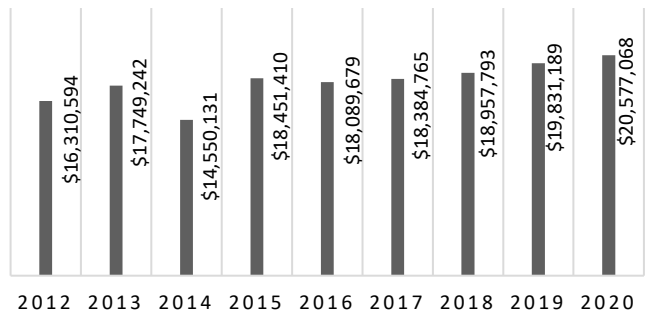


CHILDREN, YOUTH and FAMILIES

2960, 4046, 4059, 6071,
6110, 6119, 6120, 6129,
7310

DCYF - COUNTY SHARE



MISSION

Albany County Department for Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) is committed to excellence, professionalism, integrity and is uniquely structured to deliver an integrated, diverse, holistic set of services in collaboration with families and communities to empower families to create a safe, nurturing environment in which children can grow, thrive and reach their full potential.

WHO WE SERVE

DCYF serves the Children and Families of Albany County. Albany County is a System of Care community, which subscribes to the Child and Adolescent Service System Program (CASSP) Core Principles--child-centered, family-focused, community based, culturally competent, least restrictive and coordinated services for children and their families. A system of care is a coordinated network of effective services and supports for children and families, which are culturally and linguistically competent, build meaningful partnerships with families and youth, and have supportive management and policy infrastructure.

ABOUT OUR DEPARTMENT

DCYF is unique within New York State, in that services for children from other County departments are consolidated into an independent agency that focuses on integrated services, and strengthening and supporting families.

The **Children and Family Services Division** strives to ensure that all children live in safe and nurturing environments by providing State mandated Child Protective Services and prevention, adolescent, foster care and adoption services. Caseworkers are the frontline staff directly involved with ensuring the health and safety of children, especially those who are involved with Child Protective Services (CPS), Foster Care or Prevention Services.

The **Preventive Services Unit** provides rehabilitative and supportive services to families with children at risk for foster care or detention placement to avoid placements and to shorten placements for those in foster care. The *Healthy Families Home Visiting Program* is a comprehensive prevention program for children prenatal to 5 years old that builds on families' strengths with the goal of creating safe homes for children.

The **Youth Bureau** plans and manages a variety of programs for youth under the age of 21, including youth development, recreation, delinquency prevention and mandated services to run away and homeless youth.

The **Division of Children's Mental Health Services** houses the licensed Children's Mental Health Clinic, Children's Single Point of Access (SPOA), Case Management Services, and the Forensic Psychologists.

The **Division for Children with Special Needs** provides comprehensive evaluation services and administers the mandated Early Intervention and Preschool Special Education Programs. Additionally, provides the Physically Handicapped Children's Program to evaluate and serve children who have chronic illnesses, developmental delays and/or disabilities.

The **Division of Staff Development and Community Programs** are responsible for coordinating, delivering and managing the Department's staff training and educational programs. The Division also works with a variety of community programs in order to engage the broader community in promoting the safety and well-being of children and their families.

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The **Division of Administrative Services** is responsible for the fiscal operations of the Department. Due to a number of changes to state reimbursement streams, capped allocations and the continuation of a number of unfunded mandates, the Division has taken steps to review fiscal processes and claiming strategies in an effort to maximize revenue to the Department.

2019 ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND CHALLENGES

- In collaboration with the Albany County Attorney's Office and Albany County Probation, and DCYF, Albany County submitted and received an approved Raise the age 9RTA) plan. The plan addresses fiscal and programmatic services for the inclusion of 16 year olds into the Juvenile Justice System as of 10-1-18 and 17 years olds as of 10-1-19. Albany County has identified a comprehensive array of services and programs to serve this population.
- The **Children and Family Services Division** continues to facilitate services across the Child Welfare continuum in alignment with our mandate to keep children safe. From the investigation of reports, the management of foster care and long-term services, adoption and prevention services, the team of workers are dedicated and committed to the work we do to ensure the best provision of services and programs for children and families. Specifically:
 - Over 5,000 SCR reports investigated by Child Welfare staff, involving over 10,000 children
 - 36 adoptions have approved by Family Court Since January 1, 2018 to July 25, 2019.
 - 10 families participated in Model Approach to Partnerships in Parenting (MAPP) training for foster parent certification, which will help to meet the increased need for foster homes.
 - The Prevention unit managed 21 contracts with 10 voluntary agencies delivering an array of clinical services, specialty services and juvenile justice services.

