

# Leading by Results

Volume III, Number 1

Fall 2008

## **VIEWPOINT** **2**

This issue of *Leading By Results* briefly describes last year's accomplishments by answering the question "Did you know?" The answers to these questions may surprise you. I hope you have time to read them.

## **WELL-BEING OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES** **3**

Forsyth County DSS provides a comprehensive set of services to children and their families at risk for abuse and neglect. It provides these services under strict legal guidelines that protect children while preserving the rights of parents.

## **QUALITY OF LIFE FOR OLDER ADULTS** **4**

The Forsyth County Department of Social Services is the largest provider of services to older adults and adults with disabilities in Forsyth County serving more than 15,000 each month.

## **ECONOMIC STABILITY** **5**

Forsyth County DSS helps enhance families' economic stability through employment services, access to health care and other income support services. During the last fiscal year, DSS added over 370 million federal and state dollars to the local economy through its provision of services.

## **DSS MEASURABLE BENCHMARKS** **6-7**

See pages 6-7 for a review of our primary goals and benchmarks for Fiscal Year 2007—2008 to see the progress we made towards attaining agency goals.

## **ACCOUNTABLE FOR PUBLIC RESOURCES** **8**

Because taxpayers' dollars matter, considerable effort is directed towards efficient administration.

## **INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS** **9**

DSS receives fourth consecutive Best Practice award, explores information and technology improvements and prepares for building renovations.

## **QUICK FACTS** **10-11**

See pages 10-11 to learn updates regarding specific program areas within the Department of Social Services.



*“Published to enhance the community’s knowledge of issues affecting children, families, older adults and the disabled in Forsyth County.”*

# Viewpoint



*Joe Raymond,*  
*Director*  
**Department of  
Social Services**

The Department of Social Services' mission is "to serve and protect vulnerable children and adults; strengthen and preserve families; and enhance economic stability while encouraging personal responsibility." Last year, the Department served over 70,000 Forsyth County residents to fulfill this mission. This issue of *Leading By Results* briefly describes last year's accomplishments by answering the question "Did you know?" The answers to these questions may surprise you. I hope you have time to read them.

Some of you know that DSS programs are aimed squarely at helping children (and their families) and/or older adults and adults with disabilities. DSS provides access to employment services, health care, and day care for children. DSS also provides food and nutritional services (most recipients are elderly or are under age 21) and representation for custodial parents in child support cases. DSS also performs a critical and difficult child and adult protection role in situations that meet specific legal criteria.

Most residents are astounded to learn that DSS serves so many county residents, at least until they understand the full scope of our mission. DSS provides services before birth to after death (yes, DSS is responsible for unclaimed bodies). DSS provides services to both poor and middle class families, has services that are based on strict eligibility criteria and other services that are provided "without regard to income." These services help strengthen families, protect those who need protection, and generate approximately 400 million federal dollars a year for the local economy.

Unfortunately, the need for services is increasing, not decreasing. More families are participating in the federal Medicaid and Food Assistance programs. This trend is always a predictor of economic downturn and a lag of economic recovery. This means that low income wage earners, people that want to and do work, are the first to be hurt in a bad economy and are the last people to recover. Construction jobs, service jobs, the loss of manufacturing jobs, and minimum wage jobs with no benefits means more people, not fewer, now have to rely on public supports. DSS is also experiencing increased demand in child protection services and in adult protection programs as well. These realities reflect trends in our communities that are beyond the daily control of DSS.

Frankly, the DSS mission is challenging as program expectations are high, resources are not equal to these expectations, the pace is fast, and the human and financial consequences for errors are great. Despite these challenges, DSS's program eligibility staff, child support agents, in-home aides, and social work staff deserve considerable acknowledgement as they provide services that are every bit as important as any other public service provided in our community. Few people realize that DSS social workers are frequently working after hours, on weekends and on holidays as they work with law enforcement, hospitals and others to handle emergency situations.

We will continue to try to find ways to improve services. For example, DSS is seeking enhanced information technology to improve customer service and increase staff efficiency. We will continue to seek measurable results, improve customer service, lower caseloads, and find ways to support our staff in order to decrease turnover and maintain a high level of service delivery. I hope the enclosed information presents a fair picture of what DSS has accomplished (often in partnership with other public and private organizations) in the past year.

