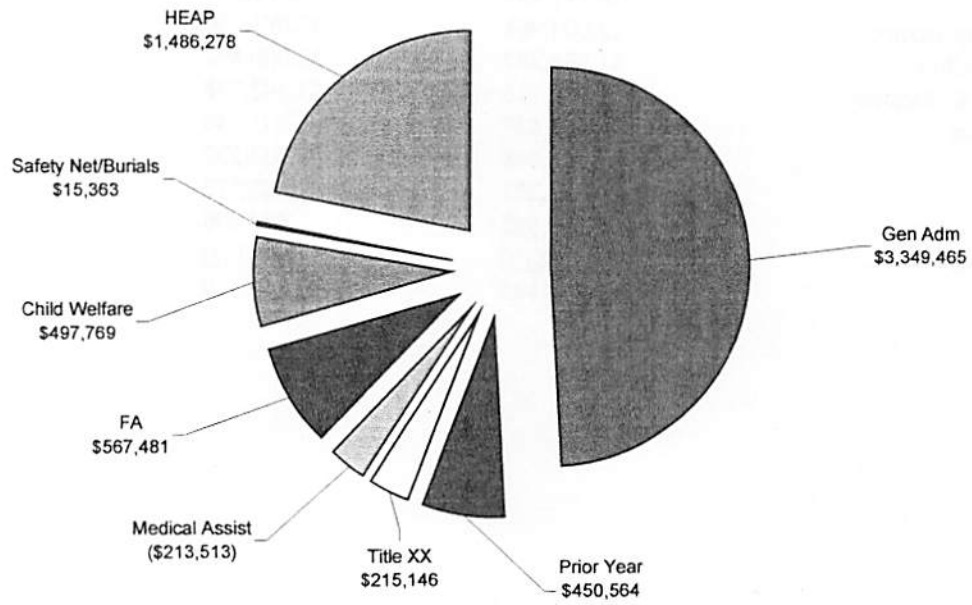
Net Local Cost - 2004

	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Surplus/ (Deficit)</u>
General Administration	\$1,356,170	\$207,101	\$1,149,069
Child Care Block Grant	\$12,147	(\$171,993)	\$184,140
Title XX	\$77,630	\$199,617	(\$121,987)
Medical Assist	(\$465,100)	(\$464,096)	(\$1,005)
MMIS	\$9,936,788	\$9,936,789	(\$1)
TANF/Family Assistance	\$2,459,653	\$2,104,598	\$355,055
Child Welfare	\$923,885	\$854,244	\$69,641
Juvenile Delinquent	\$702,164	\$683,471	\$18,693
Safety Net	\$122,250	\$86,372	\$35,878
HEAP	\$0	\$1,666	(\$1,666)
EAA	\$5,000	\$4,670	\$330
Burials	\$82,500	\$56,807	\$25,693
Title IV-D	<u>(\$41,499)</u>	<u>(\$40,441)</u>	<u>(\$1,058)</u>
Total	\$15,171,588	\$13,458,806	\$1,712,782

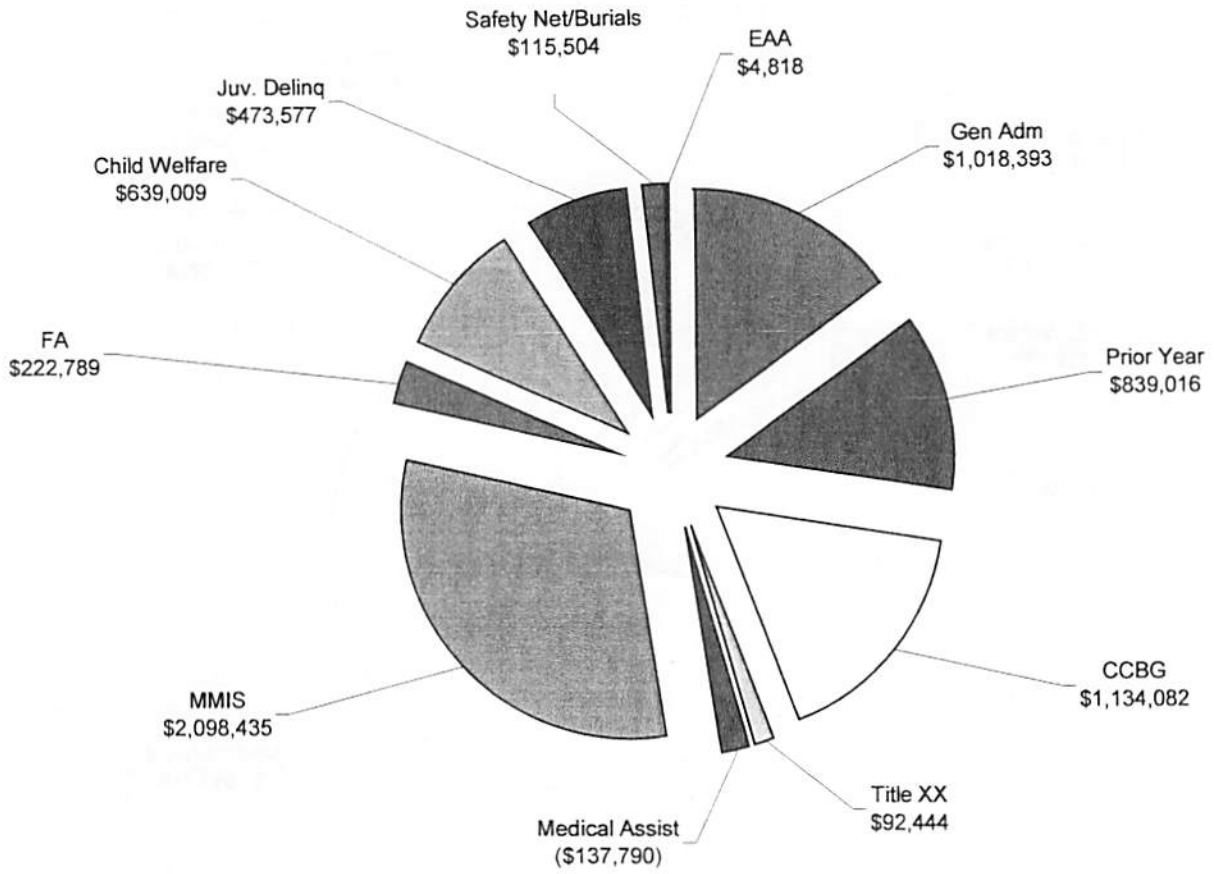
Adjusted Gross Cost 2003 vs Adjusted Gross Cost 2004
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	<u>Actual - 2003</u>	<u>Actual - 2004</u>	<u>Difference</u>
General Administration	\$5,612,293	\$5,893,613	\$281,320
Day Care	\$974,881	\$962,813	(\$12,068)
Title XX	\$583,237	\$507,207	(\$76,030)
Medical Assistance	\$247,871	\$266,751	\$18,880
MMIS	\$10,141,695	\$12,035,224	\$1,893,529
Family Assistance	\$2,003,988	\$3,085,976	\$1,081,988
Child Welfare	\$1,684,287	\$2,050,892	\$366,605
Juvenile Delinquent	\$2,076,735	\$1,182,738	(\$893,997)
Safety Net	\$292,437	\$301,046	\$8,609
HEAP	\$1,544,808	\$1,513,232	(\$31,576)
EAA	\$8,221	\$9,572	\$1,351
Burials	\$52,552	\$84,496	\$31,944
Title IV-D	<u>(\$46,810)</u>	<u>(\$40,441)</u>	\$6,369
Total	\$25,176,195	\$27,853,120	\$2,676,925