Special Needs Division

- Continued integration of Single Point of Entry (SPOE) into the network of access of services. As a result of increased community awareness, SPOE has seen an increase in referrals received over the past year. Pediatricians, hospitals, and a growing number of community based organizations are relying exclusively on the SPOE fax line for submission of their referrals to programs for the 0-5 population.
- The Evaluation Team continues to be utilized by multiple counties and has a high level of respect from counties and school districts they serve. For Early Intervention (EI), of 554 referrals received, the evaluation team facilitated 488 evaluations. For the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE), there were a total of 184 children evaluated and the following evaluations were facilitated: 113 initial evaluations, and a total of 73 transitional and psychological evaluations.

Children's Mental Health Clinic

- The Children's Mental Health Clinic's continues to strengthen its connections in the community through the satellite clinic in the Berne Knox Westerlo school district as well as the co-location of a clinician at the Harmony Mills Pediatric clinic in Cohoes, NY. This supports the model of co-locating behavioral health services with primary care offices, to provide more comprehensive and holistic services and supports for families. Additionally, through our participation in the Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment Program (DSRIP) as it pertains to the colocation of behavioral health in primary health clinics, the clinic has been able to generate additional revenue.
- Through services and supports provided through Vital Access Provider (VAP) funding, the clinic has seen increased revenue and productivity through the implementation of open access hours to the clinic on Wednesday mornings.
- The Care Management Team continues to support and coordinate services for families through the continued transformation of Behavioral Health services and Managed Care. Staff continue to participate in trainings and conferences to be prepared for the impending changes

Youth Bureau Division

- The Youth Bureau managed 55 community-based programs using the Positive Youth Development approach which engages youth within their communities, schools, organizations, peer groups, and families in a manner that is productive and constructive; recognizes, utilizes, and enhances young people's strengths; and promotes positive outcomes for young people by providing opportunities, fostering positive relationships, and furnishing the support needed to build on their leadership strengths. Over 20,000 youth in 13 municipalities will benefit from these services.

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- To facilitate integration of the Youth Bureau with child welfare, the Youth Bureau Executive Director is a member of the Capital Region Runaway and Homeless Youth Advisory Committee, vice president of the Capital Region Youth Bureau Association, participates on the Youth Bureau 2.0 committee, a member of NYS Association of Youth Bureaus training team, and is a member of the Albany County Human Trafficking/CSEC Critical Team.
- Runaway and Homeless Youth Services have been expanded with the opening of St. Anne's Institutes Hubbard Hall which will provide temporary shelter and counseling services to run away, homeless youth less than 18 years of age

Staff Development

- A well-trained and skilled workforce along with opportunities for professional development is important for DCYF. To ensure best practice in service delivery to children and families, the Department has identified the following annual trainings for staff: Implicit Bias, Cultural Competency, Safety Training, Mindfulness Awareness, Aces, and Trauma-Informed Care.
- The Healthy Families Albany County Home Visiting Program is a strength-based program, committed to providing education and supporting parent-child interaction. The Healthy Families program serves over 200 families on an annual basis. The program has been highlighted by Prevent Child Abuse New York.

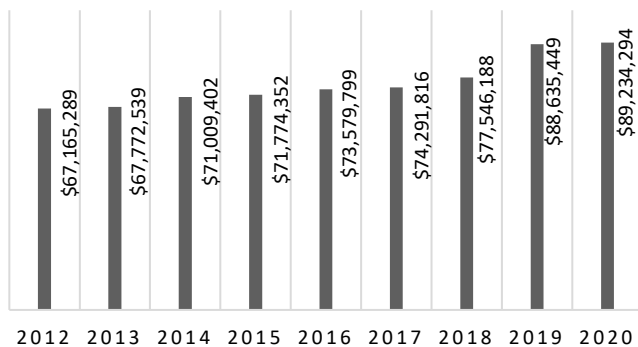
Administrative Services

- The Administrative Division was responsible for operating an annual budget of \$88,645,060 budget and managing 215 contracts. Across the accounts, there is a targeted overall reimbursement rate of 75.5%.
- There have been significant changes by NYS regarding Title IV-E claiming, Candidacy requirements for Prevention programs and services, Raise the Age claiming, and the impending PINS and Families First legislation. These changes have come amid staffing changes in the Administrative Services division. Notwithstanding these challenges, the Division has banded together to implement and facilitate the needed changes while identifying ways to improve efficiency and productivity.