*Joe Raymond*

## Leading by Results

**Publisher-Editor-in Chief**  
Joe Raymond, Director

**Editor**  
Daphne Taylor, Human  
Services Planner

### DSS Contributors

Children's Services Division  
Adult Services Division  
TEAM Division  
Administration

### Forsyth County Board of Social Services

Florence Corpening, Chair  
Claudette Weston, Vice Chair  
Walter Marshall  
Dave Plyler  
Michael Wells

**Mission:** Forsyth County DSS will serve and protect vulnerable children and adults; strengthen and preserve families; and enhance economic stability while encouraging personal responsibility.

***"Serving Our Community with  
Competency, Compassion and  
Commitment"***

Please direct all  
correspondence regarding  
this publication to  
Daphne Taylor,  
Forsyth County Department of  
Social Services,  
741 N. Highland Ave.,  
Winston-Salem, NC 27101  
336-703-3403  
taylordm@forsyth.cc

# Goal I Improve the Safety, Quality of Life, and Well-Being of Children and Families



## **FOSTERING CHILDREN AND TRANSITIONING CHILDREN TO YOUNG ADULTHOOD**

### **Did you know that Forsyth County DSS...?**

- By law, must make reasonable efforts to reunite all children with their parents
- Had approximately 350 children in legal custody last year
- Reunified 106 of these children with parents or placed them with relatives
- Supervises approximately 135 licensed foster homes and agency placements
- Helped nine foster children enter college last year, but only two returned for their second year
- Served an average of 275 children each month in our LINKS program
- Assisted 52 youths transition from foster care into independent living situations
- Provides school supplies and holiday assistance to over 350 children living with relatives
- Won a Best Practice Award in 2007 for our program that assists relative caregivers

**Myth:** *Abused and neglected children almost always come from poor, minority and/or inner city families.*

**Fact:** *There is no evidence that links socioeconomic status, race or educational level to abuse and neglect. Child abuse occurs within every neighborhood and school community across the country.*

## **ADOPTING CHILDREN**

### **Did you know that Forsyth County DSS...?**

- Is Forsyth county's largest adoption agency
- Placed 63 children for adoption last year
- Provides financial assistance for adopted children until their 18th birthday
- Provides post-adoption support to families indefinitely after adoption
- Provides confidential intermediary services to facilitate contact between adult adoptees and birth parents

Forsyth County DSS provides a comprehensive set of services to children and their families who are at risk of child abuse and child neglect. It provides these services under strict legal guidelines that protect children while preserving the rights of parents.

## **PROTECTING CHILDREN**

### **Did you know that Forsyth County DSS...?**

- Cannot investigate abuse or neglect reports that do not meet legal criteria
- Received 4,000 child protection reports last year and investigated 2,625
- Served an average of 528 families each month
- Judges, not DSS, determine which children are placed in DSS legal custody
- Had an average of 280 children in DSS legal custody each month
- Provided treatment services to 160 families enabling children to remain in their homes

---

*By law, DSS must make reasonable efforts to reunite all children with their parents.*

---

## **Goal II Older Adults and Adults with Disabilities will be Safe and Healthy and Live in the Least Restrictive, Most Appropriate Setting**



The Forsyth County Department of Social Services is the largest provider of services to older adults and adults with disabilities in Forsyth County. We provide a range of services that includes protective services and a full spectrum of supportive services that allow our aged or disabled to remain in their own homes, as well as assistance with the transition to rest or nursing home care and access to Adult Medicaid for health care.

### ***KEEPING ADULTS IN THEIR OWN HOMES***

#### ***Did you know that Forsyth County DSS...?***

- Provided in-home services to 307 adults
- Provided Special Assistance in-home services to 62 adults
- Maintained an average of 116 adults on our In-Home services waiting list
- Provided Enhanced Personal Care services in assisted living facilities to 120 older adults

- Served 43 older adults and adults with disabilities who receive Adult Day Care or Adult Day Health

### ***ASSURING QUALITY RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES***

#### ***Did you know that Forsyth County DSS...?***

- Monitored 45 assisted living facilities and investigated 78 complaints

### ***ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE***

#### ***Did you know that Forsyth County DSS...?***

- Provided Medicaid benefits to an average of 12,563 older adults and adults with disabilities each month,
- Completed 96% of Adult Medicaid applications within expected timeframes
- The percentage of older adults and those with disabilities was less than 1%
- Coordinated Medicaid Transportation for 1,100 older adults and adults with disabilities