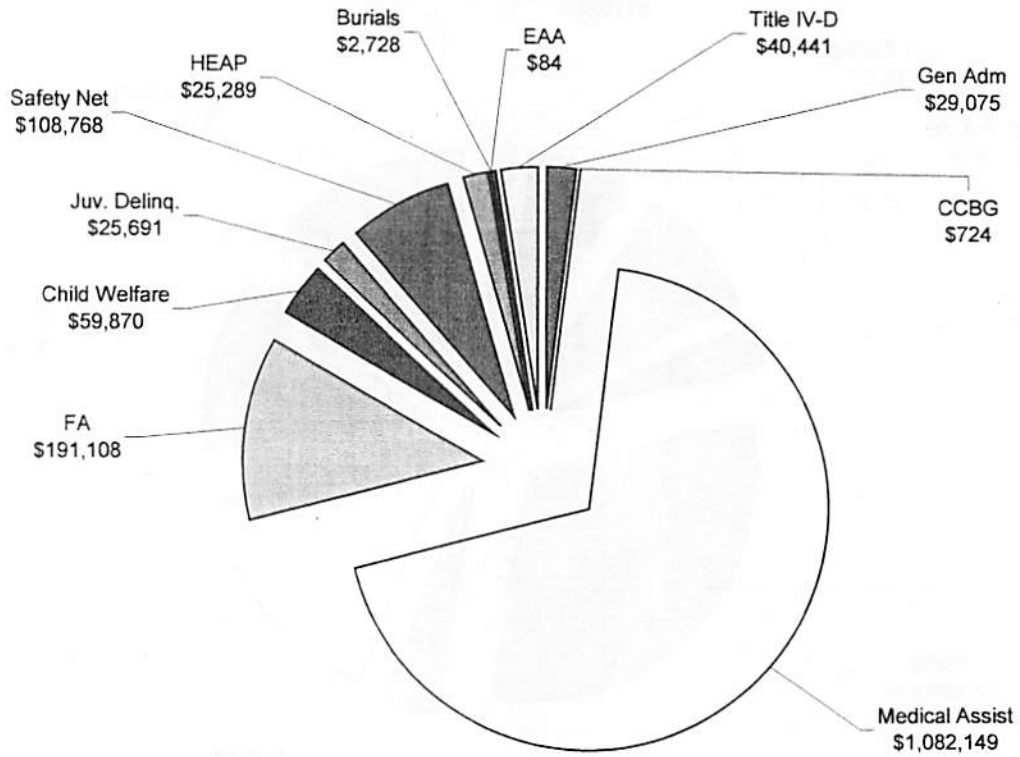
2004 FEDERAL SHARE ANALYSIS



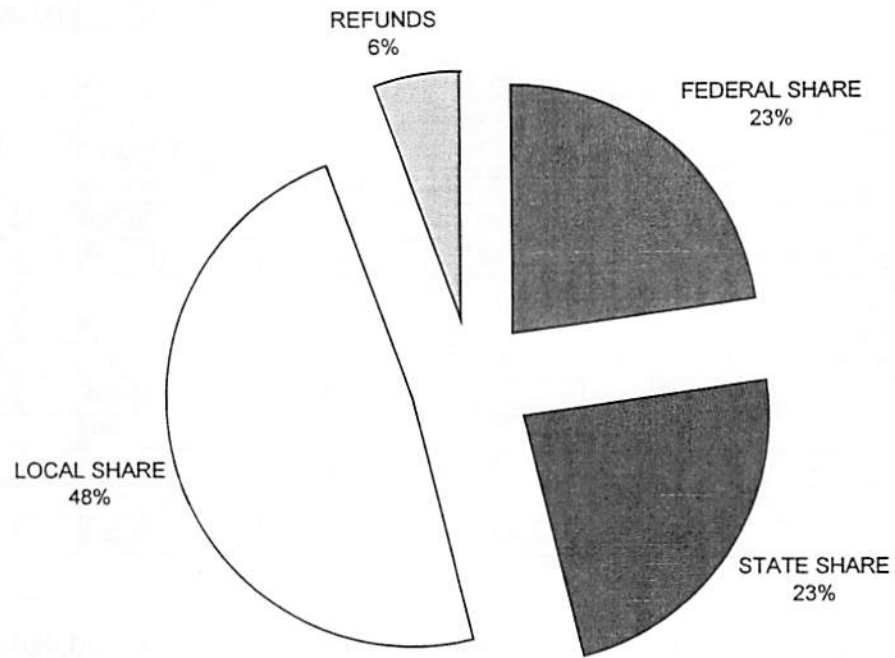
2004 STATE SHARE ANALYSIS



2004 REFUND ANALYSIS



2004 REIMBURSEMENT ANALYSIS



2004 REIMBURSEMENT BREAKDOWN

	FEDERAL SHARE	STATE SHARE	REFUNDS	LOCAL SHARE	TOTAL COST
General Administration	\$3,800,029	\$1,857,409	\$29,075	\$207,101	\$5,893,614
Child Care Block Grant	\$0	\$1,134,082	\$724	(\$171,993)	\$962,813
Title XX	\$215,146	\$92,444	\$0	\$199,617	\$507,207
Medical Assistance	(\$213,513)	(\$137,790)	\$1,082,149	(\$464,096)	\$266,750
MMIS	\$0	\$2,098,435	\$0	\$9,936,789	\$12,035,224
TANF/Family Assistance	\$567,481	\$222,789	\$191,108	\$2,104,598	\$3,085,976
Child Welfare	\$497,769	\$639,009	\$59,870	\$854,244	\$2,050,892
Juvenile Delinquent	\$0	\$473,577	\$25,691	\$683,470	\$1,182,738
Safety Net/Burials	\$15,363	\$90,543	\$108,768	\$86,372	\$301,046
HEAP	\$1,486,278	\$0	\$25,289	\$1,665	\$1,513,232
EAA	\$0	\$4,818	\$84	\$4,670	\$9,572
Burials	\$0	\$24,961	\$2,728	\$56,807	\$84,496
Title IV-D	\$0	\$0	\$40,441	(\$40,441)	\$0
Total	\$6,368,553	\$6,500,277	\$1,565,926	\$13,458,803	\$27,893,559

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

Submitted by Steven Chaires, Deputy Commissioner for Administrative Services

Fiscal Reference Guide

Terminology	Meaning
A3602	State Aid Revenue Account for Mentally Disabled – Long-Term Care Payments
Assisted Lvg Prog	Assisted Living Program
Avg	Average
Child in Med Per Diem	Medicaid Cost for Foster Care Child in Higher Level Placement
COH	Committee on Handicapped
COPS	Community Optional Preventive Services
DC Ctr FT	Day Care Center Fulltime
DC Ctr PT	Day Care Center Part Time
DFY-14	Non-Secure Detention Claim for Children in Foster Care
DME	Durable Medical Equipment
EAA	Emergency Aid to Adults
EAF	Emergency Aid to Families
EAF	Emergency Assistance for Families
FA	Family Assistance
Family DC FT	Family Day Care Fulltime
Family DC PT	Family Day Care Part Time
FC	Foster Care
FMAP	Federal Medical Assistance Percentage
Gen Adm	General Administration
Grp Fam DC FT	Group Family Day Care Fulltime
Grp Fam DC PT	Group Family Day Care Part Time
HEAP	Home Energy Assistance Program
HMO	Health Maintenance Organization
ICF	Intermediate Care Facility
Inf DC Non-Rel FT	Informal Day Care Non-Relative Fulltime
Inf DC Non-Rel PT	Informal Day Care Non-Relative Part Time
Inf DC Rel FT	Informal Day Care Relative Fulltime
Inf DC Rel PT	Informal Day Care Relative Part Time
JD/PINS	Juvenile Delinquents/Persons in Need of Supervision
Lab	Laboratory
Legally Operating Ctr – FT	Legally Operating Center – Fulltime
Legally Operating Ctr – PT	Legally Operating Center – Part Time
Maintenance of Effort	Amount of Local Cost that Must be Spent to be eligible for Federal State Aid
MH	Mental Health

MMIS	Medicaid Management Information System
O & M & I	Operations and Maintenance and Interest
Pers Care	Personal Care
Prev	Preventive
Rehab	Rehabilitation
RTF	Residential Treatment Facility
Sch Age DC	School-Age Day Care
SCH K	Claiming Schedule for Children in Foster Care
SEC DET	Children Placed in Secure Detention Facilities
SNF	Skilled Nursing Facility
TANF	Temporary Assistance to Needy Families
Title IV-E	Federal Revenue Category for Foster Care Related Expenditures
Title XX	Federal Legislation That Provides Monies to Low-Income Individuals – Part of the Social Security Act
TRAIN SCH	State Training School

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 3,929 hours of locally arranged and state-provided training in the year 2004. This represents almost a 100 percent increase over the previous year and includes a total of 274 different training sessions that the staff participated in. The agency spent a total of \$5,785 on training expenses for the year. This is money paid out for meals, travel, lodging, and registration fees for out-of-county training.

New worker training was provided in-house to 24 employees. This included both new hires and promoted employees. In-house training is provided as a joint effort between the Director of Staff Development (SDC), the director of the program area, and the individual's supervisor. Some staff have their training enhanced through state institutions offered under contract with one of several colleges including Brookdale Center on Aging, 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 a full year to be fully trained to perform his/her job duties independently. For example, let us take a look at the training a new Social Welfare Examiner Trainee assigned to the Temporary Assistance unit receives.

