

Orange County Department of Social Services



(Photos courtesy of the OCVB)

ANNUAL REPORT 2004-2005

COMMEMORATING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF OUR
CLIENTS, AGENCY, AND COMMUNITY...

Board of Directors:
Rosetta Wash, Chair
Joe Robbins, Vice-Chair
Valerie Foushee
Harold Russell
Mary Bowe



Message from the Board

The Orange County Department of Social Services is blessed with a mission that sanctions us to perform some of the most vital and necessary work of any human service organization; provide a diverse array of services that help strengthen families, protect children and vulnerable adults, and increase employment opportunities in a manner that is professional and compassionate. However, it also challenges us to be attuned to the emerging needs of our community. In this 2005 Annual Report, we highlight some of our key initiatives and outcomes in Family Services, Economic Services, Adult Services and Individual Services programs over the past year.

Our heartfelt appreciation goes out to our community partners and volunteers. Much of what we have done, and much of what we hope to do to assist the citizens of Orange County would not be possible without your continued support. Thank you so very much!

Sincerely,

Rosetta Wash

Rosetta Wash
Chair, Board of Social Services

Administration



The Orange County Department of Social Services has two primary office locations:

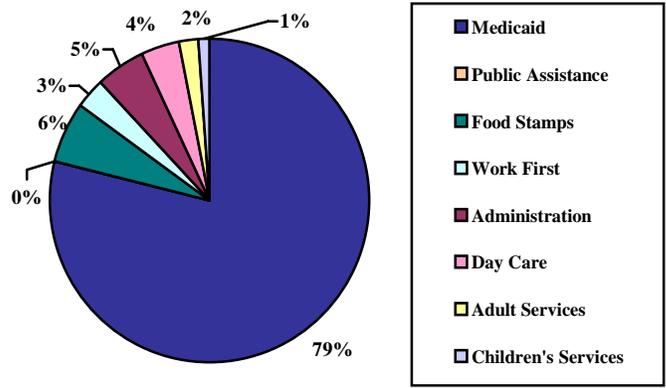
2501 Homestead Road
Chapel Hill, NC 27516
(919) 968-2000

Fax: (919) 644-3005
Email: dssinfo@co.orange.nc.us
Website: www.co.orange.nc.us/socsvcs/index.asp

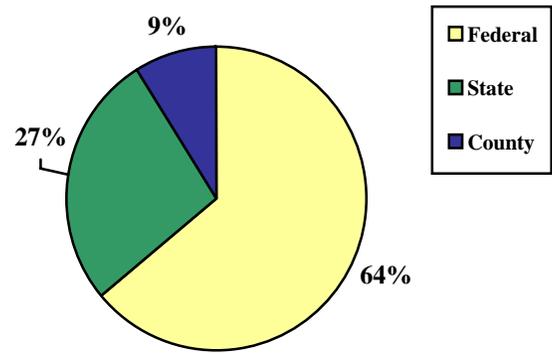
300 West Tryon Street
Hillsborough, NC 27278
(919) 245-2800

Financial Overview for Fiscal Year 2004-2005:

Total Budget \$95,369,340



Share Comparisons



Economic Services



Food Stamps

The Food Stamp Program is a federal program that provides a monthly allotment of Food Stamp benefits issued via Electronic Benefit Transfer cards (EBT cards) that can be used like debit cards. Food Stamp benefits may be used to purchase most foods at participating stores.

- 2,764 households served monthly (average)
- 6,017 individuals served monthly (average)
- \$6,876,051.00 total value of Food Stamps issued

Emergency Assistance

Families who are experiencing a financial emergency may be eligible for financial help to pay for housing, utilities, food, gas, and/or medicine.

- 3,665 people assisted
- \$116.50 average payment
- \$426,966.41 total payments issued

Low Income Energy Assistance Program

The Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) provides for a one-time cash payment to help eligible families pay their heating bills.

- 1,739 individuals and families assisted

- \$ 65.39 average payment per family
- \$113,718.00 total payments issued

Medicaid

Medicaid is a health insurance program for certain families and individuals whose income makes it difficult for them to afford health care. It is a publicly funded program governed by federal and state laws.

- 4,685 households served monthly (average)
- 6,535 individuals served monthly (average)

Health Choice

North Carolina Health Choice (NCHC) is North Carolina's health insurance program for children under age 19 who have no health insurance and whose family's income prevents them from affording health care, but who are ineligible for Medicaid. Coverage is through Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina, but the program is publicly funded and governed by federal and state laws. This program can end or be frozen when funds are depleted.

- 1,017 children served through Health Choice

Economic Services



Work First

Work First is North Carolina's TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) plan to help families move from welfare into jobs. Work First provides assistance with job search, vocational training, day care, transportation and time limited cash assistance to families with children under age 18 who meet income and resource guidelines.