***Did you know that “depression is not a normal part of aging, but nearly 20% of the older population—twice the rate of younger cohorts—experiences it.” Only about half of seniors who***

***experience mental health problems receive any type of treatment and less than 3% are treated by a mental health specialist. Visit [www.health.com/health/condition-article](http://www.health.com/health/condition-article) to learn more about depression in the elderly in the article titled “Myths and Facts About Depression in the Elderly.”***

### ***PROTECTING OLDER ADULTS AND ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES***

#### ***Did you know that Forsyth County DSS...?***

- Helped assure that 99% of older adults and adults with disabilities were not abused, neglected or exploited while living in licensed care facilities
- Served 21,900 people through its telephone intake service
- Received 467 Adult Protective Services reports, a 20% increase, with 146 reports requiring full intervention
- Was the legal guardian of 118 adults deemed by the court to be incompetent and in need of protection—this number was an all-time high

***FC DSS provided Adult Medicaid benefits to an average of 12,563 older adults and adults with disabilities each month***

# Goal III Enhance the Economic Stability of Individuals and Families



**Did you know** that approximately **20%** of Forsyth County children, families, older adults and adults with disabilities

**live in poverty?** Forsyth County DSS helps enhance their economic stability through employment services, access to health care and other income support services.

## COLLECTING CHILD SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN AND CUSTODIAL PARENTS

FCSS helps children obtain adequate household income from non-custodial parents. *Did you know that Forsyth County DSS...?*

- Served over **15,000 custodial parents** and collected \$21,242,768 in Child Support Enforcement payments for children
- Caused **61%** of cases to obtain some level of enforcement collections
- Obtained over **11,200 court orders** establishing child support payments
- Established **865 paternitys**
- Created a minimum economic impact of **\$21 million**

## ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

Forsyth County children, older adults and adults with disabilities who meet strict income and age guidelines may be eligible for the federal Medicaid program which provides access to health care. *Did you know that Forsyth County DSS...?*

- Completed **92.5%** of Family and Children's Medicaid and NC Health Choice applications within 45 days,

thus exceeding the 90% standard established by the state

- Provided Medicaid benefits to an average of **21,774 children and families** per month
- Put over **370 million federal and state dollars** into the local economy through funds paid to hospitals, physicians, nursing homes and other health care providers

## PUTTING ADULTS TO WORK

The Work First program provides employment services and cash assistance for families with children.

*Did you know that Forsyth County DSS...?*

- Serves **7,000 fewer people with cash assistance than in 1996**, down to approximately 300 individuals at any one time—except for approximately 900 children who live with relatives, usually their grandparents
- Put **395 people to work**, far exceeding the state's goal of 207
- Put an **additional 200 people in jobs** through services provided in our innovative Employment Lab
- Helped **16%** of people find work in jobs that paid at least \$8.50 an hour

## FEEDING LOW INCOME CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides access to food for needy children, families and older adults. *Did you know that Forsyth County DSS...?*

- Provides Supplemental Nutrition Services to **13,000 households per month**

- Serves **27,000 recipients**, 60% of whom were under age 20 or over age 60
- Serves recipients, who on an average, received **\$114 in food assistance per month**
- Was awarded a **Certificate of Merit in June 2008** for achieving a payment accuracy rate of 97%
- Created a minimum economic impact of **36 million** federal dollars paid to grocers and other qualified Forsyth County food suppliers

## CHILD CARE IN SUPPORT OF PARENTAL WORK, EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CHILD PROTECTION

Working low-income parents cannot afford child care for their children. *Did you know that Forsyth County DSS...?*

- Provided **\$14,375,916 in child care subsidies** to over 300 centers
- Served an average of **3,128 children each month**
- Maintained the **2nd largest waiting list in NC**, ending the fiscal year with 2,022 waiting for child care services due to lack of funding
- Created a minimum economic impact of **14 million federal dollars** paid to Forsyth County child care centers

*DSS put over 370 million federal and state dollars into the local economy through funds paid to hospitals and other health care providers, grocers, child care centers, utility companies and other vendors*