On day one, the trainee meets with the Director of Staff Development/IT 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 rest of the first day is spent on getting a feel for what it is like to be

a customer of our services. The trainee is required to spend time observing in our waiting room and completing an application as if he/she were applying. The focus of his/her second day is learning how to perform inquiries on our various computer systems. The rest of that week is spent with the supervisor or observing interviews with another experienced Examiner.

Ideally this new worker's training begins with the eligibility requirements for the Food Stamp Program. Besides observing interviews, the worker spends time in one-on-one classroom training learning such concepts as household composition, budget calculations, and how to authorize food stamp benefits. Some topics are supplemented with computer-based training modules prepared by New York State. Madison County chooses to conduct all food stamp training in-house even though the state offers a four-day New Food Stamp Worker Training Institute.

It is hoped that the new Examiner will have a month of on-the-job training before he/she must attend the Income Maintenance Training Institute in Albany, which is offered on a quarterly basis. This is a two-week course offered over a three-week period that covers most of the eligibility requirements for public assistance applicants. The week in between the two sessions is spent on homework assignments and observing more interviews. Once the Examiner has completed the two-week training, he/she gets a small caseload and conducts his/her own interviews. The Examiner is under the close guidance of his/her supervisor who will reinforce the concepts learned in training and watches for problem areas.

Additional onsite training is available from the state on such topics as Categorical Determination, Specialized Budgeting for Public Assistance, and Acceptable Professional Standards. These are requested on an "as needed" basis.

The trainee will also need to learn the eligibility requirements for the HEAP program during his/her first year of employment. From November to March, the Temporary Assistance worker is responsible for authorizing HEAP payments to all eligible temporary assistance and food stamp recipients.

Once the Welfare Examiner has one year's experience in the job, he/she will be given training on direct data entry. This allows the worker to input some of his/her own changes onto the Welfare Management System (WMS) system without first having the case reviewed by the supervisor. At this time, payment line changes are not an allowable direct data entry function. It is also at the one-year mark that the worker's title is changed from Social Welfare Examiner Trainee to Social Welfare Examiner.

Depending on the worker's interest, he/she may be asked to participate in additional "Welfare-to-Work" or "Domestic Violence Liaison" training. These are specialized trainings offered regionally by the state.

During the year, we were successful in bringing two state training sessions onsite. Seven members of the management staff attended a daylong program on "Process Reviews" offered by Cornell University. Forty staff members participated in a one-day course titled "Productive Confrontation" offered through Brookdale Center on Aging. Thanks to the dynamic trainer, this session proved to be both educational and motivational for our staff.

We also took advantage of 36 LearnLinc courses. These 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 offsite classroom training.

Employees also took part in training offered locally. These included defensive driving, child car seat safety training, and various conferences, among others. One of our Attorneys and the Deputy Commissioner for Family Services had to participate in three weeklong mandated Drug Court Training. Two were held in Florida and one in Kansas City, Missouri. Two of our Child Protective Caseworkers attended a Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect held in Ocean City, Maryland, that was paid for out of the county's Sexual Abuse Task Force grant.

Another of our local initiatives included the presentation of "Who Moved My Cheese," which helped staff look at the way they view change in their lives and what can help them better manage changes at work.

The year ahead sees the need to offer quality-training programs while reducing the cost to the local district. One way this may be accomplished is by participating in more of the state's LearnLinc courses.

Example of the time involved in hiring and training a new Social Welfare Examiner Trainee assigned to the Temporary Assistance Unit—from the time a vacancy occurs until the trainee is fully prepared to independently perform the functions of the position.

Jan. 1, 2004	Vacancy occurs
Jan. 21	Social and Mental Health Services Committee approves filling the vacancy
Jan. 29	Government Operations Committee approves filling the vacancy
Jan. 30-Feb. 9	Personnel Office canvases candidates
Feb. 10	DSS receives candidate list
Feb. 11-17	Interviews are conducted
Feb. 19	Candidate is chosen
March 8	New employee starts at DSS
March 8-April 9	In-house training on Food Stamp eligibility determinations
April 12-April 29	Trainee attends two-week Temporary Assistance Training Institute
May 3	Trainee gets a small caseload and works closely with supervisor
July	Trainee participates in onsite specialized topic training
October	Trainee participates in HEAP eligibility training.
March 8, 2005	Direct Data Entry Training; Worker's title is changed from Social Welfare Examiner Trainee to Social Welfare Examiner.

Example of time involved in hiring a new Social Welfare Examiner – from time of vacancy until worker is fully prepared to perform functions of position.

S&MHS Committee meets/approves to refill vacancy

Personnel office canvases candidates

Interviews are conducted

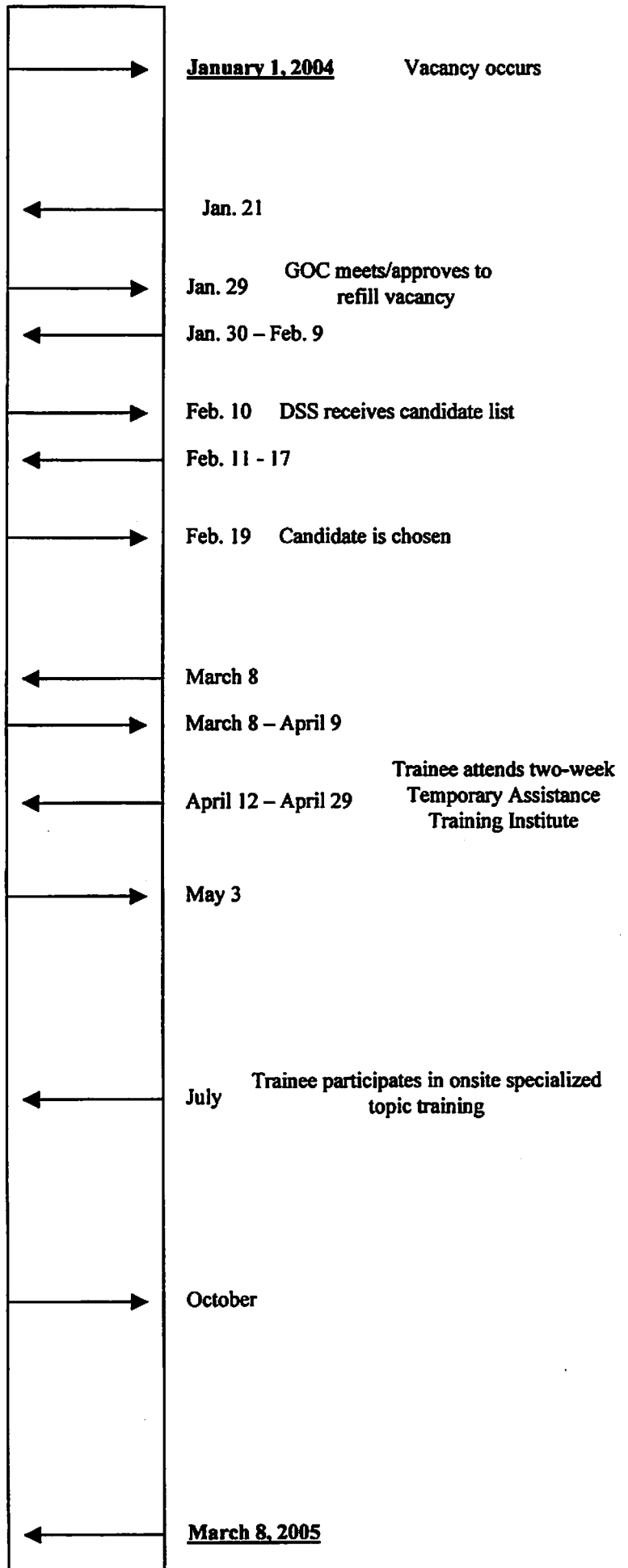
New employee starts at DSS

In-house training on food stamp eligibility

Trainee gets a small caseload and works closely with supervisor

Trainee participates in HEAP eligibility

Direct Data Entry Training: Worker's title is changed from Social Welfare Examiner Trainee to Social Welfare Examiner



RESOURCES

Our Resource Assistant is responsible for maximizing the return of revenues to this agency. This includes insuring the collection of money from mortgages, estates, assignment of proceeds, and accident liens. This position is also responsible for checking area banks for undisclosed assets, determining the availability of third party health insurance, and collecting medical information for disability determinations.

