

2011

Mecklenburg County Department of Social Services

COMMUNITY REPORT



Here Today for a Better Tomorrow.

Here Today for a Better Tomorrow.

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Welcome from the Director



The last three years have felt like a roller coaster ride. It has been scary and exhilarating at the same time. It has been a frightening time for staff and customers alike. We have worried about budgets and seen the devastation of unprecedented unemployment on our community. It has been heart-warming to see staff rise to the occasion to do more with less. The service demand grew 29% across all programs and we lost \$16 million out of our budget and 76 positions.

We were challenged to find new, innovative ways to provide mandatory services and necessary, discretionary services to connect the gaps which exist in our service continuum. We expanded service hours, cross trained staff and looked for ways to go out into the community to find those in need. We have had aha moments as we realized that we can do more and we can embrace new ways to do our job. We can process more applications if we streamline the workflow. We can decrease the number of children in custody if we provide up front services to families. And we can meet people where they are, even those incarcerated, and help prepare them for a successful return to the community.

As we look forward to continued improvement, we are using business tools such as root cause analysis and the logic model to guide our work so that we are doing the most important tasks for the best outcomes. We are researching evidenced-based best practices to inform our program development. We are partnering with evidenced-based community agencies and other departments within the County to develop holistic approaches to help customers reach their best potential. And we are re-visiting core philosophies like Bridges Out of Poverty to better understand the customers we serve and Systems of Care to better collaborate with other systems serving the same customers. While these programs have typically been embraced by isolated teams or divisions we are creating core philosophies across the department so that we can work as one team with many services.

We believe that the Department of Social Services can be a stepping stone in a child's, individual's or family's life to get them from where they are now to where they want to go as they build a sustainable future. Thank you for joining us on this journey....Here Today for a Better Tomorrow!

Sincerely,

Mary E. Wilson, Director



Department Highlights:

- Fewer children entered Foster Care in FY2011 by 14% over the previous year due to providing services to families that prevented children entering custody.
- Produced and disseminated “Know the Signs” DVD to community law enforcement as well as other first-responder personnel to educate them about the signs of vulnerable adult abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- Operated Job Boost successfully by placing 148 out of 140 slots of which 95% completed their assignments successfully, 10% were hired with 20% of clients still working as a result of the program.
- Customer wait times have decreased 20%, while customers can now contact the agency for service via email or fax request. Recent figures show in excess of 1,000 customers are served monthly through online services.
- Created partnerships with several local private adoption agencies to increase adoption opportunities for children in custody and finalized 41 adoptions.
- 100,008 people were served by the Community Resources Division in FY2011.
- 10 non-traditional community sites were staffed with DSS workers to provide services.
- 4 community partnerships were established in FY2011.
- Started the Senior Nutrition “Short-Term Meal Service”, intended to provide an immediate short-term bridge to meet the nutritional needs of seniors discharged from hospitals and long-term care facilities
- During FY2011, DSS fielded 5374 Child Protective Services reports and closed 3181 investigations.
- Opened a new Senior Nutrition congregate site at Mallard Creek Recreational Center serving over 120 people. 18 total sites now serving 1,060 people per month.
- As of May 2011, 259,000 persons (out of 950,000 residents) or 20% of the County receive some form of public assistance in Mecklenburg County. The combined economic impact of Public Assistance programs (Medicaid/Healthchoice; Food and Nutrition Services; Work First Cash) in Mecklenburg County in Fiscal Year 2010 was \$1,005,919,784.45.





By the Numbers:

- In Mecklenburg County 14.2% of residents lived in poverty in 2009 compared with 16.2% in North Carolina
- 18.9% of Mecklenburg County residents were at twice the federal poverty limit in 2009 (\$44,100 for a family of four in 2009)
- 125,107 residents were eligible for Medicaid in Mecklenburg County at the end of 2010
- 87% of DSS Households earn less than \$15,000 annually in FY2011
- 1,200 of Work First recipients moved to employment in FY2011
- 49% of DSS clients do not have a GED or High School diploma
- 1 in 4 Mecklenburg County residents receives some type of service from DSS
- There were 708 children in DSS custody as of September 2011; a reduction of 380 over the past three years
- 142,000 meals were served in the Senior Nutrition Program in FY2011
- 6,378 in community volunteer hours were provided to DSS in FY2011
- From FY2009 to FY2011, there was a 56% increase in Food & Nutrition Services (EBT) cases, and a 29% increase in overall public assistance cases while the DSS budget decreased by \$16 million