# FC DSS Benchmarks

Results reported from July 2007 through June 2008

<b>Goal I: Improve the safety, well-being and quality of life of children and families.</b>			
	<b>Benchmark</b>	<b>Results avg from July 07—June 08</b>	<b>Data Story</b>
1.1	Increase % of children who achieve permanence within one year through reunification, guardianship, or adoption from 38% to 50%	36.5%	Target was not achieved; Court Improvement Project and other solutions have not yet addressed this benchmark
1.2	Increase % of children who leave foster care who have been in foster care more than one year	56.8%	No target was set for last year
1.3	Increase % of maltreated children who are not repeat victims (within 6 mos.) of substantiated maltreatment from 95% to 96%	96.7%	Target achieved; this key benchmark continues to show excellent data
1.4	Increase % of children who are adopted within one year of having a permanent plan of adoption from 45% to 50%	19.4%	Target not achieved
1.5	Percent of children whose placement is not disrupted or dissolved will be 100%	100%	Target achieved
1.6	Percent of children in foster or facility care who have not been maltreated by a foster parent or facility staff will be 100%	99.7%	Target close to achievement
1.7	Percent of LINKS participants aged 18-23 who are employed or enrolled in post-secondary education	—	No data available
<b>Goal II: Older adults and adults with disabilities will be safe and healthy and live in the least restrictive, most appropriate setting</b>			
2.1	Increase % who request In-Home Aide Assistance and receive it by 4.8% (from 65.2% to 70%)	61.1%	Did not meet target due to high level of staff turnover
2.2	Increase number who receive Special Assistance In-Home Services 16% (from 41 to 49)	Increased by 16%	Achieved target of serving 49 adults through SA In-Home Services
2.3	Increase number who receive Enhanced Personal Care in Assisted Living Facilities 5% (from 122 to 128)	97 persons served	Target not met; At end of fiscal year, 97 persons were served; recommendations for target were made towards end of the FY and not enough time to meet
2.4	Increase the number who receive Adult Day Care/Adult Day Health 7% (from 28 to 30)	Increased by 7%	Target exceeded by serving 33 individuals by the end of the fiscal year
2.5	Decrease the number of assisted living facility complaints 9% (from 72 to 65)	78 complaints received	Target not met; 78 complaints were received
2.6	Increase the % of Adult Medicaid applicants whose applications are completed within the 45 day (MAA) or 90 day (MAD) standard from 93% to 95%	95.3%	Target achieved; 95.3% of applications were processed on time
2.7	Increase the % who are not found to be repeat victims of abuse, neglect, or exploitation 1% (from 99% to 100%)	94.5%	Target not met; Attained 94.5%
2.8	Increase the % who are not abused, neglected or exploited while living in licensed care facilities 1% (from 99% to 100%)	94.5%	Full target not met; Attained 94.5%

### Goal III: Enhance the economic stability of individuals and families

	Benchmark	Results to 6/08	Data Story
3.1	Increase the Child Support Enforcement collection rate from 61.4% to 73.2%	61.4%	Target not achieved
3.2	Increase the % of Child Support cases with court orders from 79% to 81.8%	80.1%	Target not achieved
3.3	The Child Support Enforcement Program will meet its total collections goal of \$21,599,570	\$21,242,768	Target not achieved; Total collections \$21,242,768
3.4	Increase the % of Family & Children's Medicaid and NC Health Choice applicants whose applications are completed within 45 days from 90% to 91%	92.5%	Exceeded target
3.5	Increase the Work First Participation Rate from 37% to 50%	30.5%	Target not achieved
3.6	The total number of Work First participants who obtain employment will be 400	395	Exceeded state target of 207; Additional 191 employed through Employment Lab
3.7	Increase the % of Work First participants who obtain employment at a living wage of \$8.50 per hour or higher from 3% to 10%	16%	Target achieved
3.8	The % of Work First participants that obtain a GED/High School diploma or vocational certificate (no data, target yet to be set)	No data available	N/A
3.9	The % of individuals potentially eligible for Food and Nutritional services who receive them will be 60% or better	67%	Target exceeded
3.10	The monthly average of eligible children who request DSS' child care subsidy and receive it	61.5%	An average of 3,371 children were served each month; 61.5% of children who requested services

### Goal IV: Be publicly accountable for efficient use of resources and timely delivery of services

4.1	The employee departure rate will decrease from 10.2% to 7.5% or less	13.8%	Target not achieved
4.2	The number of 18 "core" DSS programs not in program improvement status will decrease from 3 to 0	2	Child Support Enforcement and Child Protective Services/Foster Care remain in this status
4.3	The % of customers who report that they were treated with respect will be maintained at 90% or higher	93.7%	Target achieved based on reported surveys
4.4	The amount of dollars recovered through program integrity efforts will be \$75,000 or more	\$19,461	Target not achieved

# Goal V Be Publicly Accountable for Efficient Use of Resources and Timely Delivery of Services

Managing a local Department of Social Services is a complex, legalistic and bureaucratic challenge. Because taxpayers' dollars matter, considerable effort is directed towards efficient administration.