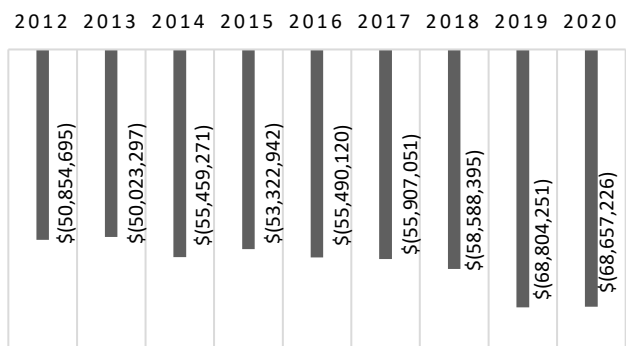
CHALLENGES

- Staffing was one of the biggest challenges for DCYF. Across the entire Department, there were vacancies due to retirements, resignations, and/or changes in circumstances. While we have successfully worked with Civil Service, HR, and the County Executive's office to fill these vacancies, there is still a significant impact to work flow and processes.
- Managing our fiscal budget. A rise in the number of foster care placements, pre-school and related services referrals, associated transportation costs, and Committee for Special Education (CSE) placements presents a significant challenge in how to meet programmatic costs without necessitating the need for increased appropriations. Additional, with the change in PINS Legislation that takes effect January 1, 2020, PINS placed youth will no longer be reimbursed by the state and will become 100% local costs.

DCYF - APPROPRIATIONS



DCYF - REVENUE



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2020 GOALS AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS

- Albany County DCYF continues to assess the impact of Raise the Age on the juvenile justice service delivery system. We have identified programs and services to support youth and families who are in need of services and supports, as 16 year olds arrested for a crime entered the juvenile justice system as of 10/1/18 and 17 year olds will enter the system as of 10-1-19.
- Continued planning for changes as Managed Care comes into effect for all Medicaid recipients as well as the implementation and roll out of Health Homes for Children. These changes will continue to impact DCYF in three key divisions: Children Services with our foster care population/ prevention population, Division of Special Needs with our Early Intervention services, and our Children's Mental Health Clinic for the provision of clinical as well as case management services. Developing contracts with managed care entities as well as identified children's health homes continues to be an integral part of this preparation.
- On October 1, 2021, Family First Prevention Services act (FFPSA) takes effect in NYS. This will substantially impact programs and services as it pertains to prevention and placement of youth and have significant fiscal impact. The Department has formed a stakeholder team comprised of members of the DCYF, DMB, VA's, and the CE's office to begin to plan for when the legislation takes effect.
- In conjunction with the County Executive's office, participating in County wide initiatives including the Equity agenda, Foster Care Task Force, Zero Detention Task Force and the infant Mortality Initiative.

SUMMARY OF BUDGET CHANGES

Overall, the Department has been diligent over the last several years to reduce our expenditures and appropriations. We have continually examined and projected our spending to produce a responsible budget. In spite of this, there are a number of factors out of the Department's control. Decreases in state funding such as the Foster Care Block Grant (FCBG) as well as increases in the number of foster care placements, Committee on Special Education (CSE) placements, and the increased number of pre-school and related services needs which correlates to an increase in transportation costs, have all had significant impact upon the DCYF budget.

Example of the services and support provided by Healthy Families Albany County

Mom called Family Support Specialist (FSS) in a panic when National Grid turned off her lights. When she spoke with National Grid she was told that the lights would not be turned on until some of her back payments of \$10,000 was paid. Mom could not afford this because she was currently not working and was a single stay at home mom with 2 children under the age of 3 years old. FSS asked mom if she had a place to stay as she could not stay in the house with her children with no power. Mom informed FSS that she would be staying with her Mother for the time being.

FSS referred mom to DSS to see if they would be able to help her get her lights back on. FSS brought mom to DSS as she does not have a car and it can be hard transporting multiple children on the city bus. FSS helped mom fill out the paperwork and kept the children entertained as mom spoke with multiple workers. A couple of days after going to DSS, mom was contacted to provide additional information in order to process paperwork. Mom instantly contacted FSS and cried on the phone for help and guidance. FSS consoled mom, listened to what she had to say and encouraged her to not give up and fight for herself and children. Mom was told that she needed to provide proof of income, bank statements, etc. in order to get her lights on. Mom was upset because she did not have a way of making copies of this information to send. FSS had mom email her paperwork she needed copied and personally dropped them off to her as soon as possible.

Mom was without power for almost a month. Mom felt helpless and called FSS everyday stressing out, wanting to go home. FSS listened and told mom to keep going, call workers, find out statuses of what is happening and go from there. That same day mom called FSS back and told her she was getting her lights turned back on. Mom was ecstatic. Mom also worked with National Grid to lower her bill down so that it was a more reasonable amount to pay. Mom also started looking for jobs and ended up getting three jobs to ensure that this won't happen again. Mom thanked FSS for always being there to help her when she needed encouragement, honesty and prioritizing her children and her self's safety.