One of the most successful ways of securing money for the agency is through the disability process. This involves identifying 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 determination of disability. If the client is determined disabled, then we are able to claim federal reimbursement for a portion of the monies paid out for this individual. In 2004, out of 60 disability packets submitted, we were successful in getting a determination of disability on 53 or 88 percent of them.

Recoveries for 2004

Estates	\$ 64,403
Assignment of Proceeds	32,162
Accident Liens	126,257
Excess Resources	18,207
Mortgages	9,392
Burial Reimbursement	<u>6,287</u>
Total	\$256,708

Forty-four burial applications were approved in 2004. The total cost paid out for these was \$80,496. Below is the amount paid to local funeral homes:

Funeral Home Payments

Burgess and Tedesco, Hamilton	\$ 7,545
Richard F. Ayer, Cazenovia	1,920
J. Homer Ball, Canastota	18,244
G. F. Zimmer, Chittenango	6,925
Ironside, Oneida	4,300
Campbell Dean, Oneida	16,181
Paul, Madison	8,411
Smith Funeral Home, Cazenovia/DeRuyter	1,265
Koster-Northrop & Bentz, Waterville	3,411
Other	<u>2,294</u>
Total	\$80,496

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). Currently, Madison Transit, a division of Madison-Cortland ARC, is responsible for the scheduling of all medical transports.

Some of the factors that are considered at the time of the client's request for medical transportation are illustrated in the scenario below:

John Doe from Oneida has an appointment to see a specialist in Syracuse. He calls Madison Transit to arrange a ride. When the call is received, Madison Transit personnel explore the following questions with him:

- 1. Is the request within five working days of the appointment?*
- 2. How does Mr. Doe get to his other appointments and social activities?*
If he has a means of transportation for other activities, he is expected to use the same means for his medical appointments.
- 3. Is there a useable vehicle in the household?*
If there is, John will be instructed to use his vehicle and to call Social Services to arrange for reimbursement at the rate of \$.13/mile.
- 4. Does he have any special limitations, such as being wheelchair bound?*
If he does, the appropriate type of transporter will be called.
- 5. Does John live on a bus route?*
If he does, this would be the transporter of choice and the appropriate pickup would be arranged.
- 6. If all of the above options have not panned out, then a private vendor such as Oneida Taxi will be scheduled to do the transport.*

Once this transport has taken place, the transport company notifies our Office Assistant II of the charge for that trip. Taxi companies are paid \$10 for each person they pick up and then \$1.75/laden mile. Wheelchairs and stretcher transports are paid at a higher rate. Once the correct charge is determined, information about the transport must be entered on the MMIS prior approval system. This allows the transporter to bill and receive payment for the trip.

One of the challenges faced in transportation in 2004 was the lack of stretcher transporters. No company in Madison County provides this type of service. This means that we must call in an outside company to do our stretcher transports or pay for ambulance service. Outside companies are not always willing to do our transports if it is for a short distance.

Another challenge is encountered in convincing the client that he/she needs to drive his/her own vehicle or find a friend to take him/her. Oftentimes, clients are reluctant to drive because of the weather or the condition of their vehicle.

There is a major change coming up in the year ahead. New York State is changing its transportation prior approval system to a Web-based program. We are hoping this change will eliminate some of the excessive paperwork connected with the current system.

We will also be exploring the possibility of Madison Transit's taking over the cost of all non-emergency medical transportation. This would be done through a contract that would pay them a set amount over the year to cover our recipients' medical transportation costs. It is hoped this change will help to contain our transportation expenditures.

**2004 Medical Transportation Expenses Paid to our
Most Frequently Used Vendors**

<u>Ambulance</u>	<u># of Trips</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u>
Vineall Ambulance, Inc.	884	\$ 88,035
Greater Lenox Ambulance Service	465	36,931
Eastern Paramedics (Rural Metro)	443	31,859
Southern Madison Co. (SOMAC)	93	3,887
Superior Ambulance	84	5,841
Edwards Ambulance Service	72	3,378
Kunkel Ambulance Service	67	5,117
Cazenovia Area (CAVAC)	60	7,657

Invalid Coach (Wheelchair Van, etc.)

Suburban	1,552	\$ 69,341
Able Medical Transport	477	25,585
Superior Ambulance	210	28,253
Affordable Wheelchair Transport	131	16,235
Kunkel Limousine Service	77	4,044
Speedy Medical Transport	69	6,138
Birnie Bus Service	46	2,454

Taxi

Suburban	1,157	\$123,847
Madison-Cortland ARC	3,541	92,189
Oneida Taxi	655	52,756
Jack's Taxi (Canastota)	287	34,311
Speedy Medical Transport	143	11,406
Fiore Funeral Home	131	4,318

Day Treatment Transportation

Gregory P. Collis	1,252	\$ 38,379
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<u>Office for the Aging:</u>	235	\$ 5,312
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Reimbursed at \$5/trip + .75/mile + tolls & parking

<u>Paid by voucher:</u>		\$ 10,329
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Reimbursed at \$.13/mile + tolls + parking

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 the planning and coordinating for the installation of new systems, upgrading and maintaining existing systems, performing daily computer operations, 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.

The year 2004 brought a little glimmer of hope for personal computer (PC) users at this department. Locally, we were able to purchase three personal computers that replaced some of our oldest PCs. The state came through with an upgrade of all existing Child Support computers and supplemented our allocation so that all Child Support workers would have a state PC on their desks. This freed up a couple of older PCs that were deployed to the Temporary Assistance (TA) staff who were still having to use antiquated WMS “dummy” terminals. In addition, the state supplied us with four additional computers to be used by the Adult Services staff. This acquisition allowed us to provide other TA workers with a local PC.

The New York State Office of Technology increased the functionality of some of the state systems, which, in most cases, were welcomed with open arms. One of the most popular enhancements was the implementation of Intelligent Autofill Forms (IAF). This process allows the worker to merge information from the WMS system onto specified New York State forms such as client notices and medical authorizations. Another improvement over the year was access to different websites directly from our Centraport connection.

These websites are accessible by the workers who do not have access to the Internet, but who may need information from these sites in order to better perform their job duties. These websites include *Yahoo Maps, NYS Inmate Lookup, Savings Bond Calculator, US Zip Codes and Addresses, and Immigration forms*, among many others. The one drawback to these new enhancements is that the Temporary Assistance workers, who have the most use for them, must go to a different location in order to access these functions on a PC since they do not have PCs on their desks.

Another improvement that came about this year was the automatic food stamp determinations for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients known as New York State Nutrition Improvement Plan (NYSNIP). This allows for the automatic opening of food stamp cases for those individuals who apply for SSI and are deemed eligible.

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

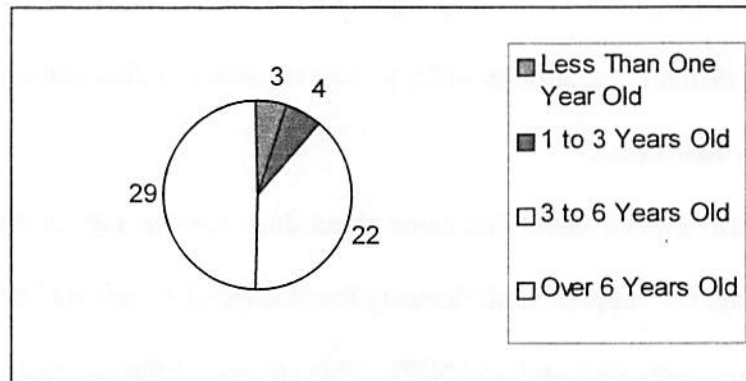
2	Accounting
1	AFIS (Automated Finger Imaging) + 1 portable unit
4	ASAP (Adult Services)
12	ASSETS (Child Support)
1	BICS (Benefit Issuance Control System)
1	CCFS (Child Care Facility System)
1	COMM (Commissioner's)
25	CONNECTIONS + 6 laptops
3	EBT (Electronic Benefit Transfer)
15	EEDSS (Medicaid eligibility)
1	STARS (Statewide Training Automated Registration System)
18	WMS (Welfare Management System) these are "dummy" terminals.

Local Systems

53	PC's connected to our LAN + 2 laptops
3	CONNECTIONS terminals

Aging Local PCs:

- Less than 1 year old 3
- 1 to 3 years old 4
- 3 to 6 years old 22
- Over 6 years old 29



The year ahead holds even more promise for our workers. Madison County Department of Social Services has received a childcare grant to be used to purchase 28 PCs and 8 networked printers. These will be distributed to the Temporary Assistance workers who are still using the outdated WMS “dummy” terminals. The rest will be used to replace some of our oldest local PCs. We are also awaiting approval of our application for a State Archives grant that will replace our current imaging system and expand the functionality of our current system.