## Did you know that Forsyth County DSS...?

- Was routinely monitored by federal and state government through structured audits during the last year
- Was determined to have no negative "material" findings in the county's single audit
- Experienced an increase in the overall departure rate from 10% to 13.4% last year largely due to workload increases and depressed salaries
- Has over 25 major programs and only two of those programs have been designated by the director as being in "program improvement status"
- In conjunction with NC's DSS county directors and their association, played a major role in ending required county funding for the federal Medicaid program
- Has won **four** consecutive statewide Best Practices Awards
- Won this year's award for our Employment Lab and partnership with the Employment Security Commission that has put over 200 individuals to work

- Has contracts for provision of specific goods and services with 57 vendors and 27 foster care providers in Forsyth County and other counties within the state

## DSS SAYS "THANK YOU" TO OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS FOR ANOTHER YEAR OF SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATIONS

- Forsyth Futures
- WS/Forsyth County Schools
- Wake Forest University
- Winston-Salem State University
- Forsyth Technical Community College
- Winston-Salem Police Department
- Kernersville Police Department
- Forsyth County Sheriff's Department
- Department of Court
- Juvenile Court
- Guardians ad Litem
- CenterPoint Human Services
- Leadership Winston-Salem
- Council on Aging
- Workforce Development
- United Way
- Experiment in Self-Reliance
- Consumer Credit Counseling Services
- Center for Home Ownership
- Employment Security Commission

- Veterans' Administration
  - Salvation Army
  - Goodwill Industries
  - Kate B. Reynolds Foundation
  - Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness Commission
  - Housing Authority of Winston-Salem
  - Family Services
  - Safe on Seventh
  - Community Safety Center
  - Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center
  - Winston-Salem Transit Authority
  - Senior Services
  - Shepherd Services
  - Vocational Rehabilitation
  - The Children's Home
  - Daymark
  - Triumph
  - Cherry Street Prison Release Program
  - Youth Opportunities
  - Social Security Administration
- (list is not all-inclusive)*

*Forsyth County DSS has won four consecutive statewide Best Practices Awards*



# Innovative Solutions at Forsyth County Department of Social Services

## **FORSYTH DSS RECEIVES 4TH CONSECUTIVE BEST PRACTICE AWARD**

On Thursday, October 9, 2008, the Forsyth County Department of Social Services (DSS) was presented with its **fourth consecutive Best Practice Award**. Each year, the North Carolina Association of County Directors of Social Services (NCACDSS) recognizes county departments of social services that implement innovative, successful and unique programs designed to enhance community development or agency operations. Nominations for awards are evaluated in five categories: Advancement in Staff and Leadership Development, Empowering Clients to Self-Sufficiency, Innovations in Services to Customers, Cost Savings Measures and/or Improvements in Efficiency and Profiles in Community Collaboration.

Forsyth County DSS received an award for its implementation of an **Upfront Services and Employment Resources Lab** which falls under the Empowering Clients to Self-Sufficiency category. DSS received grant money to develop an onsite employment lab to assist Work First or potential Work First participants with job searches, obtaining unemployment benefits and other services provided by the Employment Security Commission (ESC). The Employment Lab is staffed by ESC personnel who have worked in conjunction with DSS Employment Services social workers and found employment for more than 200 people to work during the 2007 – 2008 fiscal year. These upfront services also eliminate the need of the individual to receive Work First cash assistance which saves taxpayer dollars as well.

One participant (T.H.) who gained employment through working in the lab said this about her experience: *“My experience in the job lab was great. I received a lot of contacts and leads from*

*the Lab and I enjoyed working with the staff. I think that the job Lab is a big help for everyone that would like to be successful in life. It gives you a chance to find your fit in the work field. I would like to thank everyone for giving me the chance to get a better start in my new career.”*

DSS is pleased with the impact that the addition of the onsite Employment Lab has had upon agency clientele. The agency continues to make efforts to expand this service in order to enhance its customers’ opportunities for success in finding employment and moving towards economic stability.