- 557 clients received Work First assistance
- 106 participants found employment
- 36 families received a vehicle through Wheels for Work

Orange County Skills Development Center (JobLink)

The Orange County Skills Development Center located at 503 West Franklin Street in downtown Chapel Hill offers labor market information, provides access to career training and job placement services, and serves as the connection between employers and qualified workers.

- 7,860 visits to the Center
- 684 clients found job placements
- 921 people received further education and training

Building a Stronger Future...

Ms. L entered the Work First program in November of 2004 after relocating from Maryland, pregnant and without the necessary skills for employment. After working with staff in the Work First program and receiving necessary assistance, Ms. L has a solid future to look forward to. She is now working full-time, has her own transportation, and earns enough to support herself and her two children.

Accepting a Hand Up...

At first glance, the story of Ms. H appeared to be headed toward a most unhappy ending. She was a single mother, fleeing domestic violence with no support network and little training. Even providing basic needs was a struggle. Because of her heart, motivation, and desire to provide a better life for herself and her children, she came to Social Services. Over the course of a year she accepted help where it was most needed, and brought an endless supply of effort. Eventually, through the assistance of Work First and other community agencies she overcame domestic abuse, found housing, acquired her CNA and is now working full-time in the health care field.

Family Services



Day Care

The Child Care Subsidy Program provides low-income families with information and financial resources to find and afford quality childcare for their children. Resources enable families to make informed choices regarding childcare providers.

- 741 families were able to obtain day care
- 1,091 children were served
- 168 licensed child care providers participated
- 79% of cases were to support parents' employment
- Over \$3.8 million dollars spent to subsidize child care

Child Protective Services (CPS)

Child Protective Services is a legally mandated service to families. Orange County's foremost responsibility is to protect children. The CPS Unit provides services 24 hours per day; 8 a.m.—5 p.m. at the Department of Social Services, and after hours, weekends and holidays through an on-call system accessible through 911. The agency investigates reports of abuse, neglect and dependency.

- 1,162 children were assessed for abuse and/or neglect allegations
- 142 children in DSS custody monthly (average)

Adolescent Parenting Program

The Adolescent Parenting Program provides services and support to teenage parents who are working towards remaining in school, delaying a second pregnancy, improving parenting skills, preparing for employment, avoiding abuse and neglect, and improving the health status of mother and child.

- 34 teens participated
- 9 teens successfully graduated from High School

Celebrating 20 Years of Service...

The Adolescent Parenting Program (APP) began in 1984. It now averages 20 participants a year and continues to provide services and support to pregnant or parenting teens. The APP assists participants in completing their high school education, provides parenting skill training, and provides support and education to help avoid or delay a second pregnancy. Ms. G, a 1999 APP graduate states, "APP was like another home to me. I sit back and think how blessed we are to have so many people who care and encourage us to strive for our goals. APP has let me know, life doesn't stop because you're young and have a child." Ms. G graduated in May 2004 from UNC with a degree in Dental Hygiene, and is just one of many success stories.

Family Services



Adoption/Foster Care

The goal of foster parenting is to provide temporary care to the child while working toward reuniting the child with his/her birth family. Foster families help children feel secure and assist the child with the tasks of normal development, as well as assist the child's birth family toward reunification by providing information on the child's progress, cooperating with visitation and offering support to the child's parent. When children are not able to return to their parents, adoption gives children in need of a loving family a permanent home.

- 12 adoptions were completed
- 69 licensed foster homes
- 10 newly licensed foster homes during the fiscal year

A Place to Belong...

Jacob is 11 years old and on the verge of being adopted. After two plus years of living in foster care and relative placements that did not work out, he has finally found a place to call home. Due to the trauma he endured as a young child, Jacob has required a high degree of therapeutic intervention. Jacob has blossomed in his pre-adoptive home and has transformed into a happy and wonderful boy.

School-based Social Workers

Through a partnership with the Orange County School System, the Department of Social Services provides trained social workers to work in the schools to provide preventative social work services to children and their families.

- 86 families were served
- 134 children received services

Beginning a New Partnership...

In the fall of 2004, the Orange County School system determined a need for four additional social workers to expand services to students within the district, and meet the demands of twelve schools. As a resolution, Orange County Schools and the Department of Social Services (DSS) entered into a contractual partnership under which DSS hired, trained, and supervised these additional workers to serve at-risk children. Primary services include identification of family, economic and social issues impacting the ability of students to have successful academic outcomes, provision of counseling to children and families with certain risk factors, and provision of other supportive services to address identified problems.

Individual and Adult Services



LINKS

The Orange County Department of Social Services provides services to youth in DSS custody ages 13 through 18. Young adults who were discharged from custody as teens can continue to receive services up to age 21. The focus is to help them prepare for lives as healthy adults by learning about budgeting, maintaining a household, and emphasizing the importance of education.

- 21 young adults received services
- 9 youth received high school diplomas or equivalents
- 4 young adults were enrolled in college or vocational school

Helping to Make the Transition...