Submitted by Diane Myers, Director of Staff Development/IT

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Children's Services experienced a number of changes and was a flurry of activity in the year 2004.

First, there was a change in leadership. In March, Melissa Maine moved from the position of Social Worker into the position of Deputy Commissioner for Family Services. This entailed taking over the administrative role from Deputy Commissioner Stephen Garneau, who had effectively lead the program for several years. This change, of course, brought with it a period of adjustment for all staff members. As often happens with change, there was an examination and clarification of roles, responsibilities, and procedures. A few procedures were found to be antiquated and only served to slow down the process of business, so those procedures were eliminated. Some procedures were found to be in need of adjustment to keep up with the present demands of our services, and those adjustments are underway. Many procedures were found to be necessary and working quite well, so those remain in tact.

Second, we have taken the opportunity to apply for and, in one case, receive additional funding for services. Through an offer by Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS), our state regulatory body, we applied for and received Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funding to help prevent the placement of children due to Persons in Need of Supervision (PINS) petitions in Family Court. We received approximately \$27,000 through this program and purchased already existing services within the community for 53 children, who were at risk of out-of-home or higher level of care placement. We purchased such things as family YMCA memberships, music lessons, horseback riding lessons, summer camp registrations, and tutoring services to help engage this at-risk population in healthy

activities. Of the 53 children involved in the program, only one has subsequently required out-of-home placement.

With extensive help from our own Accounting unit and the assistance of the Community Action Partnership, Madison County Youth Bureau, and Madison County Probation Department, we completed a lengthy grant application, which was submitted to OCFS. This grant application proposes a program to help reduce the number of children placed outside of their homes due to PINS petitions. This program would contract for the services of a local life coach to work with at-risk youth at the local YMCA. Each youth and his/her family would also be provided with a family membership so they could use the YMCA facilities at any time. We requested \$35,000 to fund this program and are waiting to hear if our application is granted.

Third, we worked diligently with the Madison County Probation Department, Madison County Mental Health Department, and Liberty Resources to address the high rate of placements for individuals found to be adjudicated on a PINS petition. This group of interdepartmental personnel worked to streamline the referral process for diversion services, coordinate and stress the need for families to participate in diversion services, and developed a brochure for parents as to their rights and responsibilities if their children are involved in the juvenile justice system. We have seen a decrease (although not as dramatic as we would like) in the number of care days for non-secure detention services for PINS youth. The approximate cost saving in this decrease is \$365,000. We hope to continue this trend.

These are the highlights of the Children's Services unit as a whole. The following pages will give you a more detailed description of each program area and their respective accomplishments. We trust that you will be pleased with the work we have done. We also

look forward to continuing to serve the people of Madison County and protecting our most valuable resource – our children.

Submitted by Melissa Maine, Deputy Commissioner for Family Services

FOSTER CARE

During 2004, the department continued to utilize the services of Elmcrest Children's Center for non-secure detention beds for our Juvenile Delinquent/Persons in Need of Supervision (JD/PINS) children. This year, we added a bed to our contract so that we now have four beds available to us when we need them. We used 1,674 care days for an average of 4.58 children per day in non-secure detention. This is a reduction of .58 care days from 2003 for a cost saving of \$91,250 for the year. 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 either not appear for the next court hearing or that before his/her return for court, he/she will commit an act that would constitute a crime if the child were an adult. The situations involved in these cases were such that it was not safe for the children to remain in their parents' homes or they refused to stay there.

When there are no other options for these children, such as appropriate relatives or friends, detention is the last resort. The reduction in care days in 2004 can be attributed to an effort by the department to try to keep children in the home. We use our contract with Liberty Resources to provide diagnostic evaluations with the child remaining in the home rather than his/her being remanded to detention and awaiting a placement for a residential evaluation.

Foster Care and Institution Placements

In 2004, a total of 60 children were placed in Social Services custody. Along with 69 children discharged from custody, we ended the year with 68 children in foster care.

Twenty-eight of these were in foster care and 40 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 the families in Madison County have increasingly more complex problems and issues to deal with that are difficult to address given the dearth of community services available to them within the county.

One case stands out from the others in the past 12 months. "Albert" was 13 years old when he was placed in Social Services custody in December 2003 following his adjudication as a Person in Need of Supervision. His behaviors included truancy, disobedience of his mother's rules, and violence and anger directed at his younger brother. After a brief stint in detention followed by two months in a foster home, a maternal aunt and uncle of "Albert" came forward to take him into their home as relative foster parents. They went through an expedited process to be certified as foster parents by New York State. Keeping this family bond went a long way toward helping "Albert" address his issues and get back home sooner. With the support and guidance of his aunt and uncle, "Albert" and his mother participated in joint counseling through the contract this agency has with Liberty Resources, which helped them resolve some of their problems. As a result, "Albert" was able to return home after only 11 months in Social Services custody.

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 from 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 - \$3,472.15; Herb Philipson's - \$4,543.40; K-Mart, New Hartford - \$4,651.35; K-Mart, Dewitt - \$3,906.48.

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 2004 to these facilities for the care of children in the custody of Madison County Social Services: Elmcrest Children's Center, Syracuse - \$1,538,820.55; The House of the Good Shepherd, Utica - \$430,151.53; Liberty Resources, Syracuse/Oneida - \$580,193.00.

Independent Living

We continued our contract with Liberty Resources, Inc., to provide independent living group sessions to those children in foster care who are at least 14 years old. This year (2004) is the last year that we will be contracting out for this service. Beginning January 1, 2005, we will be providing life skills training within our agency for all eligible children. In 2004, there were 20 group sessions offered to an average of eight teens. During sessions, the teenagers learn interpersonal skills including cooking, budgeting, shopping, job hunting, and other skills of interest to them in preparing them to live independently in the future. Because of the difficult family situations most of these young people come from, many of them will be moving on to independence sooner than they should, whether they return home first or go directly from foster care to living on their own. The knowledge gained during these groups can be critical to their eventual success or failure in the "real world."

"Mary," for example, is a girl who came from a very dysfunctional family and had been in foster care from the age of 11 until 18. She came from a family system in which her father was an alcoholic and was very emotionally and, at times, physically abusive. Her

mother was very ineffective in her role and Mary came into foster care with numerous emotional problems and delays. As “Mary” aged through the system, she was moved through seven different foster homes and two institutional placements. Once she turned 14, “Mary” became eligible for independent living services, which helped teach her some of the necessary skills she would need to hopefully succeed on her own. She has turned 18 and made the decision to leave foster care. The provision of independent living services can continue for up to a year following a child’s discharge from foster care. She now meets regularly with her Caseworker, who helps her deal with some of the problems life poses. The Caseworker is there for moral and, if necessary, financial support, as there are funds available to help pay for schooling, rent, utilities, furnishings, and other needed items to help her succeed on her own.

Teenage Service Act (TASA)

Madison County continues our arrangement with Liberty Resources to provide Teenage Service Act (TASA) Services as a referral agency with the approval of the New York State Office of Children and Family Services. This is a program authorized by the Family Court Act to provide case management services for adolescents who are pregnant and/or parents. The objective is to increase the potential of this target population “...to become financially independent by helping the teenager to complete his/her education and receive sufficient manpower skills for participation on the labor markets” (FCA 409-i.2). Through this program, Social Services provides financial support to pregnant or parenting

teens and their children, as well as, providing personal counseling and supportive services to help strengthen family life and help secure opportunities for economic independence.

Submitted by Timothy Brown, Case Supervisor Grade B

FOSTER/ADOPTIVE PROGRAM

The Foster/Adoptive Program consists of two Caseworkers – a Homefinder and an Adoptions Worker. They have been using the Group Preparation and Selection (GPS) Program, which stems from the Model Approach to Partnership in Parenting (MAPP) philosophy. At the end of 2004, the GPS Program was revamped into GPS II. This program is widely used throughout the state and country. It consists of a ten-week, 30-hour orientation program for prospective foster/adoptive parents. Throughout the program, prospective parents are given tools and information about the issues surrounding children and families involved with the social services system, understanding the role of the foster/adoptive parent, and the impact on their family of fostering and/or adopting a child. Ultimately, throughout the program, the agency has the opportunity to thoroughly screen clients in order to make an informed final decision on certifying prospective foster/adoptive parents.

This 30-hour program is held two times a year in the evening hours to accommodate working families. In 2004, we were able to certify six new foster/adoptive homes. At the end of 2004, we had a total of 32 certified foster homes able to accept approximately 60 children. Recruitment and retention continues to be the primary focus of the Foster/Adoptive Program.

