

Director's Message

Another year has passed causing me to reflect on all of the accomplishments attained by my staff—both professionally and personally—during the year. I am forever amazed at their capabilities and feel such a sense of pride in sharing in the joy of their achievements. They are the reason that the Somerset County Department of Social Services is such a wonderful place to work.

This was our first year of operation after meeting accreditation standards. The Council and its supporting teams are still active and continuing efforts towards the attainment of goals set forth in the agency's Strategic Plan. Our objective is to maintain the best practices that were established last year and to provide our customers with the excellent service they deserve.

*Patricia M. Mannion
Director*



ADMINISTRATION

An on-site computer lab consisting of 17 workstations was established. An agency training module was created to provide staff with computer classes that aided in self development, promoted improved computer proficiency, and allowed better utilization of resources. The classes were taught by staff members who are proficient in the applications.

The agency was fortunate to have the assistance of volunteers. Three performed administrative and clerical functions. They provided a much-needed service within the agency while gaining marketable work experience. It is hoped that the agency can establish a volunteer program in the future.



MANAGEMENT

Patricia Mannion
Director
Linda Benton
Assistant Director, Child Support
Joyce Cottman
Assistant Director, Administration
Terri Jackson
Assistant Director, Family Investment
Cary Knopp
Assistant Director, Services

AUTUMN

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Carolyn Schulze, Chairperson
James Ring, County Commissioner
Mary Collins
Margo Gale
Jackie Haymaker
William Stanton Leonard
Jimmy Muir
Katie Nurmi
Kay Parkinson

OUR VISION

We envision a Somerset County where people independently support themselves and their families and where individuals are safe from abuse and neglect.

OUR MISSION

We will aggressively pursue opportunities to assist people in need, provide prevention services, and protect vulnerable children and adults.

Annual Report Fiscal Year 2009



Somerset County Department of Social Services

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MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

**Martin O'Malley, Governor
Anthony Brown, Lt. Governor
Brenda Donald, Secretary**



SERVICES FOR CHILDREN

In keeping with the Family Centered Practice Model, the agency implemented Family Involvement Meetings for all cases where a child was removed from the home or court action was pending.

The agency co-sponsored the Community Fair which was held in May.

The number of children in foster care was reduced from the prior year.

Six adoptions were finalized which enabled the agency to meet the state goal.

Staff collected funds for—and donations of—school supplies which were distributed to 96 children.

The Child Support Division located non-custodial parents, obtained court orders for Child Support and medical insurance, collected and distributed payments, enforced court orders, modified and adjusted court orders, and established paternity. This year, the Division collected \$2,594,527 in child support and established 132 new support orders, paternity decrees, and/or court-ordered modifications. There are approximately 1,800 open child support cases in Somerset County.

The Non-Custodial Parent Employment Program continued to be a valuable resource in assisting non-custodial parents with obtaining and retaining employment in order to meet their child support obligations. Somerset had 89 clients enrolled in the program resulting in 40 job placements.



SERVICES FOR FAMILIES AND ADULTS

The following programs and services were provided to enable adults and families with children to better meet their nutritional needs, receive health care, obtain child care, retain employment, and remain in stable living arrangements:

- Benefits were provided to 4,224 individuals from the Food Nutritional Supplement program which represents 17% of the county's total population. The agency was awarded a Food Stamp Hunger Champion Award to honor our Food Stamp staff for providing outreach and exemplary service to customers.
- Medical Assistance was provided to 5,584 individuals which represents 22% of the county's total population.
- Day care services were purchased for 335 children which enabled their parents to work.
- Assistance was provided to 92 customers enabling them to obtain employment and move towards self-sufficiency. The average wage was \$8.37 an hour.
- Services were provided to 91 families enabling them to remain in stable living arrangements by avoiding eviction or termination of utilities. Burial assistance was provided to one family.

Nine individuals completed a Job Skills Enhancement Program and gained employment with the beginning average wage of \$10.21 per hour.



SERVICES TO PROTECT VULNERABLE ADULTS

Somerset County's Adult Protective Services attained a low recidivism rate of less than five percent for repeat occurrences of abuse to a vulnerable adult.

The Tri-County Adult Protective Services (APS) Coalition continued its mission to raise awareness of APS issues, to increase coordination among the represented partners for improved investigations, and to increase criminal prosecutions. It is comprised of representatives from the Departments of Social Services, State's Attorney's Offices, law enforcement agencies, and the Offices on Aging.

Staff collected funds and purchased items for 33 holiday gift bags. They were delivered to adult service clients who have no family. Without the attention and generosity of the agency's staff, these clients would have had little celebration during the holidays.