## **D S S   N E E D S   N E W I N F O R M A T I O N   A N D T E C H N O L O G Y**

FCDSS administers more than 25 complex, policy-driven, legalistic programs and serves over 70,000 customers annually. Currently, DSS’s use of “information technology” is under-utilized in relation to agency size, scope of services, recent and anticipated program growth, use of repetitive and unnecessary staff functions and financial risk due to error – and the current use of paper-based case records causes gross inefficiency for staff and less than ideal customer service.

**FCDSS needs enhanced information technology** to reduce the number/frequency of staff and customer actions within/across programs, increase the timeliness of service delivery, simplify customer application and re-determination processes within and across programs, improve internal communication across programs & increase the service delivery accuracy, increase customer access to information about their cases, obtain reliable and timely management and program data reports, reduce customer waiting time, and positively affect staff retention rates. Since 2006, DSS and County MIS have

been on a quest to identify the best solution and make sure it fits with the state’s evolving IT system, named NC FAST. **One part of a solution is a paperless eligibility processing system.** This option has been developed and piloted and several methods of implementation are being studied. If implemented, significant gains in worker efficiency and customer experience are possible. In addition, the agency is considering the adaptation of a child welfare information technology system developed by Mecklenburg County and Buncombe County. **Implementation options are being examined** and if implemented, this system would greatly improve the qualitative function of the child protective services, foster and adoption services and would be the platform for a similar system in Adult Services.

We hope 2009 brings this IT vision to reality.

## **PARDON OUR PROGRESS**

Due to our slowing economy and the subsequent and continual increase in the number of families and individuals applying for services, **customer visits to the agency have dramatically increased**, stretching our ability to accommodate people in our limited first floor lobby area. The first and second floors will be renovated to accommodate the increased flow of traffic to the agency by moving Child Support to the second floor. Construction is anticipated to begin in January 2009 and end about mid-year.

*FC DSS needs enhanced  
information technology...one  
part of the solution is a  
paperless eligibility  
processing system*

# Forsyth County Department of Social Services

## QUICK FACTS

### **ADULT DIVISION**

#### ***SA In-Home Program***

Established in September 2000, the Special Assistance In-Home program provides an alternative to placement in an Adult Care Home (ACH) for individuals who could live at home safely with additional support services. Participation is voluntary on the part of the county departments of social services.

To be eligible for the SA In-Home (SA/IH) program, an individual must be eligible for both Medicaid and Special Assistance.

The SA/IH income limit, which is equal to the Federal Poverty Limit for an individual to qualify for the SA In-Home program increased to \$867 effective April 1, 2008. The additional monies received by individuals can be used for many purposes with the main goal being to enable the person to remain safely in their own home.

Currently, Forsyth County has 60 spaces for the program and has two people on the waiting list. DSS hoped to receive additional slots to expand the program, but was unable to as a result of budget constraints.

### **FAMILY & CHILDREN'S DIVISION**

#### ***Partnership with WSSU***

On Monday, November 3, 2008, the Family and Children's Division was honored to attend a reception at Winston-Salem State University with the School of Business and

Economics to celebrate our newly formed partnership to benefit youth are transitioning out of the Foster Care system. The first installment of the 1.5 million dollar grant from BB&T will be used for the Education of Young Entrepreneurs in Social Responsibility and Capitalist Values. This innovative program will be offered during the summer months and features educational materials and hands-on projects. This creative package includes special events, activities, field trips, workshops, business trainings, instruction, networking opportunities, community involvement and incentives for successful completion of the program. The aim of the program is to help students understand the functioning details of the free enterprise system and the interdependence of market and social forces as they shape the creation of sustainable, socially responsible business.

#### ***Leadership Winston-Salem***

We are delighted that Leadership Winston-Salem selected our LINKS program as one of their eight action learning projects for the 2008-2009 fiscal year! The focus of the project is to identify a mentoring strategy for youth in Foster Care as a way to develop sustainable, natural supports. Their role will include the research and development of guidelines for the implementation of an effective mentoring program for youth transitioning out of Foster Care in our community.