This number of foster homes is down from last year due to the following: Two homes adopted the children that were in their care, in essence “adopting themselves out” of foster care; one home was a relative foster home and the children returned to their birth parent; and two homes closed due to their moving out of state.

The needs and issues of children in care and their families are becoming increasingly more difficult to service. The agency recently raised the amount of required training hours from four to eight to better prepare our families for the challenges that lie ahead. Throughout last year, the Foster/Adoptive Program offered numerous hours of training opportunities. These included a two-hour training on behavior crisis management, a two-hour training on adoption issues, a two-hour training on behavior issues of foster children, and a roundtable (a meeting held with the Homefinder, Adoptions Worker, and foster/adoptive parents for informational discussion and support). The Regional Office also holds an annual training day in the fall that the agency sends foster parents to.

The Foster/Adoptive Program was also able to obtain donations throughout year 2004 totaling \$1,382.96. These donations were acquired in two ways: First, by sponsoring "Casual Days" – DSS staff donated \$3.00 and, in turn, were permitted to wear jeans to work; second, from letters sent out by the unit to local businesses soliciting donations. All of the donations went into the "Christmas and Beyond" Fund. This fund pays for such things as Christmas gifts, dance lessons, sporting equipment, and registration fees specifically so that foster children can have as much of a childhood as possible. We also worked with The Salvation Army, who donated many gifts for foster children to be used at Christmastime and throughout the year. In March of 2004, the agency worked with a local Girl Scout troop to acquire donated suitcases, bags, and backpacks for foster children.

The program also develops and puts out a quarterly newsletter entitled "The Partnership Post." The newsletter is filled with information about childcare, upcoming training, activities to do with children, and notes from any departments pertaining to the program. We also work with the program supervisor for the Liberty Resources Child and

Family Mental Health Program to write a column for the newsletter with information on specific therapeutic issues for foster/adoptive families and children.

In May of 2004, the Foster/Adoptive unit held a Foster Parent Appreciation Night. The event was held at the department. The Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner spoke to foster parents at the event, commending them for their hard work and dedication.

In addition to the foster/adoptive training offered this year, the unit recognized our adoptive families with an adoption celebration. This was held during Adoption Awareness Month (November) at the agency. Each family received a disposable camera, a photo album, and movie passes. The Office of Children and Family Services provided funds for this event.

The primary objectives of the Foster/Adoptive unit are to recruit and certify as many qualified families as possible, to maintain a retention rate of approximately 80 percent, and to offer a wide range of training opportunities for foster/adoptive families. The Homefinder and Adoptions Worker will continue to work in partnership in this upcoming year to maintain a program that can benefit all children and families working with the agency.

Homefinder

The Homefinder is responsible for making placements for the Child and Family Services unit. The primary goal is to know our foster families and as much information about the children as possible in order to make the best matches based on the needs of the children and the strengths of the families. The unit prides itself on having limited disruptions (children needing to move from one foster home to another or from a foster home to a higher level of care).

This year, the Homefinder was able to develop new informational brochures and flyers in order to assist in the recruitment efforts.

Along with the caseload of current foster/adoptive families (32 in total), the Homefinder also carries a caseload of Foster Care/Preventive cases. At the end of 2004, the Homefinder was handling a caseload of four cases totaling seven children. Two of these cases are Foster Care cases, one is a Preventive case, and the last is an Adoption case.

The Homefinder (along with the Adoptions Worker) is also responsible for completing court ordered home studies and investigations, and ICPC (Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children) to determine people's ability and appropriateness to care for children.

Adoptions Worker

In 2004, the Adoption Program was extremely busy. There were 13 children freed for adoption and 17 finalized adoptions. The children ranged in age from 7 months to 15 years old. All adoptions were by Madison County foster parents.

At the end of 2004, the Adoptions Worker had seven children who had been placed with their permanent families but were waiting to finalize their adoptions. She had two children listed in the New York State Adoption Album and was actively searching for adoptive families to provide permanency for these two children.

The Adoptions Worker continues to work closely with The New York State Adoption Services (NYSAS) to provide an adoption subsidy to families adopting children with special needs and children who are considered hard to place for adoption. The purpose of the subsidy is to provide children and families with the financial resources needed to address the

children's special needs and provide an incentive for families to adopt hard-to-place children, who would otherwise remain in foster care until age 21.

Some adoption subsidy applications include medical assistance in addition to the monthly stipend. Madison County, along with NYSAS, approved 17 subsidy applications, 12 of which included medical assistance in 2004.

The Adoptions Worker is also responsible for completing court ordered home studies and investigations, and ICPC Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) to determine people's ability and appropriateness to care for children. She currently has one active Adoption ICPC placement case. The children are from California and are placed with a Madison County family.

In 2004, the Adoptions Worker served as Caseworker for various children throughout the year. At the end of 2004, she had an active caseload of eight families.

In addition to the daily casework, activities associated with adoptions, and the Foster/Adoptive Program, the Adoptions Worker acts as liaison for the Liberty Resources Placement Diversion and Family Reunification Programs. She acts as case manager for these programs. She works closely with the Liberty Resources staff to ensure that the children and families receive the necessary services to avoid foster care placement.

PREVENTIVE SERVICES

In 2004, the Preventive and Foster Care unit employed 10 Caseworkers who managed an average of 77 Preventive cases involving an average of 130 children per month. Please refer to the Foster Care portion of the "Annual Report" for further information on Foster Care services provided by this unit. Caseworkers in this unit work with families to prevent having to place children in foster care. Assisting the Caseworkers are two Parent Aides, a Casework Assistant, and four clerical staff.

Preventive casework is primarily concerned with three child welfare outcomes: safety, family preservation, and child development. By establishing a professional helping relationship with families, Caseworkers are able to assess their strengths and reach mutual understanding. This leads to an agreement on a course of action. One example is a family experiencing domestic violence between the mother's paramour and one of her two children. Initially, the children were placed with their biological father. After the mother received casework counseling, help from relatives, a Parent Aide, and parenting classes, she was able to regain custody of her children.

During 2004, we continued to contract with Liberty Resources, Inc., for several preventive service programs. We have made use of our in-house counseling service also contracted through Liberty Resources, Inc. Families are referred to this program when one or more members appear to have a mental health or relationship issue. Mental health issues encountered by Preventive Caseworkers range from mild depression to psychosis. By working with a trained therapist, family members can identify and work on any underlying condition of mental illness that influences their behavior. Liberty Resources employs three

therapists who are responsible for the contracted therapy. One case involving Liberty Resources involved a single father who wanted mental health services for his daughter and himself. The family was experiencing a lot of stress due to the estrangement of the parents and continual court battles. Liberty Resources counseling has been successful in preventing a foster care placement for this family.

Partners in Prevention (PIP), a school-based preventive service, continues under contract with Liberty Resources, Inc., and is jointly funded by this agency, Madison County Mental Health Department, and the four participating school districts. The Partners in Prevention Program 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. In 2004, 88 percent of PIP students in the elementary schools avoided having a "Persons in Need of Supervision" (PINS) petition filed against them. Ninety-three percent of the middle school students and 75 percent of the high school students also avoided this court action.

The Family Reunification and the Placement Diversion Programs are contracted preventive services through Liberty Resources, Inc. Four Social Workers and one supervisor staff these programs. Family Reunification served 15 children and their families in 2004. This program works towards shortening children's time in higher-level placements. Every

child in placement represents a cost to everyone involved with the case. The family's cost comes in terms of the further erosion in their relationship with each other. The cost to the county comes in terms of investing the time of Caseworkers and the money spent for care days.

Once children are reunited with their families or are placed in a lower level of care, the Family Reunification Program continues to work with them to prevent replacement. The total number of care days saved through this program was 331. 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 average cost of residential placement is approximately \$190 to \$200 per day. The cost to the family is immeasurable. The family tends to reorganize without the child and parents begin to believe that the child was the problem when, in fact, the problem is generally related to their relationship with their child. Placement makes it very difficult to transition the child back into the home. The Placement Diversion Program seeks to prevent children from being placed into residential treatment centers. This program served 43 children and their families throughout the year. According to their statistics, they have prevented 5,917 possible care days for a substantial saving to the county. Each day that a child is in the program and not in placement is a day that is counted towards the total of 5,917. Preventing a disruption in the family helps the family to gain and maintain stability.

CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES

The Madison County Child Protective Services (CPS) Unit is responsible for investigating allegations of child abuse and maltreatment. The eight Caseworkers in this unit interview children, often in school, after a report of suspected abuse or neglect has been generated by the New York State Central Registry for Abuse and Maltreatment. In addition to meeting with the parents, the Caseworker must also observe the home environment of children alleged to be abused or maltreated. The Caseworker assesses safety throughout the investigation. Further information is often gathered through discussions with other agencies and through the reviewing of any applicable records. Additional contacts are often made at court appearances and with other service providers. The CPS Supervisor and Senior Caseworker also review this information.

During 2004, Madison County Child Protective received 1,118 reports. This record breaking total demonstrates an increase of 58 reports when compared to the 2003 total of 1,060.

Twenty-seven children needed to be removed from their homes during 2004 as a result of abuse or neglect. Only seven of those children remain in foster care at this time. An additional 27 Preventive Services cases were transferred from Child Protective to the Preventive/Foster Care unit for ongoing casework services and coordination. One particular case was opened as a result of a mother's not having adequate housing for her two children. Through a cooperative plan with Housing and Urban Development, and with assistance from the Caseworker, safe housing for the

family was obtained. The family situation stabilized in a short period of time and the children returned home to the parent.

New York State 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 Child Protective reports received during that time, as well as, questions and crises that arise. A total of 276 Child Protective reports were received outside of normal business hours during 2004.

Of the 1,118 Child Protective reports received in Madison County, 138 reports were investigated by members of Madison County's Multidisciplinary Team. 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 that particular discipline work closely together to lessen the trauma to the child.

As a community, we often expect the various school districts to not only provide an education for the children, but to also look out for their wellbeing. One of the ways school personnel are able to do this is through training on the indicators of possible abuse

or neglect. One of the CPS unit goals for 2004 was to provide customized training on Child Protective issues to schools and community agencies. The Child Protective Supervisor, Child and Family Services Deputy Commissioner, and School Services Coordinator worked collaboratively to provide a wide variety of training and informational sessions when requested throughout the community. Staff from Child and Family Services conducted seven training sessions at area schools, two sessions at child daycare centers, and one session was provided at the Oneida Indian Nation. Not only does this type of training foster safety, it also increases communication and cooperation among the Department of Social Services and the many schools and agencies in the community.

Submitted by Catherine Fowler, Case Supervisor Grade B

Monthly Child Protective Reports Sorted by Township

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total
Brookfield	8	2	0	4	3	6	5	2	5	4	1	7	47
Cazenovia	3	0	9	1	3	7	3	1	0	1	0	2	30
DeRuyter	2	0	4	1	2	0	2	1	1	1	1	0	15
Eaton	4	2	2	7	4	4	4	10	5	5	6	9	62
Fenner	0	0	1	2	3	4	2	1	0	1	2	1	17
Georgetown	0	0	0	1	0	3	1	1	2	1	6	1	16
Hamilton	0	5	4	8	4	9	2	3	5	8	7	2	57
Lebanon	2	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	1	0	0	7
Lenox	11	14	16	12	10	21	15	12	12	11	4	9	147
Lincoln	0	2	3	3	0	1	0	0	3	2	0	0	14
Madison	2	2	3	1	4	2	1	2	2	2	1	2	24
Nelson	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	2	1	1	8
Oneida	15	22	34	21	28	25	26	25	18	24	12	11	261
Smithfield	1	2	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	2	2	1	12
Stockbridge	1	8	1	2	0	2	3	3	9	1	7	2	39
Sullivan	13	16	25	11	11	15	16	15	19	23	18	15	197
Other Reports	14	7	13	15	12	22	18	9	13	8	12	22	165
Total	77	82	115	89	85	125	101	86	96	97	80	85	1118

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 in being 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.

In June of 2004, Debbie O'Connor accepted the position of Children's Services Social Worker following Melissa Maine's appointment to Deputy Commissioner for Family Services.

Debbie brings with her knowledge of home-based and outpatient mental health treatment skills that she acquired while working with families involved in the child welfare population. Debbie has also worked as a legal advocate with our local District Attorney's Office as well as with the county's Council on Alcoholism and the local Office For the Aging. Debbie is looking forward to the growth of the Children Services Social Work Program and the enrichment that it will continue to bring to families in Madison County.

The Children's Services Social Worker will also be supervising the Adoptions and Home Finder Caseworkers.

In the year 2004, the Children's Services Social Work Program engaged with 12 families involving a total of 18 youths. Out of the 18 youths, three remained at home, six foster care youths were adopted by their foster parents, and three youths remained in foster care who were at risk of moving to a higher level of care.

The cost saving of the Children's Services Social Work Program for the year 2004 was approximately \$316,033.

PARENT AIDES

During the year 2004, a total of 49 families received Parent Aide services. Of these families, 31 referrals were based on the result of neglect findings through Family Court. The other 18 families were referred via various other service providers. 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 the family members to necessary appointments, and how to talk to school personnel and medical providers about their children. 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. They also supervise visits between the parents and children, if this is necessary to keep the children safe.

It was while working closely with a particular family that one of our Parent Aides was approached by the mother in the family. This mother had formed a relationship with and trusted the Parent Aide enough to report multiple instances of domestic violence. She wanted the Parent Aide to help and assist her with leaving the home. The Parent Aide was able to assist the mother with leaving by driving the mother and her two children to the Victims of Violence Program through Liberty Resources. It should be noted that there were other service providers in the home, but it was the Parent Aide that the mother trusted enough to ask for help.

Another positive example regarding our Parent Aides occurred with a grandmother who had custody of her grandchildren. In this particular instance, the Parent Aide was

working with the parents of these children. The grandmother, recognizing that she needed help and the value of the Parent Aide's services, requested her assistance for the benefit of the children. To this date, the grandmother is working well with the Parent Aide.

Another very crucial area is teaching the parenting classes. For 2004, as in years past, the Parent Aides taught the Systemic Training to Effective Parenting (STEP) Program. Eighty-three people were invited with six people's attending the Early Childhood class and 27 people attending the Parents of School-Age Children class. Of these, 17 people received a completion certificate based upon their attendance and participation and eight received an attendance certificate. Perhaps the biggest change regarding the parenting classes is the new upcoming curriculum. This new curriculum is called "Parenting Skills." The advantage of this class is that it is very usable, with very simplistic reading for the clients, and is based on a "hands-on" program using real-life examples.

This past year, we also had an intern working with the Parent Aides. She is a high school senior who was referred by the BOCES program that she was attending. She requested this internship to get "a feel" for what the Parent Aides do. This program has allowed the Parent Aides to mentor a young person interested in the field of human services.

SCHOOL SERVICES

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 in and outside of school. The School Services Program Coordinator acts as a liaison among the school, family, and service agencies. All school staff, community agencies, and all Madison County departments may make referrals, while 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 a better opportunity to gain assistance in identifying available service options.

By combining school supports with additional services directed at the home, a better chance exists of addressing the comprehensive needs of the child and family. The School Services Program works to prevent neglect, abuse, and teenaged delinquent behavior.

In the year 2004, this program received 141 referrals. The following is a breakdown of the referral sources:

- | | |
|--|---|
| • Teachers – 12 | • Madison-Oneida BOCES Parenting Program – 11 |
| • Superintendents – 2 | • Madison County Social Services – 13 |
| • School Counselors – 45 | • Principals – 14 |
| • Nurses – 2 | • Parents and Children (self-referral) – 16 |
| • Committee on Special Education – 4 | • Community Services Agencies – 16 |
| • Madison-Oneida BOCES Alternative Education Program – 6 | |

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

- Requests regarding concerns pertaining to home sanitation – 3
- Requests connected to issues of alcohol/drugs – 3
- Requests reflecting serious financial problems – 7
- Requests for mentoring – 10
- Requests with transportation barriers – 10
- Requests pertaining to issues connected to Family Court/legal difficulties – 11
- Requests pertaining to health and medication – 11
- Requests needing assistance relating to insurance – 13
- Requests regarding child daycare – 13
- Requests for psychiatric mental health treatment – 15
- Requests for assistance with issues of food/shelter – 17
- Requests for parenting issues – 18
- Requests concerning a child's safety – 22
- Requests for assistance coordinating various services involved with a family – 30
- Requests for children exhibiting PINS/JD-type behaviors – 35
- Requests for individual or group counseling – 39
- Requests relating to difficulties with education – 50

Home visits and school-based contacts were made in order to develop a plan to address goals identified by the family and/or school. Once goals were identified, referrals could be made to public and private service agencies. The Coordinator was able to support families and service providers at an early point to prevent escalating difficulties or conflicts in the classroom and home. For example, one 14-year-old boy was defiant, disruptive, disrespectful, and uncooperative at school and home. The Coordinator assisted the family by attending a school meeting, participating in developing a behavior management plan, providing the parents and the teachers with literature on the child's two diagnosed disorders – Turret's and Oppositional Defiance Disorder – and made a referral for intensive case management services through Consumer Services. As a result of adjusting the child's educational environment, equipping the parents and teachers with information on the child's disorders, and providing home-based support, the crisis subsided and the child became more manageable and responsive to services.