Michelle is a 19 year old sophomore at NC State University, where she is double majoring in French and Education. Michelle utilizes the Educational and Training Voucher program which provides \$5,000 annually to assist her in paying her college expenses. While attending school full time, Michelle works part time as a tutor on campus. She is successfully maintaining her off-campus apartment and academic studies. Michelle continues to have a close relationship with her foster family, and stays in frequent contact with the LINKS coordinator.

Adult Services

The Adult Services Department administers programs that help to promote independence and enhance the dignity of North Carolina's older and disabled persons and their families through a community-based system of opportunities, services, benefits, and protections. These programs include Adult Protective Services, Placement Services, Guardianship, In-Home Aide Services, Day Care Services for Adults, and Long-term Care Placements.

- 18 clients received assistance to manage their own funds so as to pay bills.
- 74 clients were provided in-home services through the Community Alternatives Program (CAP) to avoid inappropriate placement into a nursing home.
- 32 clients who were in need of assistance with feeding, bathing and personal care were provided services in Adult Care Homes.
- 28 clients received services in their homes and were maintained with health support rather than entering a Group Home.
- 31 clients received assistance in finding appropriate group facility arrangements when they could no longer live in their own homes.

Other Services

The Orange County Department of Social Services provides a variety of additional programs and services.

Special Needs Registry

The Special Needs Registry is a voluntary database containing information about individuals in Orange County with special needs who may require assistance in the event of a disaster.

Veteran's Affairs

The Veteran's Services Office assists veterans and dependents in obtaining, retaining, or reinstating compensation, pension, medical, education, training, loan, insurance, and other applicable benefits and services.

Financial Counseling

Financial counseling services provide financial literacy training and household management to recipients of Emergency Assistance.

Fatherhood Initiative

The Fatherhood Initiative Program is designed to provide employment related services to non-custodial fathers of children receiving some type of financial assistance to help



involve them in the lives and welfare of their children.

Medicaid Transportation

Transportation services are available to Medicaid recipients to enable them to get to and from medical appointments.

Adopt-A-Family Program/Summer Camp Program

These are programs that enable children involved with the agency to enjoy the holidays and Summer Camp.

Work Permits

The Orange County Department of Social Services provides Work Permits for children under 18.

Voter Registration

Clients at the Department of Social Services can register to vote or change their voting information while at the agency.

Refugee Resettlement Program

Refugees are eligible for cash and medical assistance for the first 8 months of residence in the United States.

Become a Donor or Volunteer!



Thanks to our Community Partners...

We are able to serve the thousands of clients that come through our doors throughout the year due to the tremendous support that the agency receives. The support of our donors and volunteers helps to improve the lives of all Orange County residents. Without them, thousands of men, women and children in our community would lead lives less dignified and free.

We have ongoing volunteer/donor opportunities in the following areas:

- Friends of DSS
- Adolescent Parenting Program
- Foster Parenting
- Faith Teams
- Adopt-A-Family Holiday Program
- Summer Camp Program
- Foster Children Donation Fund
- Day Care Sponsorship Program

For more information on any of these opportunities, call Lindsey Dennis at (919) 245-2817

We at the Department of Social Services would like to take this opportunity to extend a special thank you to the following groups and organizations for their tremendous donations of time, talent, and resources:

Friends of DSS
Faith Teams
Foster and Adoptive Parents
APP Volunteers
Balloons & Tunes
Triangle Community Foundation

We appreciate all that you do for our clients, staff, and community...

Thank you so very much!!

*"The value of a man resides in what he gives
and not in what he is capable of receiving."
-Albert Einstein*

Highlights of 2004-2005



"The staff treated me with respect."
-Client

- The **Adopt-A-Family** program was able to provide 121 families and 255 children with clothes, toys, bicycles, and an array of other items. For FY 2004-05 the program raised over \$1630.
- 12 **adoptions** were finalized in 2004-2005, providing safe and loving homes to children in need.
- The **Adolescent Parenting Program** celebrated its 20th Anniversary and enabled 9 teenage mothers to graduate from high school, a new record.
- 4 staff members were added to **expand social work services** into the Orange County School System.
- The **intake** unit provided over 14,900 assessments for Orange County families who came in for assistance.
- The **Work First** program provided services that helped 106 clients find employment and move off assistance.
- The **Wheels for Work** program provided cars for 36 participants.
- 102 elderly Orange County residents received **in-home services** instead of entering Nursing or Rest Homes.
- 741 families were able to obtain subsidized **day care** to support employment.
- Social Services launched its first **website** giving the agency an online presence. (<http://www.co.orange.nc.us/socsvcs/index.asp>)

"I appreciated the help and answers that were available to me and my family."
-Client

Orange County DSS
300 West Tryon Street
P.O. Box 8181
Hillsborough, NC 27278

Place
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