Adult Care Home Monitoring
 Adult Guardianship
 Adult Medicaid
 Adult Protective Services
 Adult Social Work Case Management
 Caregiver Support Services
 Child Protective Services
 Community Social Work
 Food & Nutrition Services
 Foster Care & Adoption Services
 Just 1 Call
 Mecklenburg County Transportation Services
 Medicaid for Families & Children
 Senior Nutrition Services
 WorkFirst

Services:



Kevin (DSS staff member)

is doing fantastic work at the Dilworth Soup Kitchen. He is making a difference in the lives of people with the most pressing needs. Through your efforts, DSS is demonstrating its commitment to reaching out into the community, providing services where the need is, and seeking employees of the highest caliber. Thank you for continuing to invest in the development of the supervisors. You continue to reinforce the efficacy of working diligently by rewarding us accordingly. Your thoughtfulness has not gone unnoticed. I thank you! - Linda Todd, Social Work Supervisor

Deronda Metz, Salvation Army

Thank you DSS for allowing us to be a part of motivational interviewing training. As the number of families who are homeless increases, having the opportunity to gain the skills necessary to work with clients effectively is critical as we move families from homelessness to self reliance.

Financials

Function Name	Expenses
ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES (DSS)	2,344,008
ADOPTION ASSISTANCE (DSS)	2,279,968
CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES (DSS)	14,759,641
PERMANENCY PLANNING (DSS)	22,408,038
DV SERVICES (DSS)	185,276
FRAUD (DSS)	877,607
FACILITIES MANAGEMENT	1,658,836
LEGAL SERVICES (DSS)	1,271,313
Record and Mail Services (DSS)	1,113,282
CALL CENTER	2,033,320
IT RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (DSS)	1,755,596
HUMAN RESOURCES (DSS)	419,713
SENIOR ADMINISTRATION (DSS)	998,040
ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT (DSS)	5,665,751
FISCAL ADMINISTRATION (DSS)	3,581,050
MEDICAID TRANSPORTATION (DSS)	5,133,668
MECKLENBURG TRANSPORT (DSS)	3,968,579
In-Home Aide Services	2,508,818
ADULT SOCIAL WORK (DSS)	5,408,674
Senior Citizens Nutrition Program (SCNP)	3,039,357
CHILDCARE SERVICES (DSS)	49,550,520
MEDICAID RELATED PAYMENTS (DSS)	3,419,000
PUBLIC ASSISTANCE (DSS)	23,130,783
GENERAL ASSISTANCE (DSS)	5,539,023
WORK FIRST (DSS)	6,178,442

169,228,303



Marya, A DSS Social Worker at the Uptown Men's Shelter

We have helped homeless men seek disability income, Medical insurance and Food and Nutrition Services (Food Stamps) at the Shelter. This has enabled them to sustain a more self-sufficient lifestyle and move out of the Shelter. One homeless man reported moving out of the Shelter and into his own place. He said he would not have known what to do and what to apply for, and was very thankful for my help.



LOCATIONS & CONTACT

**Customer Connection
Call Center**
704-336-3000

Operating Hours:
Monday – Friday,
8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Report Child or Adult
abuse/neglect**
24 hours a day,
365 days a week at
704-336-2273 (CARE)

Access DSS services online at:
www.MecklenburgCountyNC.gov/DSS

**Access information and assistance
for seniors and adults with disabilities**
Just 1 Call
704-423-1111

DSS - Kuralt Center
301 Billingsley Road
Charlotte, NC 28211

DSS - County Courts Office Building
Youth & Family Services Division
720 East Fourth Street
Charlotte, NC 28202

DSS - Valerie C. Woodard Center -
Chapin Hall
3205 Freedom Drive
Charlotte, NC 28216

DSS - Bob Walton Plaza
Youth & Family Services Division
700 East Stonewall Street
Charlotte, NC 28202

DSS - Charlotte East
Youth & Family Services Division
5800 Executive Center Drive
Charlotte, NC 28212

DSS - Farm Pond Center
Youth & Family Services Division
5832 Farm Pond Lane
Charlotte, NC 28224



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