In addition to playing an active role in coordinating services for families and schools, the Coordinator co-founded a task force aimed at addressing the needs of children ages zero

to five with social emotional issues. The task force developed a mission, set goals, and within ten months, applied for a grant that would allow for the development of a mobile assessment team for children ages zero-to-five years of age exhibiting several emotional behaviors issues at home or in the daycare setting. The Coordinator is also actively involved in many community-based committees allowing for ongoing networking and collaboration with agencies devoted to helping the children and their families.

Submitted by Tayah Beebe, School Services Coordinator

LEGAL

The Legal unit was very busy during 2004, continuing to provide legal counsel as necessary to all units within the agency. The major caseload of this office continues to be divided between the Children and Family Services and Support Collection units. Staff turnover resulted in a new Attorney's joining this unit in August 2004. Our current staff consists of two Attorneys, a Paralegal and an Office Assistant II.

Children and Family Services

The Legal unit currently has approximately 100 open legal cases that include child abuse and/or neglect, juvenile delinquent supervision and placement, PINS supervision and placement, and termination of parental rights proceedings. To that end, in 2004, we opened approximately 48 new cases, filed over 147 new petitions, prepared approximately 364 court orders, and initiated 3 termination of parental rights proceedings.

This unit has continued to actively work with Child and Family Services to ensure that the Social Services 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.

This office meets regularly with Children and Family Services supervisors and Caseworkers on individual cases and for trial preparation. To that end, we prepared for over 43 trials in 2004. In total, the Legal unit made approximately 300 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. These 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, a determination must be made as to whether there is some credible evidence to support the allegation or not. The Legal unit often meets with the investigator to aid in making that determination. When a case is indicated and closed, there is often a request for a fair hearing by the parent seeking a ruling from the state that the decision made by our local agency was correct. We handled approximately 10 fair hearings during 2004.

Support Collection

The other major caseload for the Legal unit is in the area of establishing and enforcing support orders, establishing paternity when a child is in receipt of Medicaid, seeking reimbursement for Medicaid expenditures, and establishing child support orders when a child is in receipt of public assistance or is in foster care. In 2004, the unit, Attorneys and Paralegal combined, made approximately 1700 court appearances on matters of support establishment and enforcement, paternity, and establishment of medical support orders. This number includes approximately 600 initial appearances, 280 fact-finding hearings, and 70 referrals to the Family Court Judges on support cases where the Department of Social Services was the recipient of the support; and 430 initial appearances, 270 fact-finding hearings and 50 referrals to the Family Court Judges in private support cases. Additionally, this office prepared and submitted approximately

598 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 unit 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.

CCRS Legal Tracking

The Office Assistant II in the Legal unit is responsible for tracking all Madison County foster children and reporting the information to the state and federal governments. In 2004, there were 756 transactions entered in the Child Case Review Services (CCRS) system.

Other Areas

The Legal unit 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 this office for analysis and answers. The Legal unit looks forward to achieving many new successes in the coming year and feels 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 2004. The Investigative unit is housed at the Madison County Department of Social Services (DSS). It consists of two part-time Deputy Sheriff Investigators, who do background investigations, three fulltime Deputy Sheriff Investigators, and a fulltime Deputy Sheriff Sergeant, who supervises the unit. In 2004, the fully staffed unit added a Lieutenant to its chain of command. The hours of coverage are Monday through Saturday 8:00 am to 9:00 pm. One Investigator (one of the part-time Investigators) is assigned to the Morrisville Field Office.

The Investigative Unit encompasses many functions and responsibilities. We are responsible for the safety and security of the Madison County Department of Social Services staff, clients, and property. An Investigator is assigned to "desk duty" during business hours and special duties after business hours.

The unit also investigates major crimes, such as rape, arson, robbery, burglary, narcotics, and homicide. We also do internal investigations as directed by the Sheriff. The Investigative unit assists other local, state and federal law enforcement agencies, and other Madison County Departments, along with working closely with the Madison County District Attorney's Office and DSS Child Protective and Adult Services Protective units.

Another responsibility is validations (front-end detection). An Investigator will make a home visit to confirm that all information the applicant provided to the Madison County Department of Social Services is correct. The Investigator will then validate or deny the application. This helps prevent fraud and creates savings.

Many of the rules and regulations concerning validations and fraud have changed recently making fraud arrests and validation denials very difficult. The unit did 859 validations in 2004, which is an increase from 593 validations completed in 2003 and 342 in 2002. As a result in 2004, a total of \$988,518 was saved from being paid out over the year. This is up from \$899,691 in 2003 and \$644,242 in 2002.

The unit investigated 64 fraud allegations. This is down from 148 in 2003, up from 54 in 2002, and 28 in 2001. The fraud investigations were received through tips from the public, screenings from Caseworkers, and leads developed from criminal investigations. As a result, two people were arrested on various criminal charges, the remaining cases were closed as unfounded, or the clients signed a repayment agreement.

In 2002, the Sergeant proposed to the Commissioner and Sheriff that the Sheriff's Transport unit take over juvenile transports. The Department of Social Services would pay for one transport officer to cover the transport and the Sheriff would provide two officers to cover the transport. This would benefit both agencies in several ways. First, there are trained personnel (specific to transport) doing the transports. Next, an Investigator and Caseworker are not tied up transporting the juvenile. This saves in paying overtime to the Investigator and Caseworker – the transport unit works flex hours. Also, when the transport officer is not on a juvenile transport, the officer would cover the front desk in the security area of DSS. This frees up the Investigator from desk duty and makes him/her available for other investigations. This plan was put into effect for 2003 and has proven to be a valuable move. The Transport unit did a record breaking 187 juvenile transports in 2004. This is up from 158 transports in 2003 and more than triple the 49 transports in 2002. Out of the 187 transports, the Investigators only did 12.

The Investigative unit has two trained staff members that specialize in using two separate tools for truth verification – the Voice Stress Analyzer and the Polygraph. These tools have been used successfully in criminal investigations to assist the Investigators. The polygraph is also used for background investigations for prospective employees.

A new addition to investigating child abuse/sexual assault is the formation of a Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT). In 2003, the Sheriff, along with DSS, received a grant to form a MDT. The grant provides funding for 18 months. A former Assistant District Attorney was appointed as the Coordinator of the MDT and occupies an office in the DSS building. The purpose of the MDT is to minimize trauma to the victim and, at the same time, strengthen the prosecution of the defendant. Goals were set along with landmarks to measure where the team needs to be. A protocol and mission statement were put into place and adopted by all of the law enforcement agencies in Madison County. MDT cases are the top priority for the Investigative unit and all of our investigators have, and continue to receive, specialized training. In 2004 we investigated 22 MDT cases.

The Madison County Investigation unit is only one piece of the MDT pie. Other team members consist of law enforcement (other agencies in Madison County) Mental Health Department, medical community, District Attorney's Office, and Department of Social Services. Together we have formed a very focused team with an open line of communication. We meet and train together to better serve the public. The Madison County Sheriff's Investigative unit has proven to be a step ahead. By being located in the DSS building, we are in direct contact with DSS Child Protective and Legal units, and therapists. This is a large part of being awarded the grant. We have a child-friendly area in the building that is necessary for conducting a forensic interview of children. We also possess an

approved juvenile interview room for conducting interviews of juvenile suspects. This room is also used as an adult suspect interview room. In addition, we have a separate area to interview multiple victims and witnesses. Being located at the DSS building and having the proper facilities to work in is a great advantage to help us better serve the people we are charged to protect.

The Lieutenant of the Investigative unit has held several different training sessions for non-profits, police academies, police agencies, students, and others. The topics ranged from street drugs, interviews and interrogations, information gathering, and other topics.

The Investigative unit conducted 1,248 investigations in 2004. That is up from a total of 974 investigations in 2003 and 637 investigations in 2002. As you can see, the number of cases that the unit has been involved in has increased each year along with the quality of the work. We will continue to build our team and educate our staff to better serve the citizens of Madison County. The Investigative unit is a valuable section of a larger law enforcement picture and has proven to be very successful.