#### ***Child Planning Conferences***

The Family and Children's Division began participating in Child Planning Conferences (CPC) in March 2008. These conferences stemmed from our

Local Rules for Juvenile Court which were adopted in 2001 and are now an integral part of our legal process when a child is taken into DSS custody due to abuse, neglect or dependency. Our Court Improvement Project Director, Kim Shore, facilitates these conferences that are scheduled to be held seven days after the initial non-secure hearing. The true purpose of a CPC is to expedite the process of establishing stability for the child by bringing together, as early as possible, the parents, all interested parties and community resources in an effort to share information, inform parents of the court process and begin services as soon as possible and to begin the planning process at an early stage for the child's well-being. Participants in the CPC may include parents/caretakers, other family members, DSS, Guardians at Litem, attorneys, mental health agencies, parenting resource agencies, representatives of the school system the child attends, Department of Juvenile Justice and law enforcement (as necessary). A summary of this meeting in the form of a proposed consent order or agreement that outlines a tentative service plan is presented at the full hearing. Thus far, the CPCs have been extremely beneficial and have helped "jump start" efforts in the best interest of the child and family.

*Leadership Winston-Salem selects LINKS program as an action learning project for 2008—2009 fiscal year*

# Forsyth County Department of Social Services

## QUICK FACTS

### ***T.E.A.M DIVISION***

#### ***Quantities Interdisciplinary Evaluations (QIE) for Work First Participants***

We are continuing to have QIEs completed for all of our Work First participants that are coded "F," which means that they are unable to work due to some medical condition as documented by a physician. These QIEs are completed by staff at Comp Rehab of Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center. To date, several of our recipients have been determined to have some work capacity while others have been determined to have no work capacity. For those without work capacity, the results of the QIE are included with their application for SSI disability that is determined by the Social Security Administration.

#### ***Community-Based Vocational Training Initiative***

The FC DSS has partnered with the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools in the Community-Based Vocational Training Initiative. The primary goal of this partnership is to offer non-paid vocational training to develop work-appropriate behavior and job skills with students that have special needs. This is accomplished best by giving students the opportunity to train at the actual job site. DSS has been fortunate to have Ms. LaShawnda Daniels from Carter Vocational High School as our student intern since September 2008. Ms. Daniels works with Julie Hooker, Senior Income Maintenance he four to six hours. Ms. Daniels has assisted with opening mail for the division, customer service in the agency lobby

and helped with day care group applications. She also assists Ms. Hooker by distributing information on a biweekly basis at the Employment Security Commission and on a monthly basis at the Resource Center at Goler AME Zion Church. LaShawnda is hard working and not afraid of challenging herself to accomplish new skills. She is an asset to the agency.

#### ***Day Care***

The subsidized childcare program will be pulling 400 children off the waiting list. Parents of eligible children who are working at least 30 hours per week will be invited to attend one of two scheduled appointment times, December 2nd and 3rd. The ability to serve these children is due to attrition as there have been no additional monies added to this year's fiscal budget.

#### ***Child Support Services***

The Child Support Enforcement (CSE) program participated in a program assessment with the Center for the Support of Families, Inc. (CSF) located in Silver Spring, Maryland. The CSF consultants completed their analysis and shared their recommendations with the agency.

DSS adopted their recommendations on November 5, 2008 and has begun developing an implementation plan. The core areas in which recommendations were made and are considered for improvement at this time are: case cleanup, structure and organization and leadership and supervision.

The specific areas in which the program will focus on implementing recommendations made by CSF are:

- Conduct a "case cleanup" of 15,000 cases, close non-productive cases

and focus on cases that have collection potential

- Define and add incentives for staff performance
- Restructure the program's organization into functional areas of performance, i.e., establishment, enforcement, etc.
- Focus supervisors on supervision of staff, i.e., not allowing supervisors to carry caseloads
- Improve training for all staff
- Increase management communication and visibility
- Improve work flow (there are multiple specific recommendations)

Managers and staff in the CSE program have embraced this opportunity to enhance the program area through implementation of these recommendations. The Department of Social Services is very hopeful about the success of these new efforts to move the Child Support program in the right direction to achieve its performance goals.

---

*DSS adopted recommendations made to enhance Child Support Enforcement program*

---

**Forsyth County**  
**Department of Social Services**  
**741 N. Highland Ave.**  
**Winston-Salem, NC 27101**

PRESORTED  
FIRST-CLASS MAIL  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
Winston-Salem, NC  
Permit No. 714

# "In the Next Issue"

*In the Winter issue of **Leading by Results**, the Department of Social Services will report on specific benchmarks associated with each goal for Fiscal Year 2008—2009.*

